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Running head: Effects of a Persuasive

The Effects of a Persuasive Presentation and Group Discussion on Parental  
Attitude in a Youth Sports Camp Parent Conference

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April 16, 2004

Thesis submitted  
To the Graduate College of Marshall University  
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## Abstract

The general purpose of this study was to increase parental support for inclusion of services for children with special needs. A persuasive presentation and group discussion were conducted at a parent conference at a youth sports camp.

The presenter was a social worker who has experience working with children with special needs. The presenter developed the presentation and helped guide the discussion.

Anonymous pre-test and post-test surveys of parental attitude toward the presentation issue were taken. From these surveys, the effects of level of involvement and level of knowledge on level of importance were assessed.

Attitude change occurred in this study, but it was not due to an increase in level of knowledge. Level of involvement was not found to be a predictor of post-test importance. In addition, the interaction of involvement and knowledge was not found to be a significant predictor of post-test importance.

### Dedication

The author wishes to dedicate this thesis to his family for all the support they have shown him and to his friend Maryann Lijoi for reminding him of the person he still was.

### Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank Dr. Stephen O'Keefe, Dr. Helen Linkey, and Dr. Andy Whisman for all the support they have shown and given. Also, a special thanks to Dr. Robert Wilson and Dr. Ray Hanning Jr. for all the great statistical instruction.

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## Chapter 1

### The Effects of a Persuasive Presentation and Group Discussion on Parental Attitude in a Youth Sports Camp Parent Conference

Many people are not aware of the need for certain services in childcare programs. This could be due to many reasons such as not having an interest in these services or not being aware of the need for these services. Social policy issues like including services for children with special needs in childcare programs are not likely to be favored unless more people show support for this issue.

In local childcare programs in the state of West Virginia, many parents might not favor inclusion of services for children with special needs unless they see any direct benefit for their child. Also, many parents might not be aware how including services for children with special needs, in local childcare programs might benefit parents, who have children with special needs. In addition, many parents might not even know if there are children with special needs who attend their local childcare program or even if their local program provides these services.

To increase support for inclusion of services for children with special needs in childcare programs, childcare programs have to teach people, who do not have children with special needs, who are not involved with childcare programs, and who do not have children, about the benefits of these services. Childcare programs also have to find ways to get these types of people involved in these issues. When parents who do not have children with special needs, parents who are not involved with childcare programs, and people who do not have children,

are educated and involved in promoting the benefits of inclusion of services for children with special needs, support for this issue should increase.

### Design Setup

Design Issues. McKenzie-Mohr (2000) suggested five steps to an attitude change program. The five steps included uncovering barriers to behaviors, selecting which behaviors to promote based on this information, designing a program to overcome the selected behaviors, testing the program, and then evaluating it. One reason why parents might rate inclusion as low importance was because they did not see any direct benefit to their own child. Parents might only be aware of services such as wheel chair ramps and handicap accessible doors and wonder why they should pay for these services when their child does not use them. Many parents might not be aware that gaining experiences with diverse kinds of children can enrich childcare program experiences for all children. Also, many people might not be aware that interacting with diverse kinds of children and families can be a good form of multicultural learning for parents and children.

Based on McKenzie-Mohr (2000), three possible barriers that might have caused parents not to see the importance of low priority items were a lack of knowledge, a lack of understanding, and a lack of personal relevance. For example, parents who did not have a child with disabilities or have not had some training in providing services for children with disabilities might not understand what types of services these children need. In addition, these parents might not have been aware of some of the services childcare programs already provide to children with special needs, how much these services benefited special needs children, and that some of these services are required by law. Also, parents who

lack experience with disabilities might not understand the benefit of inclusion for their normally developing child. Lessons of multi-culturalism, overcoming adversity, and valuing diversity are made more readily in inclusive classrooms.

The main attitude promoted was an increase in participant support for inclusion of services for children with special needs. One behavior to promote the main attitude was empathy or trying to understand another person's perspective. For example, parents, who did have a child with disabilities, might share how the services their local childcare program provides, for children with special needs, benefited them. If people who did not have children with special needs were able to understand how these services benefited families who have a child with special needs, then they might be likely to rate these services as more important.

Another behavior to help promote the main attitude was increasing participant knowledge. With special needs children, this would involve making participants aware of the services that local childcare programs provide for special needs children and are required to provide by law according to the licensing regulations of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. If participants are made aware of the required services, then they might be likely to rate services for children with special needs as more important.

One other behavior to promote was increasing involvement. People who are highly involved in an issue usually have a high level of commitment to the issue. Also when people were highly involved in an issue, they were likely to present strong arguments in favor of the issue. In addition, they might be likely to spend time and energy to promote the issue to other people.

A presentation given by an expert, a person, who has worked with children with special needs for many years and was familiar with inclusion, along with a group discussion might increase parental support for services for children with special needs. The presentation was based on the presenter's knowledge and experience with children with special needs. The main purpose of the presentation would be to provide them with knowledge of services for children with special needs. The discussion group would be directed to generate support for the importance of the presentation item and perhaps for families to share how the services mentioned in the presentation have benefited them. Some long-term effects of this study could be increased level of involvement and commitment.

Two surveys were used to evaluate if participants increased their support for the presentation topic. A survey, given before any presentation and discussion take place, would be used to collect baseline importance attitudes. Another survey, which would be completed after both the presentation and the discussion were complete, would be compared to the time before survey to assess if the parents increased their support for the presentation issue.

Barlow, Burlingame, and Fuhriman (2000) examined how groups can be used to change and promote behavior in an article entitled, "Therapeutic Application of Groups: From Pratt's Thought Control Classes to Modern Group Psychotherapy." The researchers reviewed past literature on how groups and group psychotherapy can be used as an agent of change. They stated that most of the research was limited and that researchers have combined numerous techniques with group psychotherapy to deal with leader-member interactions and member-member interactions. The researchers stated most of group psychotherapy

involved the interactive-interpersonal model or the cognitive-behavioral model. The latter model involved changing a person's thoughts, feelings, or emotions towards an issue.

The cognitive behavioral model was the underlying model for the overall study. Attitude change was attempted through the presentation of factual information and discussion about the presentation topic. It was anticipated that increasing factual knowledge about the presentation issue would help increase importance rating for the issue. In the group discussion to increase parental support, empathy or trying to understand another person's perspective was a behavior that was encouraged during the group discussion. Parents were encouraged to share how the services mentioned in the presentation have benefited their child. If people can empathize with another person, then they might be more willing to accept a person's stance on an issue. For example if parents who did not have special needs children could understand how services for special needs children have benefited these children, then they might be willing to agree that these services were an important part of childcare programs.

#### Attitude Change

Cognitive and Affective Processes. Eagly, Mladinic, and Otto (1992) examined the cognitive and affective bases of attitudes toward three social policies. The researchers defined cognitive processes as people's beliefs, stereotypes, and opinions. Affective processes were a person's emotions and feelings. The researchers found that cognitive processes contributed more to people's attitudes toward the social policies than affective processes.

When attempting to increase parental support, the parents' cognitive processes were likely to affect whether or not there was an increase in importance toward the presentation issue. The main cognitive processes involved were increasing parental level of knowledge and understanding of how certain services might benefit other families in the childcare program. According to Eagly, Mladinic, and Otto (1992), increasing parental knowledge might increase parental support of the presentation topic if the services mentioned in the presentation were a type of social policy. Eagly, Mladinic, and Otto (1992) stated social policy issues produced highly variable cognitive responses. Many of the services for West Virginia Childcare Centers are required by the licensing regulations of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and could possibly be considered as social policies. For example, inclusion of services for children with special needs in local school programs could be considered a social policy issue. Increasing parental awareness of these regulations might have helped increase support for inclusion of services for children with special needs.

Affective Processes. In an article entitled, "Mood Contagion: The Automatic Transfer of Mood Between People," Neumann and Strack (2000) examined whether a nonintentional mood contagion existed and what processes composed it. The researchers conducted a number of experiments in which the participants believed that they were going to be tested for text comprehension. The participants listened to an emotionally neutral speech that was spoken in a happy or sad voice. The researchers found evidence that listening to another person's emotional expression was enough to possibly cause a similar mood in the

listener. In addition, they found that different affective processes emerged from nonintentional and intentional forms of discussion.

In the discussion group, the parents' attitudes were affected by the emotions of the other people in the group. Affective processes might have caused some unwanted group processes such as a group entrenchment type process, which was when a group of people become divided on an issue and neither side are willing to change their opinions. This process makes people more resistant to persuasion. In the current study, affective processes were likely to affect persuasion and affect attitude change toward the presentation issue, if in the discussion group, parents were sharing the same ideas with the same emotional support behind it. For example, parents, who did not see any direct benefit to their child, from including services for children with special needs, in childcare programs, might have argued to keep these services out of childcare programs, while parents, who have children with special needs might have argued in favor of including these services. The two different viewpoints might have led to group entrenchment. If group entrenchment occurred, there would have been no attitude change because parents would have likely been arguing why their position was right causing each side to become entrenched in their positions. This process might be avoided if the parents who did not have children with special needs and who were not involved in childcare programs focused on understanding how these services have benefited children with special needs.

Lavine and Snyder (1996) examined how perception of message quality affects the functional-matching effect in persuasion. The functional-matching effect were the motivations or feelings that comprise part of an attitude. An

attitude was an enduring evaluation of people, objects, and ideas. An attitude was comprised of three parts, which were an affective (feeling) part, a cognitive (evaluation) part, and a behavioral (action) part. The experimenters conducted two experiments. Participants were divided into groups based on what functions their attitudes served. The two groups were value-expressive and social-adjustive. The term value-expressive meant the attitude that these people expressed was motivated by a personal value. The term social-adjustive meant that people were motivated to express their attitude because of social/situational factors. In experiment 1, the social-adjustive function and the value-expressive function group were presented with either social-adjustive, value-expressive, or both types of persuasive messages. The experimenters used the term functionally relevant messages/communication when the social-adjustive group received social-adjustive persuasive communication and the value-expressive group received value-expressive messages. Participants in both groups had better message quality perception, more positive attitudes, and were persuaded when functionally relevant messages were used rather than non-functionally relevant messages. When social-adjustive and value-expressive messages were mixed, the participants had less positive attitudes, weakened message quality perception, and less favorable thoughts. When functionally non-relevant messages were used the subjects had no positive thoughts, low perception of message quality, and no favorable thoughts after hearing the message. In experiment 2, five days before a presidential election, a different group of participants were exposed to a functionally relevant or non-relevant message encouraging people to vote. The experimenters found that the functionally relevant messages produced more



positive attitude change. The participants' perception of message quality significantly affected whether or not the messages produced positive attitude change. Furthermore, the experimenters found that the participants who had a positive change in their attitude voted in the election.

This article might help to understand participants' attitudes toward certain parts of childcare programs. In this study, functional relevant communication would be matching the presentation content to the knowledge participants lack such as facts and understanding. Presenting information participants already have will cause them to lose interest in the presentation and discussion. The participants might have underlying motivations or feelings toward certain services and might be unaware these feelings were affecting their attitudes, which might have caused persuasion resistance. Knowing participants' underlying feelings toward those services and what knowledge was lacking could lead to better persuasive presentation development.

#### Level of Knowledge and Involvement

Johnson (1994) focused on how prior knowledge about a persuasive issue might interact with the quality of the argument and the level of personal involvement with that issue. This study was conducted with 211 Purdue University undergraduates of which 87 were female and 124 were male who received partial course credit. The independent variables were, Personal Involvement (high vs. low), Argument Quality (strong vs. weak), and Knowledge (high vs. low). The dependent variable was the level of attitude change. There were two control groups that had high or low knowledge of the relevant issue. Johnson found that prior knowledge tended to affect persuasion by interacting

with personal involvement and argument quality. Furthermore, low-knowledge, high-involvement subjects had more positive thoughts to strong arguments than any other group. For low-knowledge, low-involvement participants, Johnson found that they responded about the same to weak and strong arguments. For high-knowledge, low-involvement participants, Johnson found that they had negative thoughts toward weak argument quality. High-knowledge, high-involvement participants responded about the same to weak and strong arguments.

In relation to childcare programs, participants who were highly involved with childcare programs might be more open to new ideas. Participants who were highly involved but had little knowledge of childcare programs were the people who would be mostly likely to seek out training programs, education programs, and be open to new ideas because of possible motivation to learn more about their programs. Participants who were highly involved and had high knowledge of their programs might have been resistant to new training, new education programs, and new ideas. According to the experimenter, when people were highly involved and were very knowledgeable about certain issues, they required substantial and conclusive evidence to change their attitudes. For example, highly involved and highly knowledgeable parents might have required strong conclusive evidence that a new training program was better than a successful one that they have used for years. Participants who have little knowledge of their programs and were rarely involved were the people who were least likely to be attracted or persuaded by new ideas. Strong, high quality, persuasive arguments

might have influenced participants, who had high knowledge about their programs, but were rarely involved, to be more involved.

Furthermore in this study, only content knowledge was used. Johnson suggested more process knowledge should be used in persuasive arguments. According to this article, process knowledge would be problem-solving strategies and content knowledge would be general facts. Also, process knowledge has been shown to induce systematic processing which has been linked to inducing persuasion. In a childcare setting, participants might be influenced by education, training, and new ideas during the presentation. During the discussion, participants might be more persuaded to favor inclusion of services if they are asked to work together to come up with ideas in support of inclusion. Participants might be persuaded by process knowledge because if they are going to spend time to try to solve a problem then it must have some personal relevance at some level to the participants.

Level of Knowledge. Roese and Olson (1992) indicated important attitudes were central, salient, and representative of things that an individual cares deeply about. Also, important attitudes can affect the perception of others. In addition, they were more resistant to persuasion, more stable across time, and more accessible in memory than unimportant attitudes. Also, these attitudes have a direct effect on the individual in some way.

Roese and Olson (1992) examined how repeated attitude expression might affect perceived attitude importance. They believed that accessibility mediated this relationship. The researchers found evidence that memory accessibility affects attitude importance. Specifically, they found attitudes that were repeatedly

expressed were reported sooner than non-repeated attitudes. Even more, the researchers found that repeatedly expressed attitudes were rated as more important than the non-repeated attitudes. Roese and Olson (1992) stated their evidence suggested that perceivers judged attitudes to be more important when they were highly accessible in memory.

Initially, it was unlikely that participants' attitudes toward the presentation topic would have been highly supportive unless the topic was of high personal relevance to them. Roese and Olson (1992) stated that repeated exposure to an attitude position such as issues covered by TV media increases our memory accessibility of that position and we then judge that position to be more important. Many of the parents in Educare might have initially judged the presentation issue in the consumer survey as less important because they might never have been exposed to information about it. For example, the parents might not understand what the service or services mentioned in the presentation were for much less how they benefited other families. Repeated exposure to information about what the services were might cause some parents to become somewhat supportive of them. In addition, repeated exposure to how the services mentioned in the presentation have benefited certain families might also increase parental support for the presentation issue. If participants can understand how the services have benefited certain families in childcare programs, then they might become more personally committed to the issue. If participants become more committed to the issue, then they desire to learn more about it over time, which might further increase their support for the issue in the future.

Level of Involvement. McNeal (1999) examined how specific parental involvement methods, such as parent teacher involvement, affect behavioral and cognitive measures in a student population. Behavioral measures included dropping out and truancy, while cognitive measures included science achievement. McNeal (1999) also identified three distinct elements of social capital, which were form, resources, norms of obligation, and norms of reciprocity. The involvement methods examined included parent-child discussion, PTO involvement, educational support strategies, and monitoring. The researcher found parental involvement affected behavioral measures, but not cognitive measures. Also, McNeal (1999) found that the strongest parental involvement methods were PTO organizations and parent child discussion.

Some participants might have possibly participated in monitoring, educational support strategies and parent-child discussion. Participants' involvement might have been measured by the times they participated in chances for family involvement provided by the local program. Also, it might have been assessed by the number of times they attended training and development sessions.

Parental involvement has been shown to have a positive effect on children's school achievement. McNeal (1999) indicated parental involvement can enhance a child's social development and have other positive effects on their mental development. In addition, parental involvement has been shown to be an important factor in predicting a child's educational outcomes.

Parcel and Dufur (2001) examined the effects of parental school involvement and parental home involvement on students' math and reading achievement. In this study, parental home involvement or family capital included

financial resources, social involvement with the child at home, and the number of parents that were involved with their children. Parental school involvement or school capital referred to how parents were involved with their children's school. The researchers examined students who attended first through eighth grade in both 1992 and 1994. The sample included 2203 students for reading recognition and 2034 students for math achievement. The researchers' findings indicated that school involvement has moderate effects for reading and math achievement. Also, parental home involvement had the strongest effects for reading and math achievement.

In the current study, participant involvement included school involvement. School involvement was of much more interest than home involvement. School involvement questions that were asked included, how long the participant's child has been at their current program, do they attend parent-training sessions, and do they participate in family involvement opportunities at their local childcare program. Other questions included have the participants ever had a child in a childcare program and do participants attend the program with their child.

Participant involvement also included involvement with children with special needs. Questions included do participants have a child with special needs, have they ever worked with children with special needs, and have they ever taken courses that concerned children with special needs. The time of involvement with each of these questions was also a factor in parental involvement.

#### Presenter

Presentation Tactics. Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, Blaauw, and Vermunt (1999) studied the relationship between the influencing agent, the target

of influence, and the choice of using soft or hard tactics. As hard tactics, they included assertiveness, blocking, and sanctions. Soft tactics included rationality, ingratiation, exchange, and coalition. According to the researchers, assertiveness was defined as confronting the target in a direct or intimidating and aroused manner. Rationality was defined as presenting arguments and information to the target. Ingratiation was defined as putting the target in a good humor or making the target think positively about oneself. Exchange was defined as referring to reciprocation of material or immaterial goods. Coalition was defined as seeking support with superiors or peers in an upward appeal. Blocking was defined as hindering the target in carrying out specific actions. Sanctions were defined as threatening the target with or carrying out administrative compulsory measures. The researchers significant finding was evidence that the relationship between the influencing agent and influence target was important in determining what influence tactics to use. In addition, the researchers found that hard tactics appear to be socially undesirable. Even more, they found that hard tactics were used less when the influencing agent liked the target agents. The researchers stated that this implies that people were less likely to use hard tactics when they did not want to jeopardize a good relationship.

For this present experiment, soft tactics were used to present the information to parents. It was important to use soft tactics because childcare programs did not want to in anyway alienate parents from participation in their program. More specifically, the presenter used a form similar to rationality. The presenter presented the presentation to the group. Then, the presenter guided the parent discussion toward generating support for the presentation issue.

Status. Johnson and Ford (1996) examined the effect of legitimate authority and dependence power on evaluations of tactics in a two-party conflict. The researchers used a series of vignettes that describe a disagreement between a subordinate and a superordinate in a large organization and asked participants to evaluate the vignettes on six dimensions. The six dimensions included conflict avoidance, persuasion, threat to leave, coalition with other subordinates, appealing to a higher authority, and appealing to a higher authority in a coalition. The researchers found evidence that people view different dimensions of power as coming from different tactical choices. In addition, they found that people perceived that evaluations of coalition formation, appeal to a higher authority, and the combination of both these tactics were related to legitimacy dimensions. Even more, the researchers found that when people were likely to form a coalition and appeal to a higher authority was when the superordinate was neither endorsed nor authorized. The researchers found that people were likely to appeal to a higher authority when a manager was not authorized. The researchers also found that people accept outcomes when the superordinate authority was highly legitimated.

In the current study, it was important for the presenter to have official status. Johnson and Ford (1996) indicated that when a person has official status and that status was perceived as legitimate that person has power to influence other people in the same group. Since the presenter was a social worker, who has worked with children with special needs and has experience promoting inclusion issues, that person should be perceived as having legitimate authority based on their position and previous experience with the presentation issue. To initially establish their official status, the presenter stated their position before giving the



time before measures. The presenter's ability to persuade the parents, to show increased support for the low priority item that was chosen for this study, depended on whether the parents accepted the legitimacy of the presenter's status.

Crano and Hannula-Bral (1994) examined how majority/minority status of both sources and targets and norm formation affects persuasion. These were examined by asking participants to evaluate a critical item, which they were told was a task that involved either objective or subjective judgments. The researchers found a significant main effect of source status. They found that when the source of the information had a legitimated status, social influence was likely to occur. They also found an interaction effect between the status of the source and the status of the target agent of influence. In addition they found that if the source agent or presenter was part of the same majority or in-group that the target agents were part of, persuasion was likely to occur. If the source agent was part of the minority or out-group, persuasion was not likely to occur.

According to Crano and Hannula-Bral (1994), a person with official status might have persuaded target agents of influence more easily if the target agents perceived the person as similar to them. Some similarities that the parents and the presenter might have shared were that they both can be perceived as having some sort of affiliation with childcare, concern for childcare issues, and that the presenter and most of the parents were adults. The stronger the perception of similarity between the presenter and the participants was then the more likely the parents would have accepted the presenter's official status and the greater the influence the presenter would have had with the parents.

Harris and Walters (1991) attempted to change negative attitudes toward obese people. The participants in this study were undergraduate psychology students at an American university. Half of the participants read an interview with a high status researcher. One third of the subjects read one of three descriptions describing three different high status obese individuals. Another third of the individuals read interviews with three overweight individuals, which included a male undergraduate, a female undergraduate, and an alumna. The researchers found that the students did not change their attitudes toward obese people.

In their article, Harris and Walters (1991) did not allow the participants to personally interact with the high status obese individuals. As a result, the high status obese individuals' power to influence might have been limited. Another reason why Harris and Walters (1991) failed to change the participants' attitudes was because the high status obese individuals were perceived as dissimilar from the participants. One reason for the perceived dissimilarity between the participants and the high status obese individuals might have been because the participants might have had strong negative stereotypes and images about what it is like to be an obese person. In the current study, the presenter was interacting personally with the parents by giving the presentation and guiding the group discussion. The presenter's status should be legitimated as a result of their work with children with special needs. The legitimacy of the presenter's status might have been reinforced if the presenter was perceived as similar to the group of parents as well as if they interacted personally with the parents.

### Group Discussion

Discussion vs. Individual Interview. Seal, Bogart, and Ehrhardt (1998) examined the empirical value of focus groups and interviews in research. Overall, the researchers found that both the interview and focus group yielded similar conclusions. The researchers stated the more appropriate question to ask considering the research question and data was, “Was the focus group or individual interview more appropriate to use?” It was suggested the group setting might have been best used to share opinions and generate thought about a topic while an interview was more appropriate for generating personal opinions.

A group discussion was used after the persuasive presentation. The purpose of this group was to generate ideas in support of the issue presented in the presentation. A group presentation and discussion might have been more effective than individual interview because it could have generated more thought and attitude sharing about important childcare issues. In addition, a group discussion was more appropriate because childcare issues did not affect one single person they affect many people. Furthermore, one of the goals of this study was to see how a group of people’s attitudes were changed not how a single person’s attitude was changed.

Simultaneous Issue Consideration. Weingart, Bennett, and Brett (1993) conducted two studies in which they examined the effects of issue consideration and motivational orientation on the discussion process and decision-making ability of 4-person groups participating in a multi-issue discussion. This was a two by two design experiment, which included issue consideration (simultaneous vs. sequential) and motivational orientation (cooperative vs. individualistic).

Simultaneous issue consideration was the processing of information about an issue from mental wholes. Sequential issue consideration was the processing of information about an issue from serial or sequential parts. In both studies, the participants were thirty-six M.B.A. students. The researchers found, in study 1, that simultaneous issue considering, cooperative oriented groups made higher quality decisions than sequential issue considering, individualistic groups. In study 2, the researchers found that when discussing issues, simultaneous issue considering groups understood their members' priorities better and shared more information.

The parents were guided in the discussion toward simultaneous consideration of the presentation issue. To accomplish this, the presenter asked parents to consider the overall benefits of having the services mentioned in the presentation issue included in their local program, before beginning the discussion. This might have helped prevent parents from considering the presentation issue in a serial or sequential order way. If parents were to consider the presentation issue in a serial order way, then the discussion was likely to take longer and most likely would not have reached a definitive conclusion. Weingart, Bennett, and Brett (1993) suggested simultaneous consideration of the issue led to greater understanding of priorities and preferences among group members and less arguments about specific positions. This might have occurred because the issue might have been made less complex and easier to understand. Even more, this might have occurred because group members were given less of a chance to argue about specific points of the issue.

Discussion Setup. Mannix, Thompson, and Bazerman (1989) studied the effects of decision rule (majority vs. unanimous), power balance (equal vs. unequal), and issue agenda (sequential vs. package) on a mixed-motive decision-making group. The researchers define mixed-motive perspective as a process in which three or more persons make decisions to resolve conflicting preferences. According to the researchers, sequential agendas were agendas in which the three issues were discussed separately. Also, package agendas were agendas in which the three issues were discussed together. Equal power balance means that all group members have equal power in the group. Unequal power balance means that all group members did not have equal power in the group. Mannix, Thompson, and Bazerman (1989) found that groups using sequential agendas achieved less beneficial agreements than groups using package agendas. Also, they found that sequential agenda/majority rule groups had less beneficial agreements than package agenda/majority rule groups, sequential agenda/unanimous rule groups, and package agenda/unanimous rule groups. The researchers speculated that this occurred with the sequential agenda/majority rule group because the group members expended less effort trying to find a mutually beneficial, integrative solution.

The researchers suggested for establishing a group discussion, the task or issue to be accomplished must be decided first before deciding on any procedures for the group. In addition, all negotiators must decide if the decision is important enough to take the time and effort to lead the group to an integrative, mutually beneficial decision. Also, the researchers suggested having a group follow an

agenda for a discussion, which could cause detrimental effects to the group decision-making process such as disputes over minor points of the main issue.

For this study, there was no agenda for the discussion. Also, parents were encouraged to come up with some overall benefits of including the services in the presentation issue in their local program. This might have led to simultaneous discussion of the presentation issue. Mannix, Thompson, and Bazerman (1989) suggested simultaneous discussion of issues allowed group members to learn about the other members' preferences. Simultaneous discussion of the presentation issue might have encouraged more overall sharing of ideas among parents. The increased sharing of information might lead to cooperation. Cooperation might lead to more understanding of other group members' perspective. As a result, this understanding might have helped increase support for the presentation issue. In addition, simultaneous consideration of the issue might help prevent parents from getting in major arguments over minor points with the main issue. These disagreements over minor issue points might lead to unwanted processes such as entrenchment.

Minority vs. Majority. Kenworthy and Miller (2001) manipulated the effects of the number of people in a group in order to see what effects it had on the majority and minority members in a group. The experimenters found that when they decreased the number of people in both the minority and majority group the remaining members begin to view this as a threat. According to the researchers, this was viewed as a threat because the groups felt they were losing support for their position. When this happened, the group members became defensive or displayed a negative affect. The researcher's stated this negative

affect could have been alleviated if one perceived that their opinion was representative of the majority.

For the discussion group, parents might take different positions. The number of people in the discussion might have an effect on the level of parental attitude change. Some parents might change their opinions by simply noticing that a large number of parents support the issue. Kenworthy and Miller (2001) speculated that seeing a majority of people support an issue has an effect on people. This however might have caused a strategic bias because even though some parents might have gone along with the majority they might not have necessarily agreed with the majority.

Argumentativeness. Levine and Badger (1993) examined how argumentativeness affects persuasion. The researchers examine characteristics of the receivers that make them resistant or susceptible to persuasive appeals. They divided the participants into two groups and asked each group to develop and deliver a persuasive speech on a topic of their choice in front of the other members. All of the participants completed the Argumentativeness Scale and an opinion survey, which contained items about the in-group presentation. Participants were classified as high or low argumentative individuals based on their responses to the Argumentativeness Scale. Later in the study, the participants made persuasive speeches and listened to them from several different sources. After listening to the speeches, participants completed the opinion survey a second time. The researchers hypothesized that low argumentative individuals would report more attitude change in the direction of the message recommendations than high trait argumentatives. The researchers found that high

trait argumentative individuals experienced more attitude change in favor of the message. It might be that high trait argumentative people are able to consider their opinions more when discussing issues intensely.

In discussion groups, people tend to argue strongly for their point. It was hoped for the current study that people would have been arguing in favor of inclusion of services for children with special needs. To start the discussion, the presenter asked the parents to come up with some overall benefits as to why the services mentioned in the presentation should be included in childcare programs. From this cue, it was hoped parents would have argued as to why the presentation issue was important. By coming up with these overall benefits, parents should become more supportive of the presentation issue although some parents could need intense discussion of the issue to re-examine their opinions. For the final actual study, it was hoped parents would discuss the issue and find ways to generate support for the presentation issue.

#### Time Before and Time After Measures

Private vs. Public. Prislín, Limbert, and Bauer (2000) examined, in two studies, the effect of the loss of the majority position and the effect of the gain of majority position on groups. In both studies, the experimenters found that loss of majority position can create strong disintegrative forces such as decreased perception of similarity, decreased positive interaction expectancies, and increased negative interaction expectancies. According to the researchers, achieving the majority position does not initially appear to cause any changes in opinion toward the group. In addition, Prislín, Limbert, and Bauer (2000) suggested gaining the majority position did increase the significance or



importance of the issue and decreased the group's tolerance for dissenting opinions.

An interesting aspect about Prislin, Limbert, and Bauer (2000) was their procedure. In their first study, the participants filled out a 15-item questionnaire and discussed their answers publicly in a group with other people. In the second study, groups of four people participated in a simulated mock political campaign. One participant acted as the candidate and the others as voters. The candidate was to state their position publicly to the group on a number of issues. The voters one by one publicly stated their agreement or disagreement with the candidate's position on each issue. Group entrenchment might have affected the results of this study due to the fact that people were asked to state their opinions publicly. Group entrenchment was a process that occurred when two people in a group state their opinions publicly on an issue and they keep to their positions so strongly that thinking narrows or converges.

For this study, it was important that opinions be stated privately on the questionnaire before beginning the group discussion because asking the parents to state their opinions publicly before the presentation and then discuss their issue in a group might have led to group entrenchment. Entrenchment might occur because people tend to stick to their opinions when they state them publicly possibly to avoid feelings of embarrassment. For this study, it was best to administer time before and time after survey measures privately so as to avoid processes such as group entrenchment. In later studies, the sleeper effect might occur if attitude measurements were taken on the same sample used for this study.

The sleeper effect might occur because people might process certain information better over time.

Survey Anchors. Wegener, Petty, Detweiler-Bedell, and Jarvis (2001) examined the effects of moderate and extreme anchors on people's judgments. The researchers believed for any given question people have a range of plausible answers. Wegener, Petty, Detweiler-Bedell, and Jarvis (2001) refer to anchors as defined numerical points on a rating scale. Also according to them, anchoring effects were numerical judgments that were influenced by consideration of the plausibility of the anchors. When the anchors or answers for a rating scale lie outside a person's range of plausible answers for a question, people adjust their answers or estimates for that scale until they reach the nearest boundary of their range. This view was called the anchor-and-adjust view and it was one of many explanations for anchoring effects. The researchers disagreed with this view because this view stated that extreme anchors affected judgment more than moderate anchors. Wegener, Petty, Detweiler-Bedell, and Jarvis (2001) believed that moderate anchors would affect judgment more than extreme anchors.

Wegener, Petty, Detweiler-Bedell, and Jarvis (2001) found moderate anchors, or midpoints, or points close to the middle, affected judgment more than extreme anchors. This conflicted with the anchor-and-adjust view. The researchers speculated moderate anchors might have caused people to search for evidence of the plausibility of their position. Also, the researchers hypothesized a survey with only moderate anchors might have gotten people to consider the plausibility of their opinions more than a survey with only extreme anchors.

In this study whenever a rating scale was involved on either of the two surveys, the anchors on the scale were defined and received a numerical value of 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. Points 1 and 5 were intended to be the extreme anchors with 2, 3, and 4 being the moderate anchors. A five point scale might allow for easier attitude evaluation. Rating scales are used to help researchers easily define and evaluate attitudes among large samples. In addition, five point rating scales are used because they allow participants a range of attitudes falling from none to moderate to extremely, which usually encompasses all levels of attitude in some form. For example, participants might rate certain attitudes that are over the level of the closest extreme end point by rating their attitude as the closest extreme end point.

Study Format and Literature Summary. The two main processes that are hypothesized to affect attitude change in this study were level of involvement and level of knowledge. The more involvement and the more knowledge participants have in an issue the more likely they were to be supportive of the issue. In this study, the parents who were highly involved in their local programs were the parents hypothesized to be persuaded by the presentation issue. This might have occurred because they had a strong commitment to their program and a desire to learn more about their program and improve it in any possible way.

A person's level of knowledge about the presentation issue was also likely to affect attitude change. Parents in this study might have already had some experiences that have allowed them to gain knowledge about the presentation issue. Parents who had high knowledge about the presentation issue might have been harder to persuade than parents who had low knowledge. This might have

occurred because these people were apathetic about their program and did not care if these services were included or not included.

In addition to this, there might have been some type of interaction between level of involvement and level of knowledge. Having high knowledge about the presentation issue seemed to limit a person's persuadability no matter if they were highly involved in the issue or not highly involved. The involvement that was important in this study was parental involvement in their local childcare program. High knowledge and high involvement parents might not have shown attitude change because they might already have a high level of support for the presentation issue. High knowledge and low involvement parents might have been hard to persuade because they don't care whether these services were in their program or not. Low knowledge might have increased high involvement parents' persuadability because they might have had a desire to learn more about something that could improve their program. Having low knowledge about the presentation issue might have made it tougher to persuade low involvement parents because they were not as committed to their program as high involvement parents.

In this study, the presentation was used to increase general knowledge about the presentation issue services for children with special needs. In the discussion group, parents were to come up with overall ideas supporting the presentation issue. The goal here was to get a majority of people stating ideas in favor of support of the presentation issue. If there was a majority showing support for the issue, then other participants were likely to support it as well. During the discussion, people were encouraged to share how services mentioned

in the presentation had benefited them. The goal here was to create some type of understanding or perspective of how these services had benefited other children and families. If the other participants can understand the perspective of how important these services are to the families and children that have benefited from them, then they might show support for the issue.

#### Hypothesis 1

The general hypothesis of the study is that a presentation and group discussion will increase level of importance for inclusion of services in a local childcare program.

#### Hypothesis 2

Childcare parents who are highly involved in their local programs are expected to show greater endorsement than low involvement parents.

#### Hypothesis 3

Parents who have knowledge will show a greater level of importance rating for the post-test level of importance items.

#### Hypothesis 4

There should be an interaction in this study between level of involvement and level of knowledge.

A. High knowledge and high involvement participants are likely to be unaffected by persuasion.

B. Low knowledge and high involvement participants should be affected by persuasion.

C. High knowledge and low involvement participants should be affected by persuasion.

D. Low involvement and low knowledge participants are likely to be unaffected by persuasion.

## Chapter 2

### Method

#### Permission

Written permission to conduct this study at the National Youth Sports Camp at Bluefield State College was obtained from the program director. The purpose of the experiment was discussed with the program director in a face-to-face meeting with the director. The director agreed to let the experiment take place July 7, 2003. Before conducting the presentation, the presenter told the consumers that there was a presentation and discussion about services for children with special needs about to be conducted. The presenter indicated those that wanted to stay were welcome and those who wanted to leave could.

#### Participants

The sample consisted of a group of parents from the McDowell and Mercer County area, whose children were participating in a sports camp at Bluefield State College. It was determined that it was best to conduct the presentation, discussion, and surveys at this site in order to include parents who currently have children in a childcare program, parents who previously had a child in a childcare program, and parents who have never had a child in a childcare program. At this sports camp, parents varied in age from 24 to 42. The experiment was conducted at a parent meeting for the National Youth Sports Camp at Bluefield State College on July 7, 2003. There were a total of 18 people in this sample.

### Materials

The presenter developed the persuasive presentation based on the chosen presentation issue of inclusion of services for children with special needs in childcare programs. A survey questionnaire was developed for the pre- and post-tests. The pre-test was composed of 45 items while the post-test was composed of 24 items.

### Design and Procedure

Presentation Topic. The topic chosen for this study was inclusion of services for children with special needs in childcare programs. This topic was chosen because it was believed a majority of the parents would have the least knowledge and least experience with this topic. In addition, it was believed the majority of parents would not rate this issue as important unless they were directly affected in some way by special needs services such as having some type of disability themselves or interacting in some way with people who have some type of disability.

Presenter. The presenter was a social worker who has worked with children with special needs for the past ten years and has promoted the issue of inclusion of services for children with special needs for the past five years. The presenter has a Masters Degree in Social Work and has worked exclusively with children with special needs for the majority of her career. To avoid experimenter bias, it was determined that the presenter will conduct the presentation, lead the discussion, and collect the pre- and post-test surveys. Before giving the pre-test survey, the presenter identified that they have worked with children with special



needs, how long she has worked with children with special needs for, and her level of schooling. This gave the presenter official status.

Persuasive Presentation. The presenter developed the persuasive presentation. The presenter based the presentation on general information about services for children with special needs in West Virginia and her personal knowledge of services for children with special needs. The presentation was conducted after the participants completed a questionnaire that measured their pre-presentation attitudes toward services for children with special needs.

Pre- and Post-Tests. Both surveys have a number in the top right hand corner. Each participant was given a pre- and a post-test survey. This was to allow comparison of any potential attitude change. Before filling out the post-test survey, the presenter reminded the participants to make sure that they had the same numbered pre- and post-test. The participants received the pre-test survey and the post- test survey at the same time, which occurred when they arrived in the for the presentation. The post-test was in a sealed envelope with the words “DO NOT OPEN UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO” written across it. The presenter repeated the same instructions written on the envelope. Both of these processes were done to prevent the parents from filling out the post-test survey before the presentation and group discussion took place. The pre-test surveys were collected after parents made sure they had received the same number. The presenter asked if everyone had received the same number pre-test and post-test. All participants identified they had and the presenter stated that before beginning the post-test all pre-test surveys needed to be collected. All eighteen surveys were collected and accounted for.

The pre-test was a survey that measured parental attitudes toward the critical item before the presentation and discussion (see Appendix A). Participants completed it before the persuasive presentation was conducted. The presenter told participants to complete the pre-test survey immediately once they had received both surveys. The pre-test contained questions asking about level of knowledge level of importance, level of involvement, and questions to help describe the sample.

The post-test survey was a survey that the participants completed after a group discussion about the presentation topic. The survey measured parental attitude toward the presentation topic after the persuasive presentation and group discussion were completed (see Appendix B). The survey contained items asking about level of involvement, level of knowledge, and level of importance. The level of involvement, level of knowledge, and level of importance items were worded the same in both the pre-test and post-test. The order of the importance, knowledge, and involvement items was changed from pre-test to post-test.

Discussion Group. The discussion group was conducted after the persuasive presentation. The discussion was about services for children with special needs. The presenter guided the discussion in order to get the parents to be supportive of the issue by saying, “What are some overall reasons to include services for disabled children in you local program?” Once the discussion began, the parents started to brainstorm and come up with ideas as to why services for children with special needs was important. The parents stated their ideas publicly to the presenter. The presenter kept parents on the topic by asking parents specifically as to why they thought the issue was important and by reviewing or

repeating some of the parents' previous statements as to why inclusion of services for children with special needs in childcare programs was important.

Determining Attitude Change. Attitude change was determined by comparing the time before survey with the time after survey. Each participant filled out the same numbered time before survey and the same numbered time after survey, which allowed there to be a comparison of attitude change across the two measures. Level of involvement included the sum of all participant responses for the five involvement pre-test items. The items are listed below:

<b>Pre-Test Involvement Items</b>
41. With your current childcare program.
42. With your previous childcare program.
43. With any other childcare program.
44. Children with special needs.
45. Involvement with your child's education.

Level of knowledge included all nine pre-test items and all nine post-test items.

<b>Pre-Test Level of Knowledge Items</b>
32. Children with special needs
33. Services provided for children with special needs by your local childcare programs
34. Childcare issues in general.
35. Services your local childcare programs are required to provide by law.

36. How services for children with special needs have benefited other families in your local childcare programs.
37. Other services your local childcare programs provide.
38. What these other services are used for.
39. The activities and education your local childcare programs provide.
40. Services for children with special needs in general.

<b>Post-Test Level of Knowledge Items</b>
11. Children with special needs.
12. Services provided for children with special needs by local childcare programs.
13. Childcare issues in general.
14. Other services local childcare programs provide.
15. What these other services are use for.
16. How services for children with special needs have benefited families in local childcare programs.
17. The activities and education local childcare programs provide.
18. Services your local childcare programs are required to provide by law.
19. Services for special needs children in general.

Level of importance included all ten post-test level of importance items.

<b>Post-Test Level of Importance Items</b>
1. Opportunities for family involvement.
2. Your child’s schedule.
3. Child development parent training.
4. Services for children with special needs.
5. The hours the program is open.
6. Your child having experience with children with special needs.
7. Your child gaining experience interacting with diverse kinds of children (Children with varying levels of ability and race.)

8. Children with special needs, having experiences in a normal classroom of same age children.
9. Knowing what services, for children with special needs, your local childcare programs provide.
10. Families having experiences interacting with families of children with special needs.

## Chapter 3

### Results

Statistical Methods. The dependent variable of interest was post-test level of importance. Level of involvement and level of knowledge were independent variables that were hypothesized to affect persuasion or change attitudes. A paired samples t-test was used to assess the change in level of importance between pre- and post-test. For this procedure, the pre-test level of importance item responses for all participants were added together under a single group heading of before importance. Also, all post-test level of importance item responses for all participants were added together under a single group heading of after importance.

A two-way analysis of variance was used to assess the effects of level of involvement and level of knowledge on persuasion for post-test level of importance. In addition, the two-way analysis of variance was used to assess the effects of any interactions on persuasion of the post-test level of importance items. For the two-way analysis of variance, all pre-test involvement item responses for all participants were summed under a single group heading of involvement. Also, all pre-test and post-test knowledge item responses for all participants were summed under a single group heading of knowledge. All involvement and knowledge items were broken down into groups using the range. The range for involvement was from 2 to 21. The range for knowledge was from 28 to 72.

Low and high levels of involvement and knowledge were determined by using the midpoints of each group range. The midpoint for level of involvement

was determined to be 11.5. Any score falling at or below 11 was determined to be a low level of involvement and was recoded as 1 and any score that was 12 or greater was determined to be a high level of involvement and was recoded as 2. The scores of 1 and 2 for involvement were placed under a single heading of group involvement. The range for level of knowledge was 28 to 72. The midpoint for group knowledge was determined to be 50. Scores less than 50 were considered to be a low level of knowledge and were recoded as 1 and scores greater than 50 were considered to be a high level of knowledge and were recoded as 2. The scores of 1 and 2 for knowledge were placed under a single heading of group knowledge. In the two-way analysis of variance, the group involvement and knowledge were used as fixed factors and after importance was used as the dependent variable.

Multiple regression was used to determine if post-test level of knowledge was a predictor of post-test level of importance. It was also used to determine if pre-test level of involvement was a predictor of post-test level of importance. The inter-item reliability of both surveys was determined using coefficient alpha correlation. The results from pre- and post-test survey 32 were not included in any data analysis because the participant failed to completely fill out the pre- and post-test surveys. Seventeen out of the eighteen surveys were included in the data analysis.

Paired Samples T Test. The t-test showed a significant increase from the pre-group importance mean to the post-group importance mean. The increase in the mean from pre- to post-test was 2.3529. In SPSS in the paired samples t-test,

the negative sign for the mean difference indicated a positive change. This difference was significant at the .05-level (See Table 1).



Table 1

Paired Samples T-Test: Before Importance Compared with After Importance

		Paired Differences								
							95% Confidence Interval			
Pairs	Before Mean	After Mean	Mean Difference	STD Dev.	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig	
Before & After	45.4706	47.8325	-2.3529	4.41505	-4.6229	-.0829	-2.197	16	.043	

Two-Way Analysis of Variance: Range Midpoint. The range midpoint was used to determine high and low group involvement and group knowledge. The analysis of variance did not indicate that the variables group knowledge and group involvement were significant predictors of post-test level of importance. There was evidence to suggest the interaction variable of group involvement and group knowledge was a predictor of level of importance. The p-value for the interaction of group knowledge and group involvement was significant at the .3 - level. Levene's statistic was not significant which indicated homogeneity of variance. This meant that the group involvement and group knowledge distributions were normally distributed when each was compared with after importance (See Table 2). The INVOL variable distribution appeared somewhat normally distributed (Insert Figure 1 Here). The KNOW variable distribution also appeared somewhat normally distributed (Insert Figure 2 Here).

Table 2

Two Way Analysis of Variance: Range Midpoint

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-VALUE	PARTIAL ETA SQUARED
Corrected Model	19.637	3	6.546	.704	.566	.140
Intercept	21186.992	1	21186.992	2279.428	.000	.994
Group Involvement	.388	1	.388	.042	.841	.003
Group Knowledge	.388	1	.388	.042	.841	.003
Group Involvement & Group Knowledge Interaction	14.889	1	14.889	1.603	.228	.110
Error	120.833	13	9.265			
Total	39021.000	17				
Corrected Total	140.471	16				

## Levene's Homogeneity of Variance Test

F	Df1	df2	P-value
1.172	3	13	.358

Two-Way Analysis of Variance: Median as the Midpoint. For this two-way analysis of variance, high and low groups for group involvement and group knowledge were determined using the median. The KNOW variable median was 54. The INVOL variable median was 12.5. The individual variables of group involvement and group knowledge had p-values of .698. These p-values were not significant at the .05-level, which suggested they were not predictors of after importance. The group involvement and group knowledge interaction had a p-value of .206, which was not significant at the .05-level. This suggested the interaction was not a significant predictor of after importance. The two-way analysis of variance homogeneity of variance test had a p-value of .402, which was not significant at the .05-level. This suggested the variance for group involvement, group knowledge, and after importance was homogeneous (See Table 3).

Table 3

Two Way Analysis of Variance: Median as the Midpoint

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-VALUE	PARTIAL ETA SQUARED
Corrected Model	25.899	3	8.633	.980	.432	.184
Intercept	21231.646	1	21231.646	2409.077	.000	.995
Group Involvement	1.383	1	1.383	.157	.698	.012
Group Knowledge	1.383	1	1.383	.157	.698	.012
Group Involvement & Group Knowledge Interaction	15.646	1	15.646	1.775	.206	.120
Error	114.571	13	8.813			
Total	39021.000	17				
Corrected Total	140.471	16				

## Levene's Homogeneity of Variance Test

F	df1	df2	P-value
1.053	3	13	.402

Inter-Item Reliability. The alpha coefficient for items 22 to 45 on the pre-test was .8251. The standardized item alpha, for items 22 to 45 on the pre-test, was .7502. Both the alpha coefficient and the standardized item alpha indicated high inter-item reliability, for items 22 to 45 on the pre-test. For the pre-test, items 22 to 45, the between-groups variance sum of squares was 45.5379. Also, for the pre-test, items 22 to 45, the within-group variance sum of squares was 474.4583 (See Table 4). This suggested that involvement items, knowledge items, and importance items covered some similar underlying factor.

Table 4  
Pre-Test Inter-Item Reliability

Item	Means	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Max/Min	Variance
Means	3.5038	1.8182	4.9091	3.0909	2.7000	1.1513
Variances	.9530	.0909	2.5636	2.4727	28.2000	.4531
N of cases = 11.0						

Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Square	F	Prob.
Between People	45.5379	10	4.5538		
Within People	474.4583	253	1.8753		
Between Measures	291.2689	23	12.6639	15.8999	.0000
Residual	183.1894	230	.7965		
Total	519.9962	263	1.9772		

Grand Mean = 3.5038

Reliability Coefficients = 24 items

Alpha = .8251

Standardized Item Alpha = .7502

The alpha coefficient for the entire post-test was .8662. The standardized item alpha was .8218. Both the alpha coefficient and standardized item alpha indicated a high degree of reliability for the post-test. For the post-test, the between-groups variance sum of squares was 54.9094. The total within-group variance sum of squares, for the post-test, was 192.1522. The high alpha coefficients for the pre-test and post-test importance, knowledge, and involvement items indicated these items all measured the same underlying factor (See Table 5).



Table 5  
Post-Test Inter-Item Reliability

Item	Means	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Max/Min	Variance
Means	3.7572	2.6667	4.9167	2.2500	1.8438	.7278
Variances	.8561	.0833	2.0833	2.0000	25.0000	.3738
N of cases = 12.0						

Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Square	F	Prob.
Between People	54.9094	11	4.9918		
Within People	353.8261	264	1.3403		
Between Measures	192.1522	22	8.7342	13.0737	.0000
Residual	161.6739	242	.6681		
Total	408.7355	275	1.4863		

Grand Mean = 3.7572

Reliability Coefficients = 23 items

Alpha = .8662

Standardized Item Alpha = .8218

Inter-Item Reliability: Involvement, Knowledge, and Importance.

The alpha coefficient for involvement items was .8397. The standardized alpha coefficient for involvement items was .8501 (See Table 6). The alpha coefficient for knowledge was .9054. The standardized alpha coefficient for knowledge was .9051 (See Table 7). The alpha coefficient for importance was .7795. The standardized alpha coefficient for importance was .7460 (See Table 8). These high alpha coefficients suggested that involvement items, knowledge items, and importance items were each separately measuring some underlying factor. The involvement alpha and knowledge alpha both came out higher than the pre-test alpha. This might have occurred because the knowledge items and involvement items covered some separate factors that were unable to be detected when knowledge items and involvement items were included in pre-test reliability. The importance alpha came out lower than the pre-test alpha. This might have occurred because the factor that importance items covered was the same factor covered by the pre-test.

Table 6  
Inter-Item Reliability: Involvement

Item	Means	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Max/Min	Variance
Means	2.6286	2.0714	3.9286	1.8571	1.8966	.5520
Variances	1.8066	1.4560	2.1154	.6593	1.4528	.0824
N of cases = 14.0						

Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Square	F
Between People	71.5429	13	5.5033	
Within People	76.8000	56	1.3714	
Between Measures	30.9143	04	7.7286	8.7584
Residual	45.8857	52	.8824	
Total	148.3429	69	2.1499	

Grand Mean = 2.6286

Reliability Coefficients = 5 items

Alpha = .8397

Standardized Item Alpha = .8501

Table 7

Inter-Item Reliability: Knowledge

Item	Means	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Max/Min	Variance
Means	2.8519	2.4667	3.8000	1.3333	1.5405	.1642
Variances	1.0741	.6381	1.7143	1.0762	2.6866	.1405
N of cases = 15.0						

## Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Square	F
Between People	77.0370	14	5.5026	
Within People	78.0000	120	.6500	
Between Measures	19.7037	08	2.4630	4.7319
Residual	58.2963	112	.5205	
Total	155.0370	134	1.1570	

Grand Mean = 2.8519

Reliability Coefficients = .09 items

Alpha = .9054

Standardized Item Alpha = .9051

Table 8  
Inter-Item Reliability: Importance

Item	Means	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Max/Min	Variance
Means	4.6467	4.4000	4.9333	.5333	1.1212	.0297
Variances	.3448	.0667	.5524	.4857	8.2857	.0242
N of cases = 15.0						

Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Square	F
Between People	16.1733	14	1.1552	
Within People	36.1000	135	.2674	
Between Measures	4.0067	9	.4452	
Residual	32.0933	126	.2547	1.7478
Total	52.2733	149	.3508	

Grand Mean = 4.6467

Reliability Coefficients = 10 items

Alpha = .7795

Standardized Item Alpha = .7460

Frequencies. In the pre-test level of importance items, fifteen out of seventeen participants responded that opportunities for family involvement in local childcare programs were extremely important services. Thirteen out of seventeen participants responded that their child's schedule in a childcare program was extremely important. Eleven out of sixteen participants responded that child development parent training was an extremely important service. Fifteen out of seventeen participants responded that services for children with special needs was extremely important. Twelve out of seventeen participants responded that children with special needs, having experiences in a normal classroom of same age children was extremely important to childcare programs. Ten out of seventeen participants responded that their child having experience with children with special needs was extremely important. Twelve out of seventeen participants responded that their child gaining experience interacting with diverse kinds of children was extremely important. Sixteen out of seventeen participants responded the hours the program was open was somewhat to extremely important. Nine out of sixteen participants responded that knowing what services, for children with special needs, your local childcare programs provide was extremely important. Eleven out of seventeen participants responded that families having experiences interacting with families of children with special needs was moderately or somewhat important. "Child development parent

training” and “Knowing what services, for children with special needs, your local childcare programs provide” each had one missing response (See Appendix C).

In the post-test level of importance items, sixteen out of seventeen participants responded that “Opportunities for family involvement” was extremely important. Fourteen out of seventeen participants responded that their “Child’s schedule” in local childcare programs was extremely important. Fifteen out of seventeen participants responded that child development parent training was extremely important. Seventeen out of seventeen participants responded that services for children with special needs was extremely important. Twelve out of seventeen participants responded that the “Hours a childcare program” were open was extremely important. Thirteen out of seventeen participants responded that their “Child having experience with children with special needs” was extremely important. Fifteen out of seventeen participants responded that their “Child gaining experience interacting with diverse kinds of children” was extremely important. Thirteen out of seventeen participants responded that “Children with special needs, having experiences in a normal classroom of same age children” was extremely important. Thirteen out of seventeen participants responded that “Knowing what services, for children with special needs, your local childcare programs provide” was extremely important. Thirteen out of seventeen participants responded that “Families having experiences interacting with families of children with special needs” was extremely important (See Appendix D).

For the pre-test level of knowledge items, twelve out of seventeen parents responded that they know somewhat or very well about children with special needs. Fourteen out of seventeen participants responded that they knew very little

or knew an average amount about services provided for children with special needs by your local childcare programs. Nine out of fifteen parents reported that they knew somewhat or knew very well about childcare issues in general. Ten out of seventeen participants reported that they did not know at all, know very little, or know somewhat about services your local childcare programs are required to provide by law. Nine out of seventeen parents responded that they did not know at all or know very little about “How services for children with special needs have benefited other families in your local childcare programs?” Ten out of seventeen participants responded that they know about average or know somewhat about other services your local childcare programs provide. Nine out of seventeen participants responded that they know about average or know somewhat about what these other services are used for. Ten out of seventeen participants responded that they know about average or know somewhat about the activities and education your local childcare programs provide. Eight out of seventeen parents responded that they do not know at all or know very little about services for children with special needs in general. The only item with missing responses was “Childcare Issues in General.” There were two missing responses from this item (See Appendix E).

In the post-test level of knowledge frequencies, twelve out of seventeen participants responded that they knew very little to an average amount about children with special needs. Ten out of seventeen participants responded that they knew very little to an average amount about services provided for children with special needs by local childcare programs. Eight out of sixteen participants responded that they knew an average amount about childcare issues in general.



Ten out of seventeen participants responded that they knew an average amount to knew very well about services your local childcare programs are required to provide by law. Eleven out of seventeen participants responded that they knew very little to an average amount about “How services for children with special needs have benefited other families in your local childcare programs.” Thirteen out of seventeen participants responded they knew very little to an average amount about “Other services your local childcare programs provide.” Fourteen out of seventeen participants responded that they knew very little to an average amount about “What these other services are used for.” Ten out of seventeen participants responded they knew very little to an average amount about “The activities and education your local childcare programs provide.” Ten out of seventeen participants responded they knew very little to an average amount about “Services for special needs children in general.” The only item with a missing response was “Childcare issues in general” and it had one missing response (See Appendix F).

## Chapter 4

### Discussion

There was evidence to suggest that attitude change did occur in this study. There was an increase from the pre- to post-test importance mean of 2.3529. This difference has a p-value of .043, which was significant at the .05-level (See Table 1). There was evidence to suggest that the interaction of group involvement and group knowledge was a predictor of post-test importance. In the two-way analysis of variance using the range midpoint to determine high and low groups, the interaction of group knowledge and group involvement had a p-value of .228, which was not significant at the .05-level. This indicated that the interaction was not a significant predictor of post-test importance. The variables of group involvement and group knowledge were found not to be significant predictors of post-test importance. Both of the individual variables of group involvement and group knowledge had p-values of .841, which were not significant at the .05 level. The homogeneity of variance test was found to be non-significant at the .05-level. This did not suggest a violation of the homoscedasticity principle, which meant that the variances for after importance, group involvement, group knowledge, and any interaction of group knowledge and group involvement, were normally distributed (See Table 2). The two-way analysis of variance was the best statistical method to determine if group knowledge, group involvement, and the

interaction of group involvement/group knowledge were predictors of after importance.

There might have been a loss of data when the presenter told the participants that those who wanted to stay were welcome and those who wanted to leave could leave. This might have caused a loss of low involvement and low knowledge participants. Also, knowledge and involvement might not have been the best way to define the independent variables. A factor analysis might have been used to determine more appropriate groups. The two-way analysis of variance was appropriate to use because it was necessary to assess the effects of group knowledge and group involvement on group importance.

The two-way analysis of variance using the median as the midpoint showed group knowledge and group involvement variables were non-significant. The group knowledge and group involvement interaction variable was non-significant. The homogeneity of variance test had a p-value of .402, which was not significant at the .05-level. This was not a violation of the homoscedasticity or normality principle, which meant that the variance for after importance was normally distributed for group involvement, group knowledge, and the group involvement/group knowledge interaction (See Table 3). This suggested that the two-analysis of variance was the best statistical procedure to determine if group involvement, group knowledge, and the group involvement/group knowledge interaction were predictors of after importance.

The two-way analysis of variance needed a bigger sample size in order to produce better results. The participants who left the study before it was conducted might have caused insignificant results in the two-way analysis of variance. In addition, group knowledge and group involvement might not have been the best way to define these variables. A factor analysis might have been used to determine more appropriate groups. The KNOW and INVOL variables had a correlation of .838 with a p-value  $<.001$ . The correlation was significant at the .05-level which suggested that group involvement and group knowledge were measuring some common underlying factor.

In Appendix C, sixty-nine percent of the total pre-test importance item responses were in the “Extremely Important” area. In Appendix D, eighty-three percent of the total post-test responses were in the “Extremely Important” area. The frequency data appeared to suggest that attitude change occurred. Also, it appeared that many people already favor the level of importance items. When people currently favor certain social policy issues such as services for children with special needs, only minimal attitude change should be expected.

In this study, the population demographics were represented by questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, and 21 on the pre-test. The demographics showed that the majority of the participants had very little involvement with their childcare programs and children with special needs (See Appendix G). For questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, and 21, of the participants who

responded, over half of them answered no to these questions. This appeared to indicate a low level of involvement with childcare programs and children with special needs. Questions 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 19, and 21 all had missing responses. Question 5 had six missing responses out of seventeen. Question 6 had four missing responses out of seventeen. Question 9 had seven missing responses out of seventeen. Question 10 had five missing responses out of seventeen. Question 13 had six missing responses out of seventeen. Question 14 had five missing responses out of seventeen. Question 19 had one missing response out of seventeen. Question 21 had one missing response out of seventeen (See Appendix G).

Figure 4 showed a negative interaction between group involvement and group knowledge when the range midpoint was used to determine high and low groups (Insert Figure 4 Here). Figure 5 showed a negative interaction between group involvement and group knowledge when the median midpoint was used to determine high and low groups (Insert Figure 5 Here). Of the participants that responded to question 1 on the pre-test, close to twenty-eight percent have a child that is currently attending a childcare program (Insert Figure 6 Here). In addition to this, of the participants who responded to pre-test question 2, close to forty-five percent had a child in a childcare program in the past (Insert Figure 7 Here). Since the majority of the participants had not been involved in local childcare programs, it was expected that the participants who were not involved were not

concerned with learning about their local childcare programs. The majority of the participants had not taken classes concerning children with special needs, do not have a child with special needs, and do not work with children with special needs. (Insert Figure 8, Figure 9, and Figure 10 Here). Participants who had not taken classes concerning children with special needs, did not have children with special needs, and did not work with children with special needs were not likely to know much about services for them or favor inclusion of these services in local childcare programs.

The alpha coefficient of .8251, for items 22 to 45 on the pre-test, suggested good inter-item reliability between these items (See Table 4). The alpha coefficient of .8662, for the post-test suggested good inter-item reliability (See Table 5). The pre-test and post-test involvement, importance, and knowledge items appeared to have good reliability. The results for the pre- and post-test involvement, importance, and knowledge items should be consistent each time the pre- and post-test are administered.

The majority of participants, in this study, appeared to have had an average amount of knowledge about childcare programs and services for children with special needs before they listened to the presentation and participated in the group discussion. On the pre-test, one hundred twenty-seven out of one hundred fifty-one responses were around know very little, know a moderate amount, and know somewhat level of knowledge range (See Table 9). One hundred twenty-

two out of one hundred fifty two responses were in the know very little to know about average to know somewhat range (See Table 10).

Hypothesis Testing Discussion. Based on the paired-samples t test, there was evidence to support hypothesis 1, attitude change did occur. The mean difference showed a positive increase from pre-importance mean to post-importance mean. The p-value for the mean difference was .043, which was significant at the .05-level. In Appendix C, sixty-nine percent of the total pre-test importance item responses were in the “Extremely Important” area. In Appendix D, eighty-three percent of the total post-test responses were in the “Extremely Important” area. The increase in “Extremely Important” rating from pre- to post-test importance provided further evidence of attitude change.

Based on the two-way analysis of variances, there was evidence to suggest that level of involvement was not a significant predictor of post-test importance. The p-value for group involvement, using the range midpoint to determine high and low groups was .841, which was not significant at the .05-level. The group involvement p-value, using the median to determine high and low groups, was .698, which was not significant at the .05-level. Since group involvement was not a significant predictor of post-test attitude, hypothesis 2 was disproven. There was no evidence to support that high involvement participants were more persuaded than low involvement participants. The two-way analysis of variance showed no evidence that level of knowledge was a significant predictor of post-test importance. The p-value for group knowledge, using the range midpoint to determine high and low groups, was .841, which was not significant at the .05-

level. The p-value for group involvement, using the median to determine high and low groups, was .698, which was not significant at the .05-level. The evidence provided would suggest that hypothesis 3 was disproven because there was no evidence to indicate that level of knowledge predicted post-test importance in any way.

There was no strong evidence to indicate that the interaction of knowledge and involvement was a predictor of post-test importance. The p-value for the interaction of group knowledge and group involvement, using the range midpoint to determine high and low groups, was .228, which was not significant at the .05-level. The group involvement and group knowledge interaction variable p-value was .206, which was not significant at the .05-level. The line graphs of group involvement and group knowledge, using the range midpoint and median to define high and low groups, appeared to indicate a negative interaction occurred (See Figure 4 and Figure 5). For hypothesis 4, there was evidence to support that the interaction of knowledge and involvement occurred. Also for hypothesis 4, since the interaction of involvement and knowledge was not found to be a significant predictor of post-test importance, there was not evidence to support the following:

A. High knowledge and high involvement participants were unaffected by persuasion.

B. Low knowledge and high involvement participants were affected by persuasion.

C. High knowledge and low involvement participants were affected by persuasion.



D. Low involvement and low knowledge participants were unaffected by persuasion.

In Eagly, Mladinic, and Otto (1992), it was suggested that people were highly persuaded by social policy issues. Services for children with special needs would be considered a social policy issue because it does affect many local schools in society. Many people might experience attitude change about social policy issues like services for children with special needs if they are made aware of the funding for these services and if these services are required by law.

It appeared that personal relevance might be a factor that affects level of involvement as suggested in McKenzie-Mohr (2000). For level of involvement to increase, social policy issues such as “Services for children with special needs” should in some way be made personally relevant to people. Personally relevant would be making a service or issue appear to directly affect a person.

Many times if level of knowledge or level of awareness can be increased among the general population about certain social policy issues then an increase in support for the issue and perhaps an increase in involvement for the issue might occur. In Roese and Olson (1992), it was suggested that increasing a person’s level of knowledge about an issue makes it more accessible in memory. It is possible that memory accessibility allows people to consider the issue more in depth since it would be easy to access.

Unlike Johnson (1994), many of the participants, in this study, were likely from the working middle class of society. People, from the working middle class, might support these issues highly, but due not have the time to have a high level of involvement with these issues. Also, they might not have the time to make themselves as aware of certain social policy issues as they would like. In Johnson (1994), the people in the groups of high involvement/high knowledge and high involvement/low knowledge might have been persuaded because they have a high personal commitment to the issue and were willing to take the time to learn about it.

Suggestions for Further Study. In this study, more items that expand on level of involvement in childcare programs and services for children with special needs should be included. Even more, these items should be included with the five point rating scale items. Also, a larger sample should be taken next time. In future samples, there should be inclusion of more participants who have children in childcare programs and those who never have had a child in a childcare program. Also, other factors effects on attitude change, such as the participants perceptions of the speaker, should be assessed. Also when giving the presentation, personal testimonials from families who have children with special needs might help to better promote inclusion. More attitude change might also have occurred if parents could have personally interacted with children with special needs and their families according to Harris and Walters (1991). Also

when conducting this study, the presenter should have the consumers sign a written contract giving potential participants the option to participate in this study. The contract would include an agreement by the participants to stay until the study was finished, which would be after they had completely filled out their post-test survey. It is hoped that by signing the contract the participants would feel obligated to stay throughout the entire study.

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## Appendix A

To Be Filled Out Before The Presentation

Survey Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Please fill this survey out immediately. Please read each question carefully and fill out this form completely. Take as much time as you need to complete this survey. You may use a pen or a pencil. For questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19 and 21 answer Yes or No by darkening in the box next to your response. For questions 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 18, and 20 please fill in the blank.**

1. Do you currently have a child in a childcare program?  YES  NO
2. Did you previously have a child in a childcare program?  YES  NO
3. If yes to 1, how many years has your child been at their current childcare program? \_\_\_\_\_
4. If yes to 2, how many years was your child at their previous childcare program? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Does your current program provide parent-training sessions?  YES  NO
6. Did your previous program provide parent-training sessions?  YES  NO
7. If yes to 5, how many training opportunities or sessions have they provided? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many have you attended? \_\_\_\_\_
8. If yes to 6, how many training opportunities or sessions did they provide? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many did you attend? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Does your current program allow opportunities for you to attend the program with your child?  YES  NO
10. Did your previous program allow opportunities for you to attend the program with your child?  YES  NO
11. If yes to 9, how many times have they provided these opportunities? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many have you attended with your children? \_\_\_\_\_



12. If yes to 10, how many times did they provide these opportunities? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many did you attend with your children? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Other than parent training and attending the program with your child, does your current program provide other opportunities for family involvement?  
 YES  NO
14. Other than parent training and attending the program with your child, did your previous program provide other opportunities for family involvement?  
 YES  NO
15. If yes to 13, how many opportunities have they provided? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many have you participated in? \_\_\_\_\_
16. If yes to 14, how many opportunities did they provide? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many did you participate in? \_\_\_\_\_
17. Have you ever worked with children with special needs?  YES  NO
18. If yes how many years have you worked with children with special needs? \_\_\_\_\_
19. Have you taken any educational courses concerning children with special needs?  YES  NO
20. If yes how many courses have you taken? \_\_\_\_\_
21. Do you have a child with special needs?  YES  NO

**PROCEED TO NEXT PAGE**

**For questions 22-31 you are asked to rate how important you believe the item to be for a typical childcare program. Please circle “1 not at all important,” “2 somewhat not important,” “3 moderately important,” “4 somewhat important,” or “5 extremely important.”**

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Not Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Extremely Important
22. Opportunities for family involvement.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Your child’s schedule.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Child development parent training.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Services for children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Children with special needs, having experiences in a normal classroom of same age children.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Your child having experience with children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Your child gaining experience interacting with diverse kinds of children (children with varying levels of ability and race).	1	2	3	4	5
29. Hours the program is open.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Knowing what services, for children with special needs, your local childcare programs provide.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Families having experiences interacting with families of children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5

**For questions 32-40 you are asked to rate your level of knowledge of the item. Please circle “1 do not know at all,” “2 know very little,” “3 know about average,” “4 know somewhat,” or “5 know very well.**

		Do Not Know At All	Know Very Little	Know about Average	Know Somewhat	Know Very Well
32.	Children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
33.	Services provided for children with special needs by your local childcare programs.	1	2	3	4	5
34.	Childcare issues in general.	1	2	3	4	5
35.	Services your local childcare programs are required to provide by law.	1	2	3	4	5
36.	How services for children with special needs have benefited other families in your local childcare programs.	1	2	3	4	5
37.	Other services your local childcare programs provide.	1	2	3	4	5
38.	What these other services are used for.	1	2	3	4	5
39.	The activities and education your local childcare programs provide.	1	2	3	4	5
40.	Services for children with special needs in general.	1	2	3	4	5

**For question 41-45, please circle “1 not at all involved,” “2 seldom involved,” “3 fairly involved,” “4 somewhat involved,” or “5 extremely involved.”**

		Not At All Involved	Seldom Involved	Fairly Involved	Somewhat Involved	Extremely Involved
41.	With your current childcare program.	1	2	3	4	5
42.	With your previous childcare program.	1	2	3	4	5
43.	With any other childcare program.	1	2	3	4	5
44.	Children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
45.	Involvement with your child’s education.	1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix B

To Be Filled Out After The Presentation and Discussion

Survey Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Do not fill this form out until you are instructed to do so by the presenter. Please read each question carefully and fill out this form completely. Take as much time as you need to complete this survey. You may use a pen or a pencil. For questions 1- 10 you are asked to rate how important you believe the item is to a typical childcare program. Please circle “1 not at all important,” “2 somewhat not important,” “3 fairly important,” “4 somewhat important,” or “5 extremely important.”**

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Not Important	Fairly Important	Somewhat Important	Extremely Important
1. Opportunities for family involvement.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Your child’s schedule.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Child development parent training.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Services for children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The hours the program is open.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Your child having experience with children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Your child gaining experience interacting with diverse kinds of children (children with varying levels of ability and race).	1	2	3	4	5
8. Children with special needs, having experiences in a normal classroom of same age children.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Knowing what services, for children with special needs, your local childcare programs provide.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Families having experiences interacting with families of children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5

**For questions 11-19, you are asked to rate your level of knowledge of the item. Please circle “1 do not know at all,” “2 know very little,” “3 know about average,” “4 know somewhat,” or “5 know very well.”**

	Do Not Know At All	Know Very Little	Know About Average	Know Somewhat	Know Very Well
11. Children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Services provided for children with special needs by local childcare programs.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Childcare issues in general.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Other services local childcare programs provide.	1	2	3	4	5
15. What these other services are used for.	1	2	3	4	5
16. How services for children with special needs have benefited families in local childcare programs.	1	2	3	4	5
17. The activities and education local childcare programs provide.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Services your local childcare programs are required to provide by law.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Services for special needs children in general.	1	2	3	4	5

**For question 20-24, please circle “1 not at all involved,” “2 seldom involved,” “3 fairly involved,” “4 somewhat involved,” or “5 extremely involved.”**

	Not At All Involved	Seldom Involved	Fairly Involved	Somewhat Involved	Extremely Involved
20. With your current childcare program	1	2	3	4	5
21. With your previous childcare program	1	2	3	4	5
22. With any other childcare program.	1	2	3	4	5

23.	Children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	With your child's education.	1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix C

Frequencies: Pre-Test Level of Importance

Item	Total Responses to Item	Missing Responses to Item	1 Not at all Important	2 Somewhat Not Important	3 Moderately Important	4 Somewhat Important	5 Extremely Important
Opportunities for family involvement	17	0	0	0	1	1	15
Your child's schedule.	17	0	0	0	0	4	13
Child development parent training.	16	1	0	0	2	3	11
Services for children with special needs.	17	0	0	0	1	1	15
Children with special needs, having experiences in a normal classroom of same age children.	17	0	0	0	1	4	12
Your child having experience with children with special needs.	17	0	0	0	2	5	10
Your child gaining experience interacting with diverse kinds of children (children with varying levels of ability and race).	17	0	0	0	2	3	12
Hours the program is open.	17	0	0	0	1	8	8
Knowing what services, for children with special needs, your local childcare programs provide.	16	1	0	0	3	4	9
Families having experiences interacting with families of children with special needs.	17	0	0	0	2	4	11
<b>TOTALS</b>			0	0	15	37	116



## Appendix D

Frequencies: Post-Test Level of Importance

Item	# of Responses to Item	# of Missing Responses	1 Not At All Important	2 Somewhat Not Important	3 Fairly Important	4 Somewhat Important	5 Extremely Important
Opportunities for family involvement	17	0	0	0	0	1	16
Your child's schedule.	17	0	0	0	1	2	14
Child development parent training.	17	0	0	0	1	1	15
Services for children with special needs.	17	0	0	0	0	0	17
The hours the program is open.	17	0	0	0	1	4	12
Your child having experience with children with special needs.	17	0	0	0	0	4	13
Your child gaining experience interacting with diverse kinds of children.	17	0	0	0	0	2	15
Children with special needs, having experiences in a normal classroom of same age children.	17	0	0	0	0	4	13
Knowing what services, for children with special needs, your local childcare programs provide.	17	0	0	0	3	1	13
Families having experiences interacting with families of children with special needs.	17	0	0	0	2	2	13
TOTALS			0	0	8	21	141

## Appendix E

Frequencies: Pre-Test Level of Knowledge

Item	Number of Responses to Item	Number of Missing Responses to Item	1 Do Not Know At All	2 Know Very Little	3 Know About Average	4 Know Some what	5 Know Very Well
Children with special needs	17	0	0	5	6	6	0
Services provided for children with special needs by your local childcare programs.	17	0	0	9	5	2	1
Childcare issues in general.	15	2	0	2	4	4	5
Services your local childcare programs are required to provide by law.	17	0	2	5	3	4	3
How services for children with special needs have benefited other families in your local childcare programs.	17	0	2	7	5	3	0
Other services your local childcare programs provide.	17	0	2	5	6	4	0
What these other services are used for.	17	0	2	6	6	3	0
The activities and education your local childcare programs provide.	17	0	2	5	5	5	0
Services for children with special needs in general.	17	0	3	5	3	4	2
TOTAL			13	49	43	35	11

## Appendix F

Frequencies: Post-Test Level of Knowledge

Item	Number of Responses to Item	Number of Missing Responses to Item	1 Do Not Know At All	2 Know Very Little	3 Know About Average	4 Know Some what	5 Know Very Well
Children with special needs	17	0	0	3	9	4	1
Services provided for children with special needs by your local childcare programs.	17	0	0	4	6	4	3
Childcare issues in general.	16	1	0	1	8	3	4
Services your local childcare programs are required to provide by law.	17	0	1	6	4	3	3
How services for children with special needs have benefited other families in your	17	0	1	4	7	2	3

## Appendix F

Frequencies: Post-Test Level of Knowledge

Item	Number of Responses to Item	Number of Missing Responses to Item	1 Do Not Know At All	2 Know Very Little	3 Know About Average	4 Know Some what	5 Know Very Well
local childcare programs.							
Other services your local childcare programs provide.	17	0	1	6	7	2	1
What these other services are used for.	17	0	1	5	9	1	1
The activities and education your local childcare programs provide.	17	0	1	6	4	3	3
Services for children with special needs in general.	17	0	1	6	4	1	5
TOTAL			6	41	58	23	24

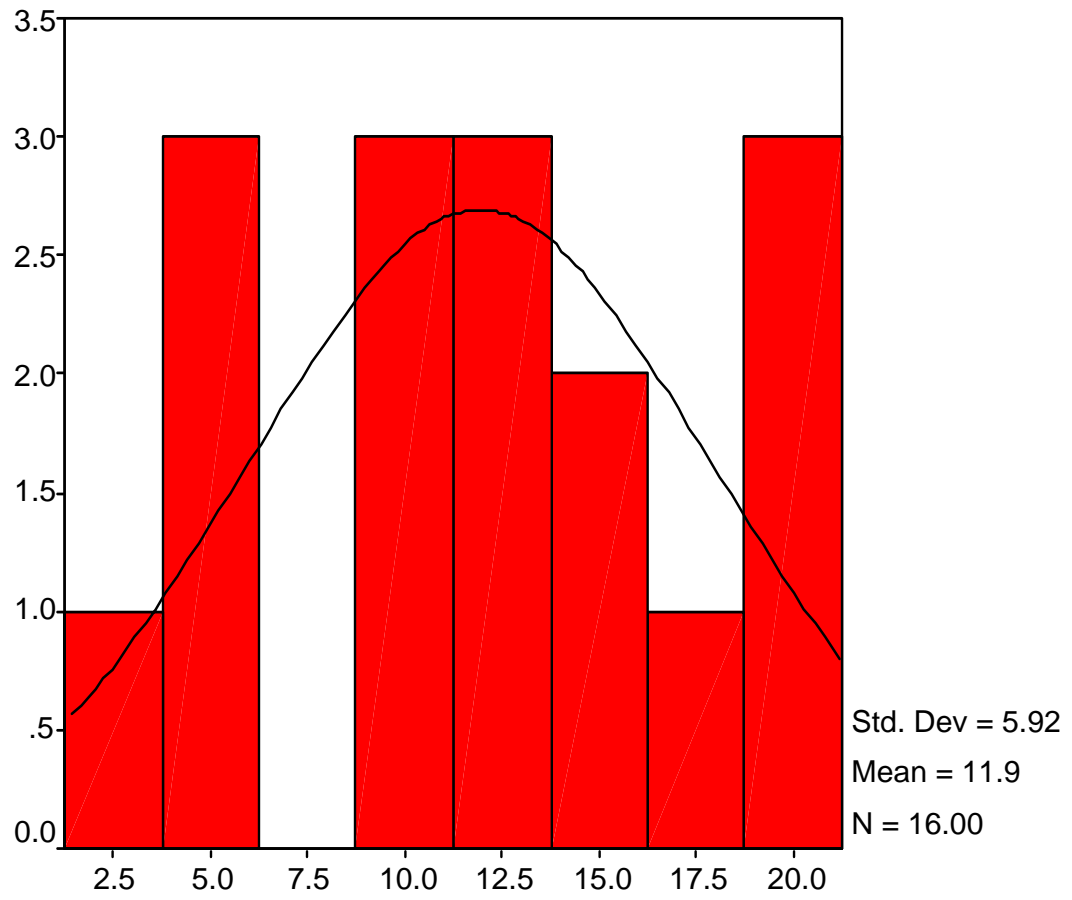
## Appendix G

Sample Population Demographics

Pre-Test Question	Yes (1)	No (0)	Missing	Total
1. Do you currently have a child in a childcare program?	5	12	0	17
2. Did you previously have a child in a childcare program?	8	9	0	17
5. Does your current program provide parent-training sessions?	2	9	6	17
6. Did your previous program provide parent-training sessions?	2	11	4	17
9. Does your current program allow opportunities for you to attend the program with your child?	3	7	7	17
10. Did your previous program allow opportunities for you to attend the program with your child?	6	6	5	17
13. Other than parent training and attending the program with your child, does your current program provide other opportunities for family involvement?	3	8	6	17
14. Other than parent training and attending the program with your child, did your previous program provide other opportunities for family involvement?	4	8	5	17
17. Have you ever worked with children with special needs?	3	14	0	17
19. Have you taken any educational courses concerning children with special needs?	2	14	1	17
21. Do you have a child with special needs?	1	15	1	17
Totals	39	113	35	187

## Figure Caption

Figure 1. Histogram for INVOL variable. INVOL variable included all total summed responses for pre-test involvement items.



INVOL

Figure Caption

Figure 2. Histogram for KNOW variable. KNOW variable included all total summed responses for pre-test and post-test knowledge items.



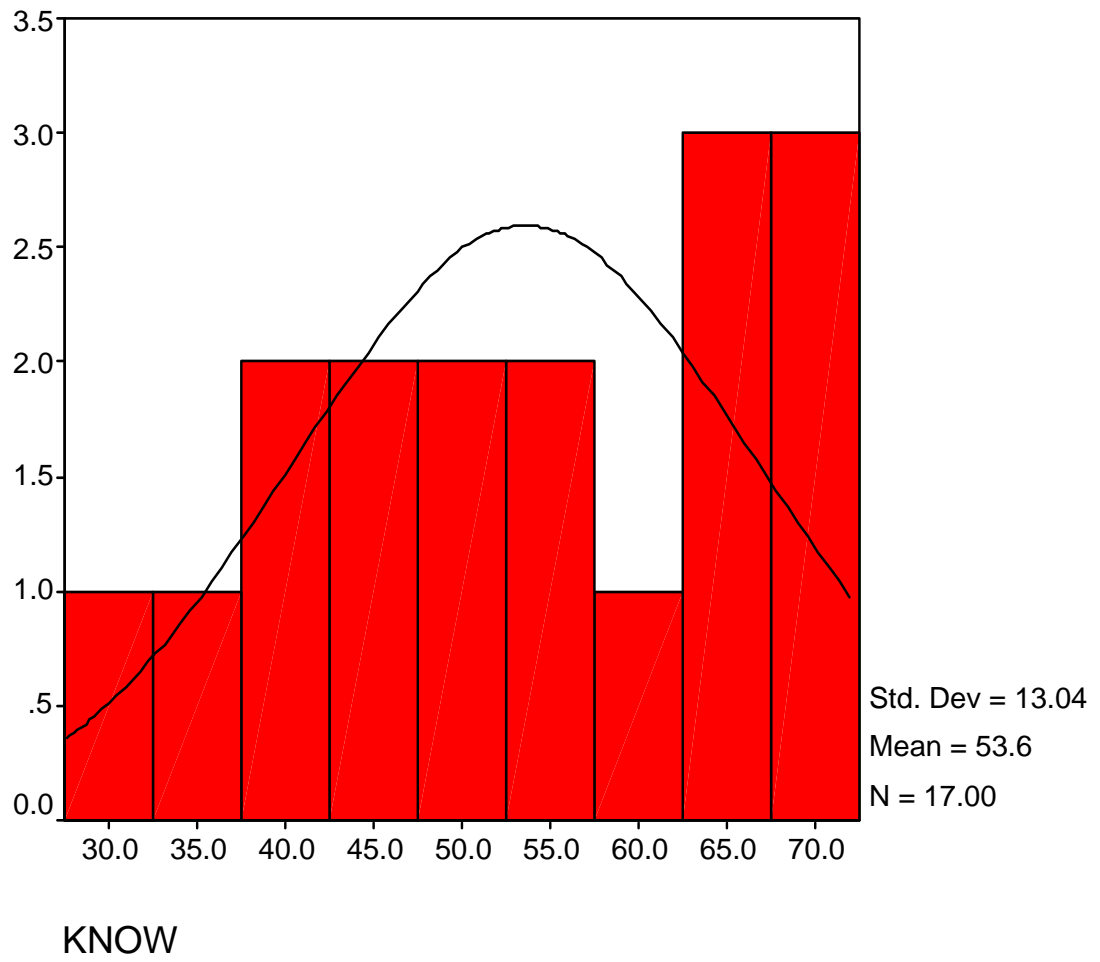


Figure Caption

Figure 3. Histogram of After Importance variable.

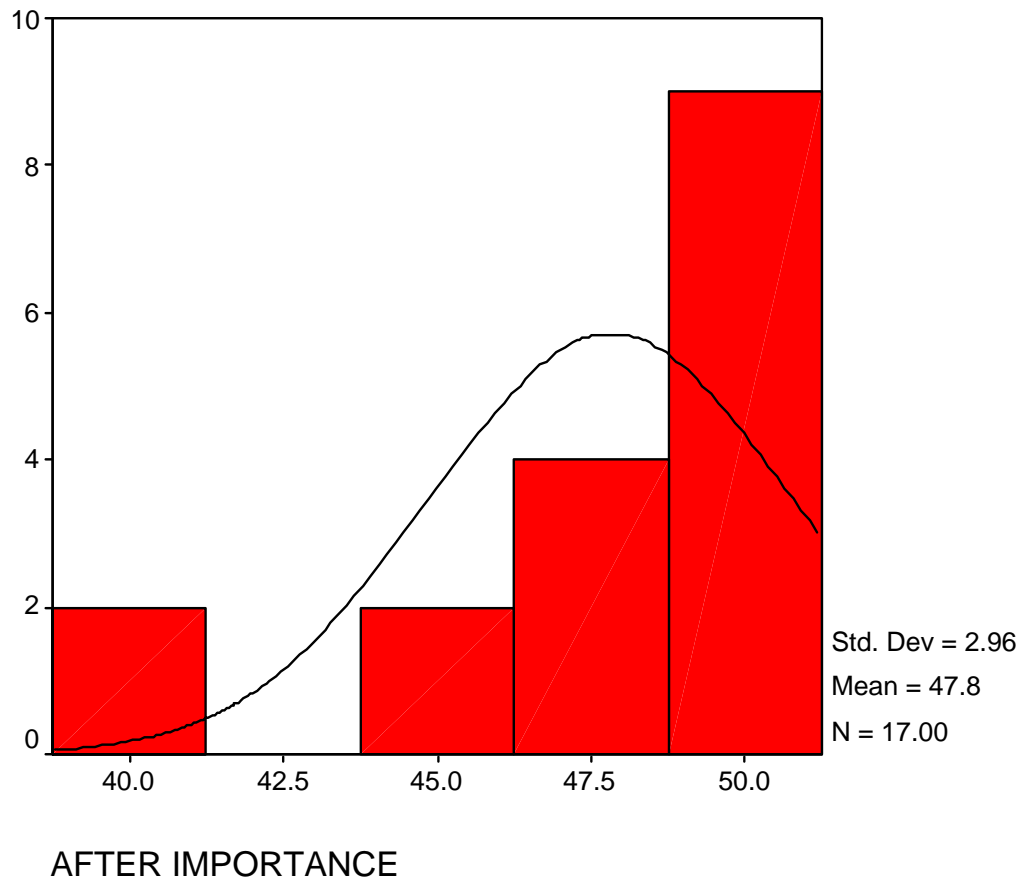


Figure Caption

Figure 4. Line graph of negative interaction between group knowledge and group involvement using range midpoint to define high and low groups.

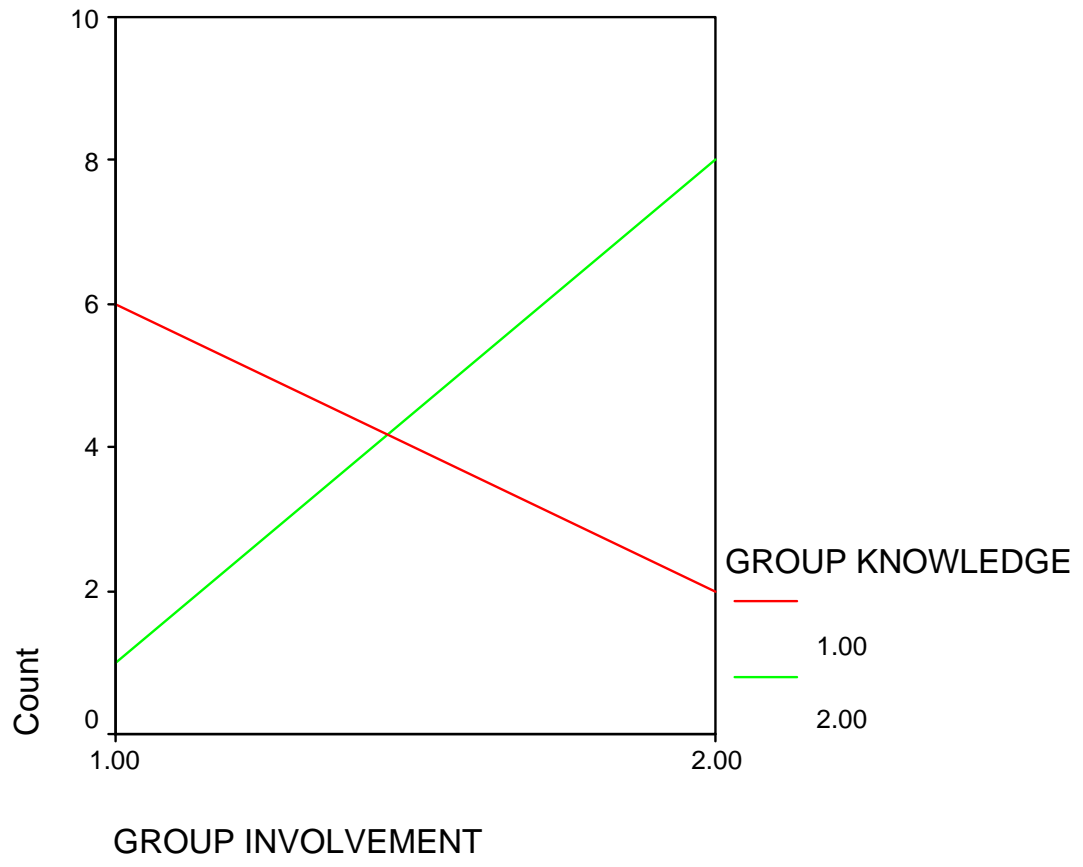


Figure Caption

Figure 5. Line graph of negative interaction between group knowledge and group involvement using median to define high and low groups.

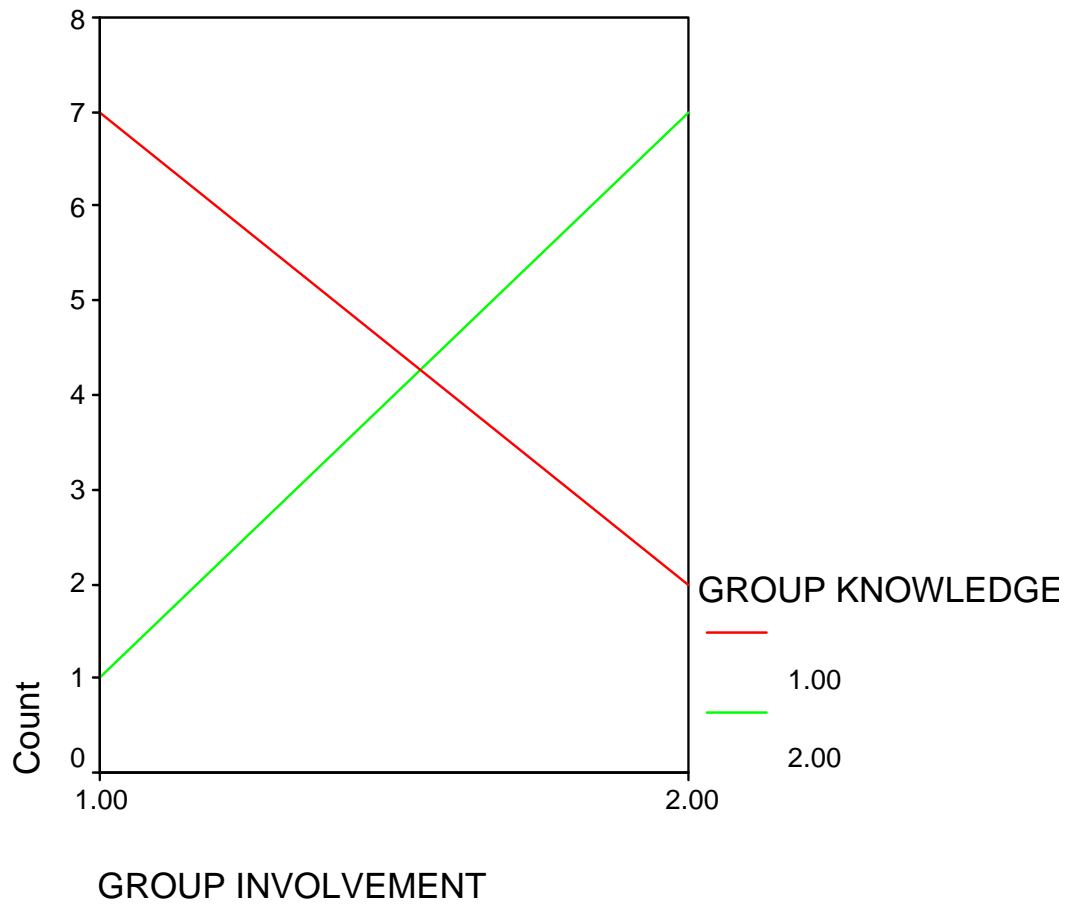


Figure Caption

Figure 6. Percentage of participants who have children currently in a childcare program.



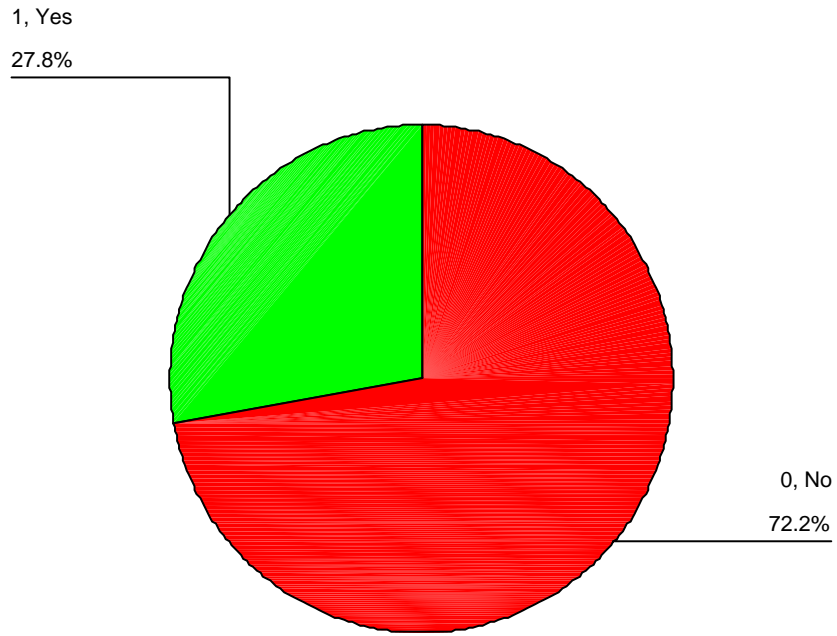


Figure Caption

Figure 7. Percentage of participants that previously had a child in a childcare program.

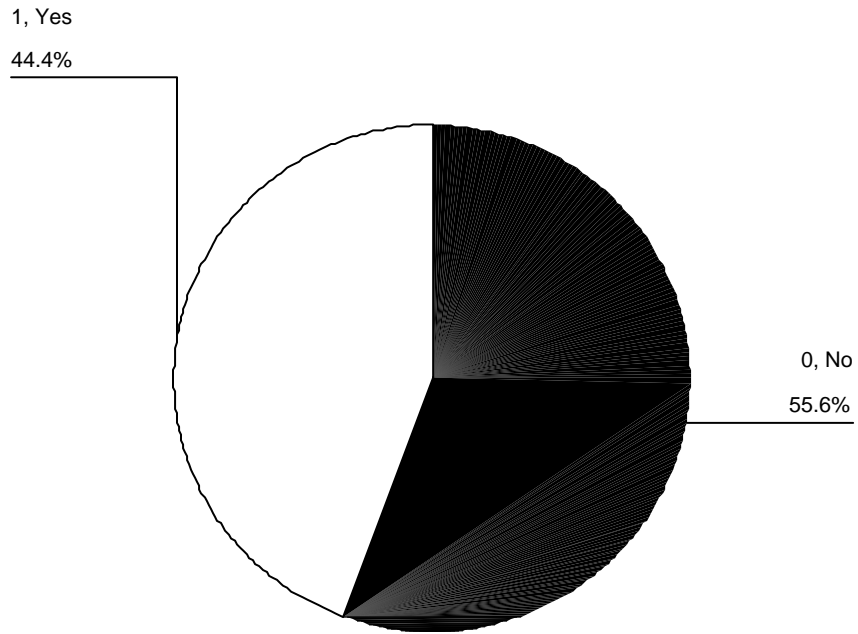


Figure Caption

Figure 8. Percentage of people who have taken educational classes concerning children with special needs.

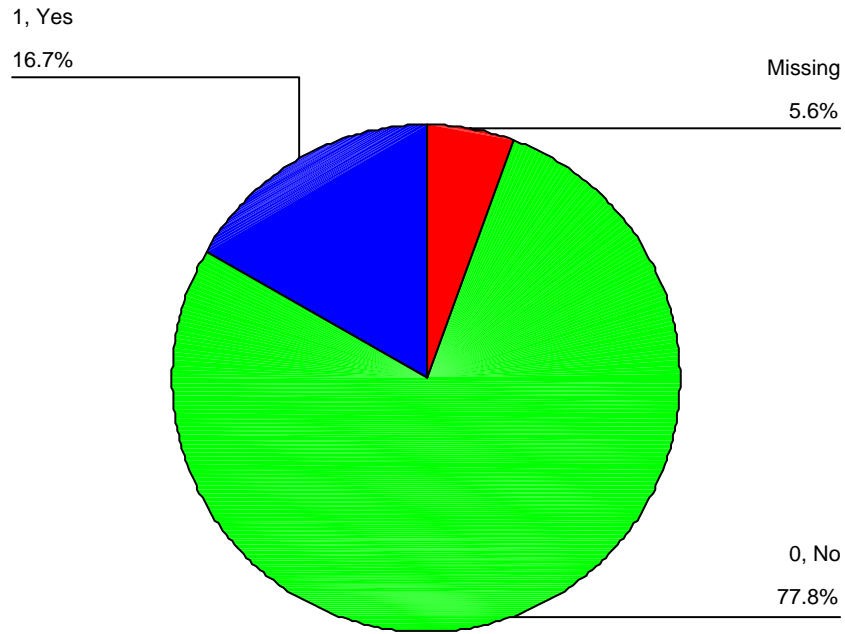


Figure Caption

Figure 9. Percentage of participants that have a child with special needs.

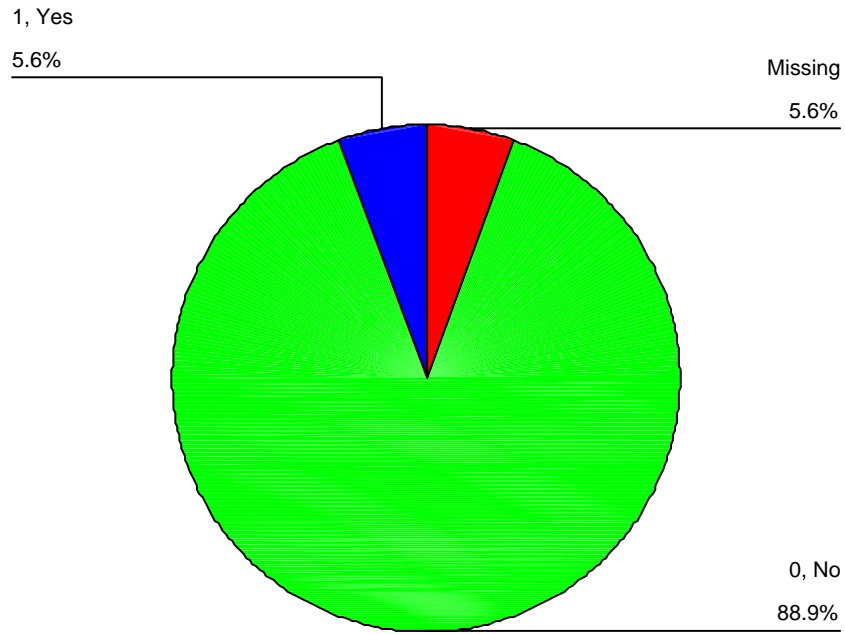
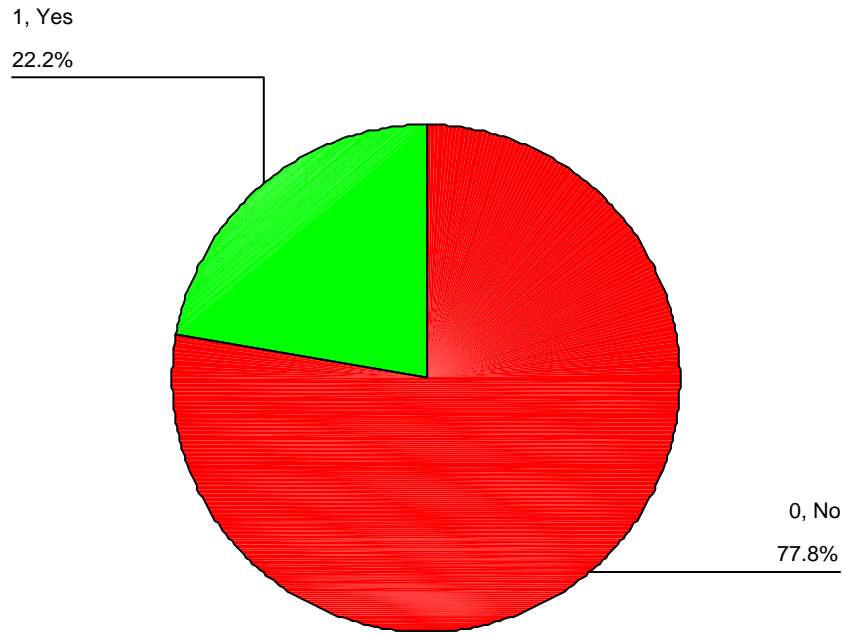


Figure Caption

Figure 10. Percentage of participants who have worked with children with special needs.





Vita

Nicholas Mirabile

**Education**

Master of Arts  
General Psychology  
Marshall University  
May 2004

Bachelor of Arts  
Psychology  
West Virginia University  
May, 2000

**Marshall University Educational Experience**

Fall 2000  
Psychology 506 – Psychometrics  
Psychology 508 – Introduction to Industrial/Organizational Psychology  
Psychology 560 – History and Systems

Spring 2001  
Psychology 503 – Applied Social Psychology  
Psychology 540 – Physiological Psychology  
Psychology 672 – Cognitive Psychology

Fall 2001  
Psychology 517 – Intermediate Behavioral Statistics  
Psychology 580 – Special Topics: Advanced Tests and Measurements  
Psychology 627 – Social Psychological Bases of Groups

Spring 2002  
Psychology 502 – Advanced Social Psychology  
Psychology 526 – Cross-Cultural Psychology  
Psychology 632 – Experimental Design

Fall 2002  
Mathematics 580 – Special Topics: Applied Statistics  
Psychology 516 – Psychology of Learning  
Psychology 681 – Thesis

### **Professional Experience**

#### **July 7, 2003 – Present Counselor I/Legends Case Manager, Southern Highlands**

Provided individual and group addictions counseling to inpatient drug rehabilitation consumers and outpatient consumers. Provided anger management counseling. Developed treatment plans with inpatient and outpatient consumers. Performed Care Connection Assessments of ASI, Comprehensive Assessment, and Functional Assessment. Took inpatient consumers to DHHR and helped them fill out Medicaid forms.

#### **2000-2002 Research Assistant, West Virginia Educare Initiative Evaluation Committee**

The Educare Initiative provides funding to Educare programs. An Educare program consists of childcare programs that have partnered with other community organizations such as businesses and health care agencies to provide quality early childcare services to local families. I was responsible for helping to prepare and send out consumer satisfaction surveys. Also, I helped analyze the consumer satisfaction survey results using Microsoft Excel and Access. In addition, I helped prepare individual program reports of the consumer satisfaction survey results for each program. I also prepared databases in Microsoft Access to help keep track of other Educare records.

#### **April 2002 Nursing Program Study, Bluefield State College**

I performed statistical analyses for a study of the effectiveness of the Nursing Program at Bluefield State College using the Statistical Package for Social Services or SPSS.

#### **April 2002 Research Assistant, Bluefield State Tobacco Study**

I performed statistical analyses for a tobacco study at Bluefield State College using the Statistical Package for Social Services or SPSS.

#### **1999 Intern, Center For Entrepreneurial Studies and Development, Morgantown, WV**

I helped design a course to help employees improve communication skills. This involved researching studies on communication, developing appropriate skill building activities, and putting this information on-line.