

## ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: THE ROLE OF TRUST AND CARE IN THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST  
CURRICULUM IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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Social constructivism centers on the belief that social interaction is paramount to effective and meaningful learning. This study examined how trusting and caring teacher-student and student-student relationships influenced students' willingness and ability to learn in a social constructivist physical education curriculum. Data were collected through student interviews and focus groups, observations (teacher log), student member checks, and independent observations. Data were analyzed using open, axial, and selective coding consistent with the ethnographic research design. The findings suggested that students' willingness and ability to learn were positively influenced through the implementation of the social constructivist curriculum Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU). Specifically, this was achieved through the classroom environment that facilitated students' perceptions of a trusting and caring teacher, contributing to more open and honest student relationships. These factors could be interpreted as an integrated spiral that contributed to teacher and student trust and care.

THE ROLE OF TRUST AND CARE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SOCIAL  
CONSTRUCTIVIST CURRICULUM IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

by

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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
2009

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Social constructivism centers on the belief that social interaction is paramount to effective and meaningful learning (Byrnes, 2000; Hausfather, 1996; Richardson, 1994). Based on Vygotsky's early works, social constructivism draws its relevancy from the belief that knowledge is best transmitted and received through functional social interchanges that allow both parties to actively participate in the process (Hausfather, 1996). Student learning is dependent on fostering relationships with adults and more knowledgeable peers that permit students to examine new concepts and processes and arrive at meaningful solutions by pooling the talents of individual group members in an effort to collectively arrive at a suitable answer (Hausfather, 1996).

Constructivist educators relinquish direct control of the learning environment often found in more traditional, teacher-directed approaches to curriculum and instruction to provide opportunities for students to explore content and construct solutions. Within a social constructivist approach, teachers assume the role of a mentor and attempt to foster the social relationships and interactions necessary for student growth (Richardson, 1994). Additionally, educators carefully choose critical instruction points that simultaneously guide students to the desired outcome while still allowing them to participate in personal discovery and growth. Thus, effective educators are both knowledgeable of guiding content principles and cognizant of the optimal environment in which such instructional points should be taught (Hausfather, 1996).

Ultimately, the central role of teacher-student and student-student interactions in a social constructivist curriculum requires educators to establish healthy and productive

social relationships (Byrnes, 2000). If this is not effectively accomplished, the potential value of social constructivism may be lost. Unfortunately, the positive relationships that foster success at times can be replaced by unhealthy interactions that deter learning and growth (Richardson, 1994). Therefore, the constructs of trust and care appear to be essential to the development of positive teacher-student and student-student relationships that foster students' knowledge construction.

### Trust

Trust appears to be critical to the development of teacher-student and student-student relationships. In order to understand how and why trust is so critical to each of these relationships, it is first important to consider its definition. One definition of trust describes it as "a state of perceived vulnerability or risk that is derived from individual's uncertainty regarding the motives, intentions, and perspective actions of others on whom they depend" (Kramer, 1999, p.571). In a similar definition, trust is defined as "a reliance on others' competence and willingness to look after, rather than harm, things one cares about which are entrusted to their care" (Baier, 1986, p. 259). Finally, trust is "one party's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is (a) benevolent, (b) reliable, (c) competent, (d) honest, and (e) open" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p.556). Thus, these definitions suggest that trust involves (a) a need that cannot efficiently be satisfied without the involvement of another, (b) a vulnerability or risk that the individual being asked to fulfill this need may not do so, and (c) a belief that the person being asked to fulfill the need, in fact, has the desire and skill to do so effectively.

Trusting relationships appear to evolve from three unique origins. The first origin involves an individual's inherent willingness to trust. An individual may accept or reject a trusting relationship based on past experiences, experiences specific to the relationship in question, general life experiences, or the individual's personal demeanor (Kramer, 1999; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). The second origin involves an individual's belief in shared personal similarities. Such similarities include shared membership in groups, similar values and attitudes, and the existence of mutual third parties (Kramer, 1999; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). The third origin of trust involves a belief in external motivations or controls. This includes trusting based on defined roles and rules as well as simply calculating risk versus reward.

Additionally, certain characteristics, such as benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness, serve to mitigate the risk and vulnerability inherent in relationships requiring trust. Each characteristic serves to establish and stabilize the relationship, leading to successful outcomes (Baier, 1986; Ennis & McCauley, 2002; Kramer, 1999; Orbell, Dawes, & Schwartz-Shea, 1994; Sweetland & How, 2001; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Conversely, distrust represents failed trusting relationships. Sweetland and Hoy (2001) designated six concepts to encompass distrusting behavior including (a) reversing the truth: the lie, (b) deception: revealing and concealing, (c) self-deception: vulnerability and stability, (d) civility: showing and hiding thoughts, (e) creating the truth: power and reality, and (f) game playing: manipulation and deception. By examining these six concepts, it is possible to identify actions that can lead to the destruction of trust.

Trust, however, often represents more than simple interactions. It frequently is developed and nurtured in cycles or stages that may stabilize and deepen trust. Specifically, Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2000) propose that the cycle of trust involves five distinct stages: (a) initiating, (b) sustaining and maintaining, (c) betrayal, (d) revenge, and (e) repair. It is important to note that all trusting relationships do not involve all stages. For example, if betrayal never occurs, there is no need for revenge and repair. Similarly, the order of the stages does not have a set sequence and may occur in any order (Baier, 1986; Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Deutsch, 1960; Kramer & Isen, 1994; Lewicki & Bunker, 1996; Orbell, et al, 1994; Sweetland & Hoy 2001; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Finally, there are certain beliefs and initiatives that foster trust. First, fostering a trusting relationship often requires that parties believe in the importance of (a) an open climate, (b) organizational citizenship which involves going beyond common expectations, (c) shared expectations, and (d) persistence (Ennis & McCauley, 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Likewise, specific initiatives that aid in fostering trust include (a) second chances, (b) positive interaction, and (c) ownership and collaboration (Ennis & McCauley, 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

While trust is essential in developing positive relationships, the existence of trust alone does not guarantee that a positive relationship will develop and flourish. Perhaps the essence of such a relationship involves the level of genuine care that individuals have for others.

## Care

The concept of caring in education is based on Noddings' (1984) work and is the second element essential to the development of teacher-student and student-student relationships. Caring represents a genuine desire to uphold or enhance the general well being of another (Noddings, 1992). Noddings (1992) characterizes consciousness when caring as involving "engrossment" and "motivational displacement." Engrossment involves "a nonselective receptivity to the cared-for" (Noddings, 1992, p.15) that ultimately results in a genuine attempt to care. Motivational displacement occurs when the caring individual focuses her or his complete attention on the needs of the cared-for recipient. Additionally, Owens and Ennis (2005) add "commitment," or a strong desire to meet the student's needs, as a third characteristic of conscious caring. Because social constructivism is based on healthy social interaction, the development of a caring relationship enhances and deepens perceptions of care.

Caring "is, in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings – a carer and a recipient of care or cared-for" (Noddings, 1992, p.15). For such a connection to occur, it is necessary for participants to have knowledge of each other. In order to be considered a care giver, one must demonstrate both the appropriate actions and intentions associated with giving care. Similarly, the role of cared-for not only involves receiving care, but also reciprocation through the demonstration of genuine appreciation for the care extended. Thus, caring involves a circle of care in which the care giver and the care recipient form reciprocal bonds that foster concern for each others' well being. "Mature (caring) relationships are characterized by mutuality"

(Noddings, 1992, p.17). In mature relationships, the role of care giver and care recipient often change multiple times (Noddings, 1992).

Noddings (1992) suggested that caring relationships can lead to moral education in which the cared-for learns to receive and extend care. Moral education focuses on the development of caring relationships and consists of four strategies: (a) modeling, (b) dialogue, (c) practice, and (d) confirmation. Modeling is simply a demonstration by the care giver of how to extend care. Dialogue represents the development of necessary communication strategies and relationships to foster and demonstrate care. Practice is reinforcement of caring dispositions through repetition, while confirmation involves affirming and encouraging demonstrated caring actions (Noddings, 1992). Ultimately, by employing such strategies, caring actions and relationships can be developed and sustained.

By examining the constructs of trust and care, it is possible to better understand an important and essential aspect of personal relationship building in educational settings. Trust and caring can lead to positive teacher-student and student-student social interactions that appear to foster student knowledge construction in social constructivist curricula. These relationships may provide essential elements in the educational environment that foster student learning.

#### Purpose of this Research

The purpose of this study was to examine the roles of trust and care in the implementation of a social constructivist curriculum in physical education. The scholarly literature suggests that trust and care are to be essential characteristics that foster student learning within social constructivist curricula. Therefore, understanding this relationship



can enhance teachers' ability to teach content and create the positive environment necessary for student knowledge construction.

### Statement of the Problem and Research Questions

While there seems to be growing support for the effectiveness and utility of social constructivist ideology in physical education, implementation is a daunting task and has been slow to materialize (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). Many educators default to traditional models of teaching that were learned in their own schooling and teacher preparation and thus, are better understood. Unfortunately, despite their long tenure, such traditional models limit the student's potential development by requiring them to receive and accept knowledge from others rather than assuming an active role in its conceptualization and construction (Richardson, 1994). Specifically, the traditional approach to teaching is a 'transmission model,' "that does not promote the interaction between prior and new knowledge necessary for deep understanding" (Richardson, 1994, p. 1).

In this research I examined the role of trust and care in a social constructivist physical education curriculum. Specifically, the research questions that guided this study were, (a) "What are the teacher-student relationships that evolve in the selected setting?" (b) "To what extent do these relationships reflect the concepts of trust and care?" and (c) "In what ways do the teacher-student and student-student relationships developed in this setting influence students' willingness and ability to learn?"

### Limitations

The study was limited by several constraints, including regional geography, socioeconomic environment, time, and objectivity biases. However, despite the fact that

I had been a physical education teacher at this middle school since September, 2005, a personal involvement bias associated with prior student contact did not exist. This was due to the fact that the beginning of my study coincided with the beginning of a new school year and therefore the sixth grade students were new to the school. I conducted this research in the school and within two sixth grade physical education classes that I taught. The middle school was located in a rural, middle to low economic suburb of a metropolitan area in the Southwest region of the United States. Thus, findings were constrained to reflect the events and relationships that occurred in these classes during the data collection period. I made every effort to address threats to the trustworthiness of research conducted in my own classes. Specifically, I described my personal history and beliefs regarding physical education and the concepts of trust and care in the following section. Additionally, I outlined specific procedures in the Methods chapter to identify and address the threats to the trustworthiness of the research and verify the findings objectively.

### *My Personal History*

I began my formal studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro focusing on physical education pedagogy with the Department of Exercise and Sport Science. At the time this study was conducted, I had taught physical education in four states and held teaching licensures in three states. Specifically, I had taught public physical education at the elementary and secondary level in low to middle socioeconomic areas for seven years. Additionally, I had served as a middle school head basketball and volleyball coach. I had also taught physical education activity classes as a graduate assistant at The University of Maryland at College Park.

From my personal experiences and formal training, I have developed a belief in the importance of teacher-student and student-student relationships that are in accordance with social constructivist teaching theory. Specifically, I believe that the active involvement of students in a constructivist teaching environment provides opportunities for optimal learning. Unfortunately, I believe that the current state of physical education is one where passive curricula are the norm. To overcome the negative aspects associated with a passive environment, personal relationships based on trust and care must be fostered and promoted. Ultimately, I believe that these relationships will enhance students' learning experiences by allowing them to play a more active role in their own development.

In addition to the site specific limitations, this study was also limited by an objectivity bias. Because I conducted the research and implemented the best practices, an objectivity bias may have existed. Furthermore, the measure of effectiveness of implementing trust and care strategies was difficult to uniquely identify because they were inherently entwined with the general effectiveness of social constructivist theory. Again, due to my personal pedagogical beliefs relating to trust and care, I may have assigned more significance to these factors than is truly accurate.

To uphold the trustworthiness of this study and guard against the identified biases, I included several safeguards. First, the students that were involved in my study were ones that I had never taught. Additionally, I conducted this research over an extended time period using a variety of data sources and methods. Findings represented a triangulation of several perspectives in addition to my own, thus tempering my influence on the conclusions. I diligently employed these safeguards and attempted to remain

mindful of these identified biases. Additionally, I made every effort to ensure that my research addressed the threats to trustworthiness that might otherwise have arisen in research of this type.

### Significance

In this research, I examined the role of trust and care in the implementation of a social constructivist curriculum. I did this by investigating strategies used to develop trust and care and the extent to which they enhanced student learning in these classes. Specifically, I first described the existing and developing teacher-student relationships to document the current presence and level of trust and care. Second, I described and provided interpretations from different participants' perspectives of the importance of relationships involving trust and care in successfully implementing a social constructivist curriculum.

This research centered on two rationales; a theoretical rationale and a practical rationale. The theoretical rationale for conducting this research added substance to the literature that supports the affective domain related to physical education. This study applied to the intangibles that exist in a student's experience in physical education. The practical rationale for conducting this research was to have individuals look at and think of physical education from a different perspective. Hopefully, this research will lead to new and innovative approaches to teaching physical education. Therefore, I believe that my research will support the body of literature dedicated to promoting social constructivism.

### Definition of Terms

*Care Giver:* A care giver is an individual who demonstrates both appropriate actions and intentions associated with giving (Noddings, 1992). The care giver's (or "one-caring's") state of consciousness is "characterized by engrossment and motivational displacement"(Noddings, 1992, p.15).

*Care Recipient:* The individual who is the focus of the care giver's attention. "The cared-for (care recipient) receives the caring and shows that it has been received" (Noddings, 1992, p.16).

*Caring:* Caring represents a genuine desire to uphold or enhance the general well being of another (Ennis & McCauley, 2002; Noddings, 1992).

*Circle of Care:* The circle of care is the reciprocal relationships in which the care giver extends care to the care recipient which, in turn, is reciprocated by the care recipient to the care give. This mutuality characterizes mature caring relationships that are "made up of strings of encounters in which the parties exchange places; both members are carers and cared-fors as opportunities arise" (Noddings, 1992, p.175).

*Engrossment:* "The open, nonselective receptivity to the cared-for" (Noddings, 1992, p.15).

*Motivational displacement:* "The sense that [the care giver's] motive energy is flowing toward others and their projects" (Noddings, 1992, p.16)

*Social constructivism:* Social constructivism represents the acquisition of knowledge through social interaction. "Knowledge is constructed by a person in transaction

with the environment; that is, both the individual and the environment change as a result of this learning process” (Richardson, 1994, p. 4).

*Tactical Games Approach:* “The tactical approach aims to improve students’ game performance, by combining tactical awareness and skill execution” (Mitchell, Oslin, & Griffin, 2006, p.8).

*Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU):* “Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) is a learner- and game- centered approach to sport-related games learning with strong ties to a constructivist approach to learning” (Griffin & Butler, 2005, p. 1).

*Trust:* Trust is “a state of perceived vulnerability or risk that is derived from individual’s uncertainty regarding the motives, intentions, and perspective actions of others on whom they depend” (Kramer, 1999, p.571). It is “a reliance on others’ competence and willingness to look after, rather than harm, things one cares about which are entrusted to their care” (Baier, 1986, p. 259). Furthermore, trust is “one party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is (a) benevolent, (b) reliable, (c) competent, (d) honest, and (e) open” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p.556). In summary, trust involves (a) a need that cannot efficiently be satisfied without the involvement of another, (b) a vulnerability or risk that the individual being asked to fulfill this need will not do harm, and (c) a belief that the person being asked to fulfill the need has the desire and skill to effectively do so.

*Traditional Model (transmission model):* The traditional model to teaching physical education is a teacher directed approach to curriculum and instruction. Game

strategies and skills are teacher-controlled where information flows from teacher to student. “The traditional approach to teaching ‘the transmission model’ does not promote the interaction between prior and new knowledge necessary for deep understanding” (Richardson, 1994, p. 1).

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The primary purpose of this review is to describe the complex constructs of trust and care by examining each of their component parts. In order to provide an appropriate foundation and context for the discussion of trust and care, constructivist theory will first be briefly addressed through the examination of both psychological and social constructivism. This will be followed by an in-depth examination of the trust construct, itself. Specifically, it will focus on (a) the many origins from which trust can be established, (b) the various characteristics associated with trusting relationships, (c) the existence and role of distrust or antitrust, (d) the cycle by which trusting relationships are established and maintained, and finally (e) various initiatives that can be used to foster trusting relationships. Finally, the review will conclude with a description of the ethic of care. This section of the review will describe both the participants in caring relationships and the methodologies associated with developing caring through moral education.

#### Constructivism

The constructivist learning theory describes how each person develops knowledge and understanding that is uniquely individual and meaningful. It does not typically represent the traditional teaching model of transmitting knowledge from the teacher to the student. Rather, it is a representation of how new knowledge is assimilated into current knowledge. Specifically, constructivism promotes the integration of knowledge in order to acquire deep understandings (Richardson, 1994). Constructivism also represents how individuals process knowledge and develop meaning. There are two major perspectives



from which constructivism can be examined: (a) psychological constructivism and (b) social constructivism.

### *Psychological Constructivism*

Psychological constructivism refers to a belief that “reality is not an absolute but a construction based on our past experiences and our current cognitive structures” (Bjorklund, 2000, p. 76). Primarily, the fruition of this belief is based on the theories of Piaget. According to Piaget, “life is a continuous creation of increasingly complex forms and a progressive balancing of these forms with the environment” (Piaget, 1952, p. 3). “Piaget believed that cognition is an art of construction, that children construct reality as a function of what is in the external world and their current cognitive structures” (Bjorklund, 2000, p. 254). Individuals create new and distinctive interpretations of new knowledge based on an individualistic interaction with the environment (Bjorklund, 2000).

This viewpoint is inherently developmental. Refining the prevailing view of the time that children at particular ages shared similar cognitive abilities and experiences, Piaget proposed a system in which an individual’s cognitive development was represented by definable as well as differentiable “stages.” By considering the demonstrated abilities of children at different ages, Piaget hoped to produce a model that would serve to explain their cognitive development in each separate “stage.”

Bjorklund (2000) points out that in order for new knowledge to be acquired, adjustments must be made within the cognitive structures. Specifically, Piaget states, “regarding the child, not as being of pure imitation, but an organism which assimilates things to itself, selects them and digests them according to its own structure” (Piaget,

1963, p. 31). This is referred to as adaptation. Adaptation “is the organism’s tendency to adjust its structures to environmental demands” (Bjorklund, 2000, p. 76-77). Piaget believed that constructing new knowledge was a complicated and active process in which an individual makes modifications of old knowledge in order to make sense of the new. “In short, at every level, experience is necessary to the development of intelligence” (Piaget, 1952, p. 362). In support of Piaget’s theoretical perspective, Bjorklund states that “the child is an active, self-motivated agent, playing an important role in his or her own development” (Bjorklund, 2000, p. 99). Therefore, psychological constructivism is dependent upon the individual and how he or she responds to his/her environment.

#### *Social Constructivism*

Unlike psychological constructivism, social constructivism, which represents the acquisition of knowledge through social interaction, is inherently dependent upon the social environment. “From the very first days of the child’s development his activities acquire meaning of their own in a system of social behavior and, being directed towards a definite purpose, are refracted through the prism of the child’s environment” (Vygotsky, 1978, p.30). This particular perspective of constructivism is based on the belief “that child development was a complex dialectical process between the child and the social environment” (Hausfather, 1996, p. 3). Specifically, “knowledge is constructed by a person in transaction with the environment; that is, both the individual and the environment change as a result of this learning process” (Richardson, 1994, p. 4).

Given the belief that each individual student has unique interpretations of knowledge, social constructivism points to the fact that such students will, if given the opportunity, share their personal knowledge perspectives with their fellow classmates as

they learn and grow within the given environment. Vygotsky posited that “the relation between speech and action is a dynamic one in the course of children’s development” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 27). “Vygotsky believed that the best forms of human thought are passed on generation-by-generation through interchanges between more competent individuals (e.g., parents and teachers) and less competent individuals (e.g., children)” (Byrnes, 2000, p. 75). According to this perspective, the social environment is integral to knowledge development.

Additionally, Vygotsky explained that knowledge development was a process that involved social interaction (Hausfather, 1996). This process is referred to as the zone of proximal development. Specifically, the zone of proximal development “is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). A social environment, such as school, provides students with an opportunity to develop within the zone of proximal development due to the given roles of teachers and peers (Byrnes, 2000). In order for individuals to learn and acquire new information within the zone of proximal development, it is vital that the social interactions are constructive with set objectives. Specifically, “for the zone of proximal development to be effective, the teacher must be willing to support learning and the student must be willing to assent to learn” (Hausfather, 1996, p. 5).

“Most constructivists would also agree that the traditional approach to teaching ‘the transmission model’ does not promote the interaction between prior and new knowledge necessary for deep understanding” (Richardson, 1994, p. 1). In order for

social constructivism to become a reality in schools, it is imperative that the instructional learning environment provides students with a medium for interactions between individuals to occur. Social constructivism represents not only how individuals create meaning, but also how other individuals guide one to that meaning. Within the school environment, it is important for teachers to establish trusting relationships in order to allow the beliefs of social constructivism to be realized. Similarly, it is important for students to believe that they are genuinely cared for in order for such trusting relationships to be established (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

### Trust

Trust is a multifaceted complex construct that varies depending on the context of the relationship (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Theorists have postulated a range of definitions in efforts to properly convey its true meaning. For example, Kramer (1999) defines trust as “a state of perceived vulnerability or risk that is derived from individuals’ uncertainty regarding the motive, intentions, and perspective actions of other on whom they depend” (Kramer, 1999, p. 571). Similarly, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) define trust as “one party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is (a) benevolent, (b) reliable, (c) competent, (d) honest, and (e) open” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 556). Finally, Baier (1986) defines trust as “a reliance on others’ competence and willingness to look after, rather than harm, things one cares about which are entrusted to their care” (Baier, 1986, p. 259). Additionally, Baier (1986) points out the inherent risk that is inevitably present within a trusting relationship. Baier (1986) attributes such potential risk to unforeseen positive or negative behavior on the part of the trusted.

Regardless of whose definition of trust is considered, there exists similar dynamics that serve to both define and explain trust relationships. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998) explain that trust relationships typically occur within established social settings between individuals whose relationships have been defined. “Trust allows individuals to focus on the task at hand, and therefore, to work and learn more effectively” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998, p. 341). Conversely, when trust is nonexistent, individuals become reluctant to take risks and are forced to employ alternate means to guard against a presumed vulnerability (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). This often proves inefficient due to time and resource requirements.

To establish an understanding of the broad construct of trust, I will define trust by considering (a) the origins from which trust is developed, (b) the characteristics common among trusting relationships, (c) the role of distrust or antitrust, (d) the cycle by which trust is initiated and maintained, and (e) various initiatives that can serve to foster and maintain trusting relationships. By considering each of these five unique areas, their interactions, and their interdependencies, a solid understanding of trust can be attained.

### *Origins of Trust*

The construct of trust can evolve from many different origins. Given general agreement on what is meant by trust, the origin from which trust is elicited differs significantly (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Kramer (1999) suggests that research conducted to explain the various conditions that promote trust include factors that influence individuals’ expectations about the trustworthiness of others with respect to their willingness to engage in a trusting relationship. Both Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) and Kramer (1999) examined the reasons or origins for trusting relationships. For

example, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) suggest the existence of seven origins of trust including (a) disposition to trust, (b) moods and emotions, (c) value and attitudes, (d) trust and diversity, (e) calculative trust, (f) institution based trust, and (g) knowledge based trust. Similarly, Kramer (1999) discusses six origins of trust that include (a) dispositional trust, (b) history based trust, (c) third parties as conduits of trust, (d) category based trust, (e) role-based trust, and (f) rule based trust. Through an examination of the various origins of trust, it is possible to gain a more complete understanding of the multidimensional nature of trust, and how trust influences the quality of interpersonal relationships.

An analysis of the origins of trust proposed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) and Kramer (1999) suggests that they can be further grouped into three comprehensive categories: (a) willingness to trust, (b) personal similarities, and (c) external motivations. These categories convey the basic themes essential to the formation or the emergence of trust.

#### *Willingness to Trust*

Individuals' willingness to trust influences how they will either accept or reject a trusting relationship based on their (a) personality or dispositions toward trust, (b) previous history or experiences with trust, and (c) their personal moods and emotions. First, an individual's personal disposition toward entering into trust relationships should be considered. While some individuals are generally trusting, others may not be (Kramer, 1999). Second, an existing history of positive or negative experiences with trust can factor into a trust relationship. Likewise, knowledge gained from direct interactions with an individual can serve as an effective foundation for trust. Lastly, the

moods and emotions that are unique to a given individual can affect the level to which that individual is willing to trust. Each of these origins impacts an individual's willingness to enter a trust relationship.

*Dispositional trust.* Dispositional or personality-based trust describes a situation in which trust is evoked based on a given individual's personal threshold or likelihood to enter into a trust relationship. This is often cultivated within an individual through a combination of societal factors that regulate a personal sense of when, where, and how much trust should be invested in a given individual or situation (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Kramer (1999) argues that dispositions to trusting are developed throughout the course of one's general experiences and are correlated with the individual's beliefs regarding human nature. Unlike history-based trust, which will be discussed later in this section, dispositional trust does not relate to a specific situation or series of situations. Rather it pertains to an individual's beliefs regarding trust that have been established throughout their many experiences. For example, "A child whose parents had been consistent would grow up to be generally trusting, while a child who had been regularly disappointed by broken promises would grow up with a generalized suspicion of people's motives and promises" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 559).

A further consideration associated with dispositional trust concerns the suspected behavioral byproducts of being a person who is generally trusting. People with a trusting disposition tend to be, themselves, more trustworthy. Furthermore, this concept holds true even given the understood personal benefits that can be gained through deceitful means. "In general, high trustors seemed to be happier, to be more popular, and to be considered better friends than low trustors; moreover, they were less likely to be

conflicted, maladjusted, or dependent on others” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 559).

*History-based trust.* Knowledge gained from direct interaction with an individual can serve as an effective foundation for trust. Thus, history or experience-based trust is derived through an existing relationship. Although similar to dispositional trust, history-based trust refers to trust built over the course of a specific relationship, while dispositional trust concerns a general pattern established over various and often unrelated occurrences. Based on continuous interactions, the level of trust between individuals either increases or decreases as a situational history is established (Kramer, 1999). Over time, both the trustee and the trustor become familiar with one another and are able to predict how the other will behave in given situations. Through regular communication, they are able to determine the other’s dependability and reliability (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). “A self-reinforcing pattern of trust emerges as repeated cycles of exchange, risk taking, and successful fulfillment of expectations strengthen the willingness of trusting parties to rely upon each other” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 562). Through such interaction, one is able to personally evaluate the level of trust that should be afforded an individual based on repeated instances in which that individual has proven himself or herself trustworthy (Kramer, 1999).

*Moods and emotions.* Moods and emotions serve as an origin for trust because of their inevitable existence within a trust relationship. Similar to disposition to trust, moods and emotions as an origin of trust relates to the specific makeup of a given person. Just as some people are naturally more outgoing while others are reserved, some people have basic moods and emotions that are more conducive to trust than others. “Emotions



are intense affective states tied to particular events or circumstances that interrupt ongoing cognitive processes and behaviors, while moods are less intense, generalized affective states that are not explicitly linked to particular events or circumstances” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 560). From this definition, it is possible to see how they play a crucial role in a trust relationships given that entering into a trust relationship places one in a naturally vulnerable position (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). By developing a sense of confidence in a relationship, one is naturally inclined to believe that there is an element of caring for the mutual well-being (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Although many trusting relationships have moods and emotions as an origin, friendship is not necessarily a prerequisite. Often this dynamic happens in reverse order, where trust is first established and then friendship follows (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Also, it is possible for someone to trust and respect another despite a general dislike of that person (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). For example, a student may trust the wisdom of a teacher that the student is not particularly fond of personally. Lastly, it should be pointed out that moods and emotions are a direct reflection of an individual’s natural disposition. Just as all people are not compatible, all moods and emotions are not compatible. Therefore, while an individual’s unique moods and emotions may contribute significantly to strengthening a trusting relationship, they may also serve to prevent such a relationship.

### *Personal Similarities*

The category of personal similarities describes three distinct origins of trust: (a) group membership, (b) common values and attitudes, and (c) third parties as conduits of

trust. In each, common relationships or traits between individuals foster trust. The most obvious origin of trust, group membership, involves individuals who are members of a given professional, social, or ethnic group. Just by being a part of the same organization or environment, individuals may feel they have something in common. Similarly, individuals may also be inclined to develop trust relationships based on mutually equivalent values and attitudes. When individuals are motivated by similar aspirations or hold important values in common, they are more likely to develop trust relationships. Thus, individuals tend to seek and entrust confidence in others who share similar values and attitudes (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Finally, third parties may function as conduits for trust. Often a third party, such as a friend or acquaintance, who has established prior trust relationships with the primary parties, can introduce individuals and vouch for their integrity or trustworthiness, thus fostering the development of trust (Kramer, 1999).

*Group membership.* Membership within an established group can serve as a powerful origin of trust. People trust others whom they perceive to be similar to themselves (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). However, the natural tendency to trust members of a common group based solely on their existence in the group may contribute to creating unfair bias and prejudice. Individuals perceive group membership to be associated with race, religion, gender, and socioeconomic status (Kramer, 1999). “This kind of trust is based on norms of obligation and cooperation rooted in social similarity, wherein similarity may depend on characteristics such as family background, social status, and ethnicity” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 560). Often, group members believe that membership conveys an inherent level of honesty, trustworthiness, and

cooperativeness (Kramer, 1999). Ultimately however, such beliefs can lead to an acceptance of in-group members as being people who can be trusted, while labeling out-group members as being untrustworthy.

Unfortunately, such group bias can lead to negative scenarios. For example, “individuals may confer a sort of depersonalized trust on other in-group members that is predicated simply on awareness of their shared category membership” (Kramer, 1999, p. 577). They assume the best, blindly trusting in-group members even when trust is unwarranted. Therein exists the chance to misjudge both an in-group member as well as an out-group member. Thus, “group biases can be destructive not only by causing people to regard out-group members with suspicion: they can also lead to too much trust of an in-group member” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 561).

*Values and attitudes.* The various values to which people hold themselves accountable and the attitudes they project in given situations, if similar to another’s, may lead to the development of a trust relationship (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Given that both of these aspects represent what people often consider the strength and meaning of their personal character, trust is granted to others that are similar in this respect. Values, as defined by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000), include general standards and principles such as helpfulness, fairness, and loyalty. Some individuals believe strongly in such ideals and strive diligently to uphold them in their personal life. Therefore, these individuals may seek out and entrust confidence in others who share similar values. Conversely, if an individual holds dissimilar values than those held by a person who is contemplating trust, that individual may be more likely to withhold their trust.

Attitudes are similar to values in that they represent the general feelings of an individual. Specifically, “attitudes are the knowledge structures containing the thoughts and feelings people have about other people, groups, or organizations and the means through which they define and structure their interactions with others” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 560). Furthermore, attitudes explain how individuals evaluate a situation. As with values, people with similar situational attitudes are more willing to engage in mutual trust, while people with differing situational attitudes are often suspicious of the other and are less likely to trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Although both values and attitudes can be defined individually, it is difficult to ignore their interdependence. Attitudes are typically formed from and represent the personal values that one holds. Likewise, the inherent attitudes that prevail from one’s general personality make some values easier to embrace, while others impossible. “Because relationships within organizations involve interdependence and a certain amount of uncertainty, the attitudes that people form toward each other in an organizational context are likely to contain information concerning the other party’s trustworthiness based on perceptions of shared values” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 560).

*Third parties as conduits of trust.* A mutually existing third party can also aid in the development of trust. Although it is most desirable to determine a person’s trustworthiness through extensive one on one personal contact, the sheer time required to build trusting relationships with everyone with whom we interact makes this impossible (Kramer, 1999). Kramer (1999) posits that third parties, with whom one has already formed some sort of trusting relationship, serve as conduits of trust. Third parties act as

“go between” in new relationships enabling individuals to “roll over” their expectations from well-established relationships to new relationships in which adequate knowledge or history may not yet be available (Kramer, 1999, p. 577). Such second hand knowledge allows a person to leverage an existing relationship in order to evaluate a new relationship’s trust potential without actually investing the time necessary to develop that relationship. Although third party conduits can create efficiencies, using gossip to determine how much a foreign person can be trusted does have its limitations.

Incomplete and skewed accounts often result because people prefer to communicate what they believe the other party wants to hear. Unfortunately, this may lead to a false sense of trust or distrust.

#### *External Motivations*

A third origin of trust, external motivations, relates to scenarios where trust is fostered by a system rather than by an individual. These are described as (a) role-based, (b) rule-based, and (c) calculative trust. Kramer (1999) suggests that because an individual has been given a certain role, society accepts inherently that the individual can be trusted within the confines of that given role. External motivation also fosters trust through the many rules that govern everyday life. Although an individual may not have earned trust, the existing societal rules help to limit and control the actions of that individual (Kramer, 1999). A final representation of trust, calculative trust, deals with the trustor making a personal assessment or calculation where the reward of a fruitful trusting relationship is levied against the risk of being deceived. In this scenario, if the reward is great enough, the risk may be worth taking even if there is no other existing origin of trust on which to gauge the relationship.

*Role based trust.* Kramer (1999) explains that role based trust reflects trust bestowed simply based on the roles people play within organizations. Similar to group membership based trust, role based trust stems not from actual knowledge of an individual's capability, strengths, motives, or intentions, but rather from knowledge of the role that the individual is asked to perform. For example, parents trust the school principal to maintain acceptable academic and behavioral standards even though they may never have met the principal personally. The role that the individual has assumed is adequate to evoke a set of expectations leading to a trusting relationship.

One significant factor that leads to role based trust is knowledge of the requirements needed to assume such a role (Kramer, 1999). In order for individuals to gain entry into a given role, they often must first prove their technical competence with respect to the work that will be required by the role. Demonstration of this competence is accomplished prior to or during the selection process. However, if an individual does not possess the needed competence, the barriers to entry should preclude that individual's appointment. This allows for trust to be placed in a defined and understood system rather than in any particular individual (Kramer, 1999). Despite the confidence afforded role based trust, there is a possibility for breakdowns because trust is not based on direct knowledge of the intentions or motives of the individual. For example, during times of institutional crisis, trust based solely on roles may be strained as the reasoning behind the various decisions is critiqued (Kramer, 1999).

*Rule based trust.* Rule based trust (Kramer, 1999) or institution based trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000) reflects a trust in the institutional rules and regulations that govern the actions of the individual. Because established rules dictate the allowed

actions of others, individuals are able to feel secure even when they are faced with an unfamiliar situation. Furthermore, understanding and abiding by the rules of an organization leads to a general level of socialization for all involved (Kramer, 1999). As new members learn and live by the accepted rules, they gain the confidence of the other members (Kramer, 1999). Ultimately, because of the social consequences associated with non-compliance, the trustor feels assured that the trusted person will act according to the behavioral requirements of the given institution (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Like role based trust, there are formal rule requirements such as licensure or certification that assure the trustor that the trustee has passed some level of scrutiny (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). In many ways, it is the consequences of not abiding by the formal rules that compels the individual to act as expected. If a person with a given certification fails to act within the guidelines of that certification, that individual will likely fall subject to punitive actions that far outweigh any advantage that might be gained through deceit. For example, if a teacher exceeds the acceptable bounds for disciplining a student, that teacher violates the rules limiting that individual's actions within the given position and, therefore, could lose his/her teaching position. Because of this, the public is able to trust the certified or licensed person.

*Calculative trust.* Calculative trust is based on weighing the risks involved with trusting a potentially untrustworthy person against the potential lost value if trust is withheld (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). In this scenario, trust is based on a choice that is derived from rational calculation. This form of trust can be very utilitarian (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). In deciding what is best, the individual balances the potential for trusting in an individual and furthering a relationship with the loss if that

person is not trustworthy. Furthermore, when deciding whether or not to trust, one considers the “other party’s benefit to behave in a trustworthy manner because the costly sanctions in place for breach of trust exceed any potential benefits from opportunistic behavior” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p.561).

Ultimately, calculative trust is most efficient when both parties have something to lose if they act in an opportunistic manner. However, given the punitive nature on which calculative trust relies, it is often considered a base of distrust rather than a base of trust. Regardless, when more naturally occurring methods of trust break down, calculative trust may remain as a default in fostering the continued relationship (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

#### *Characteristics of Trust*

Trust is considered to be a measure of one’s confidence to enter into a vulnerable situation (Baier, 1986). This is not to imply that an individual enters into such situations foolishly or without appropriate prior forethought. In actuality, the opposite is true. Depending on the situation or need, an individual’s willingness to risk vulnerability varies (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Furthermore, trusting relationships involve interdependence. The interests of one party cannot be attained unless they are willing to risk vulnerability by putting their trust in another (Baier, 1986). For example, students trust teachers to teach them the skills and knowledge that will allow them to succeed in life. Although students believe this is what will happen, by trusting the teacher, they run the risk of being misguided and, therefore, left vulnerable. The interdependent nature of this relationship, however, leaves the student with little choice but to trust the teacher.



To minimize vulnerability, trustors attempt to gain knowledge of the trustee, thereby increasing their confidence in the integrity of the trusting relationship (Kramer, 1999). Trustors compare their knowledge of the trustee with characteristics that are common to successful trusting relationships. The trustor would look for characteristics such as (a) benevolence, (b) reliability, (c) competence, (d) honesty, and (e) openness to gain confidence in the quality and integrity of the potential trusting relationship (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Through an examination of each of these five characteristics, it will be possible to increase our understanding of the processes involved in confidence building within a trusting relationship.

### *Benevolence*

Benevolence, the feeling that one values the general well-being of another based on the existence of good will, is often considered to be the most common characteristic of trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). However, benevolence is known more by its absence than by its presence. Baier (1986) argues that individuals are likely to engage in trusting relationships where vulnerability is risked because they believe that trust will be maintained.

“In situations of interdependence, this faith in the altruism of the other is particularly important” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 557). For example, students depend on the teachers’ continuing good will when their attempts repeatedly end in failure. Because students believe that the teacher recognizes their efforts despite the inevitable shortcoming, they are more willing to attempt the given task. Once they become proficient, they are better able to maintain a more equitable role in the

relationship. Without such belief in the teacher's good will in offering second chances, however, students are likely to avoid trying (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

### *Reliability*

Reliability is a characteristic that is inevitably associated with trust. Reliability is associated with predictability in a trusting relationship. Therefore, trustors are able to trust what the trustee will do within the context of a known situation (Kramer, 1999). Often, reliability is developed through repeated action. Once confidence is developed, trustors feel as if they can rely on the action of the trustee (Orbell, Dawes, & Schwartz-Shea, 1994).

This simple explanation, however, does not fully encompass the concept of reliability as a characteristic of trust. In some situations, reliability can work to inhibit trust. If trustees are not reliable, letting the trustor down repeatedly, then such reliability does not foster trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Likewise, if the trustee's repeated actions prove to be damaging or hurtful, a feeling of distrust develops. In this case, reliability works to retard trust building (Kramer, 1999).

When reliability is a characteristic of trusting relationships, the concept of good will also is present. By defining reliability as having both a predictability component and a good will component, its place in trusting relationships is solidified (Baier, 1986). For example, when teachers ask parents to help their children with extra-curricular activities, they rely on the parent to show good will in a predictable manner. Because parents typically feel good will toward their children, the teacher can trust that it will be done.

### *Competence*

Competence can bridge the gap between good intentions and successful outcomes. Therefore, it is an essential characteristic that must be present if a trusting relationship is to be effective (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). When the trustee can demonstrate a high level of competence with respect to his or her ability to perform the task required by the trustor, the likelihood of trust being extended increases. Conversely, regardless if the trustee demonstrates earnest good will towards fulfilling a commitment, if he or she is not competent, the likelihood of a beneficial relationship is severely limited. Whether it is from a lack of training or from a skill deficiency, if trustees are not competent in the respective area, they often are not trusted to fulfill the trustor's expectations.

This perspective on competence as a characteristic of trust is in no way meant to suggest that people with good will should not be trusted; only that competence is also required. The truth is that all people are not competent in all areas. For example, regardless of how much desire and effort a college student acting in the capacity of a student teacher would put into instructing a class, the ultimate responsibility for educating students should only be entrusted to a certified teacher. Another example involves participation in athletic competition. Regardless of how much an individual desires to win, they should not be trusted to fill a position unless they have the skills that will allow them to positively contribute to the team's success.

### *Honesty*

Honesty represents one of the most obvious and important characteristics of trust. It "speaks to a person's character, integrity, and authenticity" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy,

2000, p. 558). Honesty is the foundation that allows trustors to believe that trustees are speaking truthfully. In exploring how the honesty of an individual can be assessed, one must simply look for correlations between the words and corresponding deeds of that individual. A test for honesty requires reliability and predictability. In other words, trustees must follow through with verbal commitments to be considered honest (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). To a lesser degree, trustees also may be considered honest when they only partially fulfill their commitment, provided they admit their failure without distorting the truth. Through such honesty it is possible for trust to grow. However, without honesty, trust is likely to be denied (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001).

### *Openness*

Openness represents the amount of information an individual is willing to share regarding their personal situation or intentions. It acts as a window for others to determine the level of trust they should be afforded (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). Openness allows a behind the scenes look at just how honest, competent, reliable, or benevolent an individual actually is. “Such openness signals a kind of reciprocal trust, a confidence that neither the information nor the individual will be exploited, and recipients can feel the same confidence in return” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 558). Without openness, it is unlikely that individuals will form trusting relationships.

To better understand the role of openness in trust building, it is important to recognize the negative consequences associated with not being open. A sense of distrust may develop when one or both of the individuals remain reserved (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). People are reluctant to trust those who are less than forthcoming with information pertaining to the matter at hand. For example, principals who operate in a

closed environment are likely to establish a climate of distrust. By not involving the school faculty in the decision-making processes, principals send a message that they do not trust the faculty. This, in turn, is likely to lead to the faculty not trusting the principal (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001).

Although at first it seems that one should be generally open in their dealing, there is a chance that such openness could lead to negative consequences. Individuals are vulnerable when they openly reveal personal information or weaknesses (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Thus, they are susceptible to others who can take advantage of the situation. Given this, individuals should be wise about their level of openness. While too little openness can be damaging to a trust relationship, uncensored openness can lead to personal damage.

Although each characteristic provides insight into the nature of the trusting relationship, there is no predictable pattern or scheme yet determined to identify which characteristic is more important in the trusting relationship (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Depending on the situation at hand, one characteristic may outweigh the other. For example, in the case of a surgeon, competence is likely the most important characteristic, whereas in the case of a lawyer, honesty may be of most importance. However, “among teachers and principals, all aspects of trust seem to carry significant importance” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 558).

#### *Distrust/Antitrust*

Just as trust plays a significant role in fostering productive and rewarding relationships, distrust or antitrust serves to jeopardize the existence of or even destroy existing relationships. Baier (1986) points out that when trustees do not uphold the

granted trust, distrust is established. Baier (1986) also points out that betrayals of trust often undo existing relationships and lead to ill will. Ultimately, such distrust forces an individual to find an alternative measure by which to guard against the self-imposed vulnerability associated with a trusting relationship gone bad (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998).

In the article “Varnishing the Truth in Schools – Principals and Teachers Spinning Reality,” Sweetland & Hoy (2001) provide a framework from which distrust can be examined. Specifically, Sweetland and Hoy (2001) established six concepts that represented such distrust. Each of these concepts was based on their definition of varnishing the truth: “the adding and subtracting and the partial display and concealment of what one person believes to be true while communicating with another” (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001, p. 283). The six concepts that they established included: (a) reversing the truth: the lie, (b) deception: revealing and concealing, (c) self-deception: vulnerability and stability, (d) civility: showing and hiding thoughts, (e) creating the truth: power and reality, and (f) game playing: manipulation and deception (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001). By examining each of these six concepts, it is possible to better understand distrust.

#### *Reversing the Truth: The Lie*

Reversing the truth involves outright deception. This is commonly referred to as lying. Information contrary to reality is presented by the trusted in order to achieve some intended result. Examples of lying can be found in abundance within the school environment. From the age-old fib of the dog eating the homework to severe condemning accusations between fellow students, lying seems to be a common

occurrence. Unfortunately, such lying often leaves both parties in a compromising position (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001).

Conversely, Sweetland and Hoy (2001) are quick to point out that not all lying is bad or wrong. If, by lying, an individual upholds that which would be considered “right” or “good,” he or she ultimately creates a positive situation. For example, lying to an outraged parent about the whereabouts of a given teacher could likely prevent an unfortunate situation and ultimately allow for civil resolution. However, more often than not, lying results in negative consequences and should be avoided (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001).

#### *Deception: Revealing and Concealing*

Deception is a form of deceiving others through misinformation. Unlike lying, deception is more subtle and usually involves “managing information” in order to create the desired effect (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001). Specifically, an individual decides to only reveal partial truths in order to deceive the trustor into believing him or her. Although deception may be more subtle than lying, it is by no means less destructive with respect to trusting relationships (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001).

One common form of deception involves only sharing partial information or telling half-truths. By either concealing information or revealing information in a way to confuse the recipient are two means by which to use deception. Regardless, the deceived individual believes that they fully understand the issue when in fact they do not (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001). For example, if a student asks to be excused from participating in physical activity based on injury that is no longer relevant, he or she is using deception to manipulate the teacher’s trust. Consequently, if discovered, the

deceitful actions of that student may not only result in distrust towards that individual but may also result in a general distrust for all students.

*Self-deception: Vulnerability and Stability*

Self-deception represents an individual's inability to believe or accept the truth. "The harsh reality of life often is just too overwhelming and requires modification" (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001, p. 284). Individuals can fall prey to self-deception because they feel vulnerable. By only seeing what is desired, a false sense of stability is achieved.

Supporting this belief is Gurtman's findings that distrusting individuals have "a variety of problems, not only in trusting others (as would be expected), but also in those interpersonal areas that are related to trust" (Gurtman, 1992, p. 999). Examples of such interpersonal areas include competitiveness, envy, resentment, and vindictiveness. Unfortunately, the repercussions of such self-deception can lead to the further deception as false information is passed along (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001).

*Civility: Showing and Hiding Thoughts*

While civility may seem out of place in a list of distrustful concepts, it in fact does have a place. Civility typically refers to acting within the virtues of public life in order to keep in mind the interests of others. However, as Sweetland and Hoy (2001) point out, by acting in such a civil manner one may truly be hiding some individual interests and desires while only showing those that do not create civil disruption. By doing this, "we deceive others to keep our social systems working, and civility is a means to that end" (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001, p. 284).



### *Creating the Truth: Power and Reality*

Creating the truth, the fifth trust varnishing concept established by Sweetland and Hoy (2001), involves the actions of those individuals in power. Individuals in power often have the luxury of interpreting what is right and wrong. By doing this, they decide what is truth and what is not. “Power not only can blur the truth; it can create both truth and organizational reality” (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001, p. 285). In such cases where persons in power (e.g. superintendents or principals) decide on a given policy, they in a sense decide what truly represents the organization and what does not (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001). Consequently, such control can foster an environment of distrust.

As was discussed earlier, trust can be effectively fostered through the creation of an open environment. However, in order to protect against opportunistic behavior, it is important to have rules. Unfortunately, unnecessary and overly restrictive rules can create an environment of distrust. “Teachers as well as students may respond to a proliferation of rules with feelings of alienation, disloyalty, and lack of commitment, which, ironically, can result in dishonesty and cheating” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 584). In order for rules to be better received, it is important for the rule to be understood clearly and concisely by all.

### *Game Playing: Manipulation and Deception*

Game playing typically represents a subordinate’s response to the truth that is established by those in leadership. The reason behind game playing is to create organizational change by influencing those in power. For example, if a teacher is not happy with the actions of the principal, he or she may elect to avoid direct contact and choose to instigate internal conflict in order to bring the perceived problem to light.

Through such actions, the individual is able to reveal the problem while remaining anonymous (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001). Unfortunately, because the key elements of such game playing typically involve manipulation and deception, such actions have the potential to backfire (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001).

While it is usually subordinates who resort to game playing, it is important to note the superiors do also partake. Typically, this occurs when they perceive their authority is challenged. Additionally, superiors may choose to partake in game playing as a counter response to subordinate game playing. Unfortunately, when this occurs, the game playing becomes cyclical and self-perpetuating (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001).

Through an understanding of the six concepts presented by Sweetland and Hoy (2001), it is possible to better grasp the various methods that represent distrustful actions. More importantly, it is possible to understand how and why such distrustful actions result in negative consequences. Because the very nature of trust relationships involve assuming risk, there will always exist a motivation to partake in distrustful actions in efforts to exploit others. From a strictly utilitarian point of view, such distrust or antitrust occurs when the value gained from acting in a dishonest manner outweighs the value of acting honestly (Deutsch, 1960). Unfortunately, as was discussed previously, utility, like “calculated trust,” has the potential to do more harm than good.

### *The Trust Cycle*

“Trust is a dynamic phenomenon that takes on a different character [in different environments and] at different stages of a relationship” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 570). Just as the origins from which trust can be elicited may vary, the path or cycle of trust relationships can also vary. By examining the generalized stages of trusting

relationships, it is possible to understand why a given stage exists and if that stage is a necessary part of a specific trust relationship.

In order to break down the complicated web associated with the development and growth of trusting relationships, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) suggest the existence of five distinct stages that comprise the trust cycle: (a) initiating, (b) sustaining and maintaining, (c) betrayal, (d) revenge, and (e) repair. In the most simplistic trust relationship, each of these stages can lead to the next and ultimately form a repeating cycle. In such a scenario, trust is first initiated and then strengthened as the relationship is sustained. As bounds are tested, one of the members of a relationship often feels betrayed, leading to acts of revenge. The two parties then may sort through their differences and work to repair trust, and the relationship returns to its initial stage. As long as the involved parties desire to remain in a trusting relationship, the cycle of relationship maintenance will continue.

In reality, the trust process is typically much more complicated. The relative existence, interdependence, and ordering of the stages will often vary depending on the specifics of a given relationship (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Some relationships never feel the strain of a betrayal; others encounter a continuous pattern of betrayal and repair. Similarly, some betrayed relationships are more conducive to repair than others. Although not all stages will exist in every relationship, these five dynamics can serve as definable stages in trusting relationships. By understanding the aspects and interrelationships inherent in the trust process, individuals gain a clearer understanding of the trust relationships.

### *Initiating Trust*

Individuals initially enter into trusting relationship because they believe that the relationship will in some way serve them. Similarly, one perceives that the rewards gained from entering into a trust relationship will outweigh the potential risks (Baier, 1986). Trusting relationships are complex and in many cases, individuals feel an inherent anxiety toward trusting (Kramer & Isen, 1994). Adding to the anxiety is the fact that an individual entering into a trust relationship does not clearly understand just how the relationship will progress. Often, there is very little first hand knowledge. In many cases, the decision to enter into a trusting relationship is based not on any specific evidence that the relationship will prosper, but rather on a lack of evidence that the relationship will fail (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Nonetheless, a trust relationship is initiated based on limited information.

When convincing others to initiate trusting relationships, individuals may attempt to demonstrate characteristics of trust, signaling trustworthiness and/or personal reliability (Bair, 1986). One proven way to promote the success of a trust relationship is through open communication. By openly sharing ideas, plans, and beliefs, individuals encourage quick examination that can allow another to better gauge their true intentions (Deutsch, 1960). As the parties continue to interact, the initial desire to enter into a trusting relationship is strengthened, resulting in the progression of a trusting relationship, or weakened, resulting in the likely termination of the trust relationship.

### *Sustaining and Maintaining Trust*

Following the initial decision to commit to a trusting relationship, individuals have a mutual interest to strengthen and maintain it. The strength of a trusting

relationship is affected by the trusting persons' satisfaction with past experiences and the length of time in which parties have been involved in a trusting association (Baier, 1986). As each party repeatedly demonstrates that they are worthy of being trusted, a belief that trustworthiness will be extended in the future is strengthened (Orbell, et al., 1994).

Given the unequal balance of power that often exists within a trusting relationship, each individual must understand the other's vantage in order to sustain and maintain a trusting relationship beneficial to both (Butler & Cantrell, 1984). "For a superior's trust in a subordinate, the integrity, competence, and consistency of the subordinate were most important. For a subordinate's trust in a superior, the integrity, loyalty (motives), and openness of the superior were most important" (Butler & Cantrell, 1984, p. 20). When both the senior and subordinate recognize this dynamic and deliberately act so as to fulfill the expectations of the other, the trusting relationship inevitably grows (Butler & Cantrell, 1984).

Open communication, shared decision-making, and cooperation are effective strategies for maintaining and sustaining trusting relationships. Open communication fosters understanding and permits the subordinate to share in the decision making process. By allowing the subordinate to share in making decisions, the senior demonstrates a level of trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Trust is further enhanced through cooperation. By cooperating mutually, the involved parties establish a self-sustaining cycle of trust, enhancing the relationship (Deutsch, 1960). As each party continues to demonstrate acceptable trusting behavior, the relationship is sustained and maintained based on the specific history of interactions within the relationship. Such first

hand knowledge serves to fortify the origins from which the relationship was initiated, thus strengthening the relationship as a whole.

### *Betrayal*

In an ideal scenario, a trust relationship would perpetually gain strength, thus demonstrating the true value of trust relationships. Unfortunately, through its very nature, trust represents an avenue by which the manipulative can gain an unfair advantage. Therefore, trust relationships can be damaged by betrayal (Baier, 1986). Because a trusting relationship inherently involves assuming risk by willingly placing something of personal value in the care of another, one can understand how a betrayal of trust is destructive to the relationship (Baier, 1986). In trust betrayal, the trustor's voluntarily exposed vulnerability is exploited by the trustee. In this situation, not only have the trustors lost something of value, but also their loss is the result of intentional actions of someone who was assumed to be trustworthy. It is important to note that a trust betrayal is a voluntary and intentional act. Actions such as lying, deception, and manipulation are used to exploit weaknesses that have been revealed by the trustor (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001).

Given the obvious negative consequences that trust betrayal has on an existing relation, it may seem hard to understand why betrayals occur in the first place. For trust betrayal to occur, the value of the relationship to the betrayer no longer outweighs that which can be gained through a betrayal (Deutsch, 1960). For example, if a student believes that taking advantage of a teacher's trust will better his or her personal position more significantly than maintaining truthfulness, that student is likely to engage in deceitful actions. Often this is a result of the betrayer's dissatisfaction with an existing

environment. However, sometimes a betrayal can be brought on through a lessening in the trustor's benevolence or integrity.

Although trust betrayal can be the result of unethical or immoral actions, in some instances, a betrayal of trust results from an ethical decision (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). For example, betraying the trust of a colleague who is participating in wrongdoing by alerting the proper authorities would constitute an ethical action. In this case, the trustor is faced with a decision of which trust to up-hold and which to betray. A decision to report illegal or unethical behavior is a decision to uphold the trust of the institution and is regarded by society as an ethical decision.

### *Revenge*

Although betrayals in trust often leave the trustor disadvantaged, decisions to revenge the betrayal often hinge on the victim's perceptions of betrayal. Naturally, the idea of being wronged, especially by someone who has willingly been granted trust, creates within the victim trustor a sense of hurt. It is this hurt, be it sadness, confusion, disappointment, or anger, which evokes the victim to consider revenge. However, the actual response, if any, depends primarily on the victim's perception of the betrayal (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Depending on the circumstances surrounding the betrayal, the victim may choose a range of responses. On one hand, if the victim believes that the betrayal resulted from factors beyond the perpetrator's control, no response may result. On the other hand, if the victim believes that the perpetrator acted out of malevolence or selfishness, a revengeful response is almost assured. Furthermore, regardless of the perpetrator's perceived intention, the victim may hold the organization or institution responsible for

placing the perpetrator in a position to betray the victim (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

If the victim seeks revenge, an escalating range of scenarios is possible. Some victims simply choose to sever ties with the perpetrator and avoid any future social contact. Others may be satisfied with fantasizing about what revengeful acts they could attempt without actually following through. Still others choose to follow through with an act of revenge. Finally, some victims choose to forgive the perpetrator and attempt to rebuild the relationship (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Regardless of the victim's response, once a betrayal has occurred, power is equalized because the victim is in control of future events. While this control may lead to a vicious cycle of feuding, it may also lead to the rebuilding of the relationship. Similarly, the victim is likely to gain the support of sympathizing others. Such sympathy also gives the victim support and reassurance in their desired pursuits (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

### *Trust Repair*

Due to the inherent fragility of trust relationships, there often arises a need to repair trust when a relationship has been weakened by a betrayal (Kramer, 1999). While there is no guarantee that trust repair is either desired or feasible given the severity and nature of the betrayal, there often does exist a possibility that trust repair can be successful (Gurtman, 1992). To determine whether or not trust repair is worthwhile, individuals use the same criteria used to initiate the relationship. If a trust relationship is perceived to be sufficiently beneficial to invest the time and energy that repairs requires, the relationship may once again grow strong.



Given a betrayal in trust, Lewicki and Bunker (1996) suggest four distinct resulting possibilities. First, the victim may feel that the betrayal is so severe that repair is not desired. In this case, based on victim's risk versus reward assessment, there is little hope to repair the relationship. Second, the betrayal's perpetrator may decide that the victim's reparation demands are unreasonable and choose not to attempt to repair the relationship. Third, the betrayal's perpetrator may recognize that the victim's reparation demands are reasonable and begin the repair process. Lastly, the victim may simply choose forgiveness and allow the repair to begin without any reparation (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996).

Once it has been decided that trust repair is worthwhile, it is important that communications be honest and open by engaging in thorough communication. Each individual then may be better able to understand both the actions and intentions of the other (Deutsch, 1960). Another aspect of trust repair involves developing an attitude of understanding with respect to the interests, attitudes, and beliefs of the other party. This allows each person to better understand the rationale for the others' actions and reactions. By communicating with and attempting to understand the others' intentions, trust repair is possible (Kramer, 1999). However, as in all trust relationships, there is no guarantee of success.

### *Trust Building Strategies*

Given the dynamics associated with leadership in the school environment, trust can either be fostered or deterred. Both Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) and Ennis and McCauley (2002) suggest several specific strategies by which trust can be initiated and maintained as it relates to social processes in schools. Based on the belief that when

relationships are developed and maintained within an organizational environment, such as is present in schools, the “dynamics of trust have a very real impact on the effectiveness and collective sense of efficacy of the organization” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 581). For example, Ennis and McCauley (2002) were surprised at the number and degree of disruptive students present in an urban high school. On examining the situation, they concluded that a pervasive lack of trust was a factor contributing to this perception. They proposed several specific elements associated with classroom communities worthy of trust. Additionally, both Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) and Ennis and McCauley (2002) discovered that there are unique initiatives that can offer trust building opportunities within the educational environment.

For the purposes of this review, the various trust building strategies posited in each of the respective articles will either be considered (a) trust building beliefs or (b) trust building initiatives. While at first these two areas may appear to be the same, there exists subtle but significant differences. The following paragraphs will demonstrate this difference by illustrating specific beliefs and initiatives.

### *Trust Building Beliefs*

Trust building beliefs represent personal and professional ideologies that, when implemented effectively in classrooms, appear to foster trust building. In their articles, both Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) and Ennis and McCauley (2002) offer specific beliefs that each feel represents solid trust building practices. For the purpose of this review, these beliefs have been divided into the following five categories: (a) creating an open climate, (b) organizational citizenship, (c) shared expectations, and (d) personal

persistence. By applying such beliefs, teachers can develop trust among disengaged students (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

*Creating an Open Climate.* Due to the many interpersonal relationships that exist between the administration, teachers, students, and parents, creating an open school environment is essential in fostering trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). When students are trusting of teachers and administrators, they are more likely to disclose accurate and relevant information concerning their thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Conversely, an atmosphere of distrust is likely to discourage such openness (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

One effective belief important to maintaining an open school environment involves allowing for open communication (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Through open communication, students are able to express their individual opinions and beliefs (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). Interestingly, the relationship between trust and communication is circular. Open communication is important in creating and maintaining trust. Conversely, trust is a crucial element in eliciting open communication (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Ennis and McCauley (2002) refer to open communication as student “voice.” Through student “voice,” the teacher can understand the student’s perspective into what is fair and just. Because many students have never experienced positive, supportive relationships with teachers, the importance of hearing their “voice” is crucial if teachers desire to penetrate their time hardened protective shell. Ennis and McCauley (2002) found that in order to encourage student “voice,” it was important to create a supportive curricular structure. By doing this, teachers were able to disrupt “students’ expectations

for the oppressive practices experienced in previous educational settings” (Ennis & McCauley, 2002, p. 169). Furthermore, such curricular engagements allow students even more opportunities to communicate with adults, thus furthering educational growth. Ultimately, such trust leads to a positive school environment where learning is effectively achieved.

*Organizational Citizenship.* Organizational citizenship involves an individual going beyond the expected requirements and “engaging in nonmandatory behaviors without expectation of receiving explicit recognition or compensation” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 583). Such behavior can include altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. Within the school setting, this involves a personal desire on the part of both administrators and teachers to extend help to those students who need it most (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). Ennis and McCauley (2002) refer to such organizational citizenship as commitment. They posit that teachers must go beyond the normal requirements in order to create classroom communities worthy of trust. By working to convince students that they are cared for, teachers are able to effectively demonstrate commitment (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). Additionally, “commitment motivates both teachers and students to search for alternatives, expend effort, and reward progress” (Ennis & McCauley, 2002, p. 169).

Through effective leadership, organizational citizenship can lead to great gains. Within the school environment, it is the role of principals and teachers to inspire such actions (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). It is important to note that administrators, teachers, and students alike must possess a sense of organizational citizenship if continued success is to be achieved. However, when everyone is committed to making

learning a priority, the likelihood of student success is greatly enhanced (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

*Shared Expectations.* Shared expectations involve initiating and conveying the expectations that are to be expected within a given trusting relationship. Considering a teacher's expectations for his or her students, it is important that any given expectation is reasonable and reachable. From such reasonable expectations, students are guided into successful performance and begin to believe in their own ability. This ultimately allows students to recognize and accept their place and inherent value in the classroom (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

One expectation that was critical to creating trusting classrooms was the expectation for both teacher and student to be open and honest. "Because many students brought histories of distrust to the educational process, teachers acknowledged and accepted their roles as initiators and facilitators of the trusting process" (Ennis & McCauley, 2002, p. 166). By purposefully creating environments in which positive interaction was fostered, teachers began to understand the needs of the students. Similarly, the students began to trust that the teacher truly had their best interest in mind (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

*Persistence.* Persistence involves both teachers and students remaining adamant about creating and sustaining a trusting relationship. While this sounds simple enough, it is important to realize that such persistence often comes with the possibility of failure. However, if each party persists, trusting in the other to uphold their personal responsibilities, trusting relationship will likely lead to educational gains (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

From their research, Ennis and McCauley (2002) found that despite the fact some teachers and administrators had given up on students labeled as disruptive and disengaged, others believed that they could find a way to help students engage in the learning process. By using methods such as second chances or student ownership, teachers were able to finally break through. While not every method worked for every student, persistent teachers found success “one student at a time, leading gradually to the creation of a web of mutual trust” (Ennis & McCauley, 2002, p. 168).

### *Trust Building Initiatives*

Trust building initiatives represent practices that can be actively integrated into the learning environment in a concerted effort to build trust. Ennis and McCauley (2002) determined that trusting relationships can be established and fostered from several unique initiatives including: (a) second chances, (b) positive interaction, and (c) ownership and collaboration. Additionally, through their studies, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) provided support to Ennis and McCauley’s (2002) “entrusting students with ownership” initiatives through a discussion on the importance of collaborations.

Because “disengaged students, marginalized by failure and irrelevant curricula, typically wore a mantle of protective disinterest,” (Ennis & McCauley, 2002, p. 155) they also found that most teachers agreed that it was the teacher’s responsibility to initiate the trust by establishing or furthering the existence of each of these strategies. However, when teachers did attempt to use these initiatives to create trusting relationships, they often were successful in breaking through to their disengaged students (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

*Second Chances.* “Second chances” involves providing students with multiple chances to succeed. The reasoning behind giving students second chances to succeed was drawn from an obvious lack of student trust in the school environment. Because disengaged students often and repeatedly find failure, they can become disinterested in schoolwork. This represents a defense mechanism aimed at preventing the sting of failure by avoiding involvement (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). However, human nature encourages each of us to embrace success. When teachers provide second chances, the opportunity to find success is improved thus enticing disengaged students to once again attempt to achieve. Eventually, the teacher helps the student believe both in the importance of the work and in their own capabilities (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

There are many examples where teachers can implement second chance strategies. One example involves allowing students to complete homework assignments in class away from home distractions that contributed to poor performances. Another allows students to make up assignments that are past due. Additionally, teachers can allow students to retake tests or correct wrong answers for partial credit. Regardless which methods are used, students are encouraged to continue learning (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

*Positive Interaction.* Developing trust through “positive interactions” involves engaging disruptive and disengaged students in a respectful and caring manner. Too often, unsuccessful students become angry and bitter at their inability to succeed. These feelings are only perpetuated when teachers in turn treat these students as nuisances. However, when teachers take the time to personally relate to the individual needs and

concerns of such disengaged students, such positive interactions can lead to great gains (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

One way that teachers can provide positive interactions is by personally modeling caring and trusting behaviors. Through such modeling, the student realizes that the teacher is taking personal interest in their well-being. Another way in which teachers can elicit positive interaction is by simply treating the students in a more adult-like manner. Through their study, Ennis and McCauley (2002) found that teachers “were most successful in creating trust bonds when they treated students with respect and integrity, joked and teased, and made them feel important” (Ennis & McCauley, 2002, p. 163). Ultimately, students who experienced such positive interaction responded by becoming more engaged with the curriculum and more interested in learning (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

*Ownership and Collaboration.* By allowing all involved to share in decision-making processes, trust is extended from the superior to the subordinate. This exists at many levels in the school environment. For teachers to trust the administration, they need to be included in the decision-making processes that affect them. Similarly, for students to be fully engaged, they should also be involved in the decision processes that affect them. When applied properly, such collaboration can lead to higher quality decisions and thus a more effective learning environment (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Entrusting students with ownership results when students are “trusted to create meaningful classroom policies or encouraged to infuse their unique personalities or beliefs into the final product” (Ennis & McCauley, 2002, p. 164). This is similar to



collaboration as discussed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000). By allowing students to control aspects of their own life, teachers can defuse the hostility and frustration that causes students to become disengaged and disruptive (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

While it is valuable to allow students to participate in classroom decision-making processes, it is not necessary for teachers to relinquish all decisions making authority. Significant gains can be made by simply allowing students to choose where to sit, whom to work with, and when to talk. Such decisions are very important to adolescents (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). Conversely, controlling mechanisms such as detention or withdrawal of privileges conveys distrust. Giving students ownership and making apparent teacher trust can result in improved student behavior and enhanced engagement (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

Through their respective studies, Ennis and McCauley (2002) and Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) demonstrated the value of teachers and students working cooperatively to form trust relationships that encourage learning. By employing trust building initiatives such as creating an open climate, organizational citizenship, shared expectations, and personal persistence, teachers are able to more effectively foster trust. Similarly, by implementing trust building beliefs such as second chances, positive interaction, and ownership and collaboration, teachers are able to encourage student learning through the development of trusting relationships.

### Caring

A caring relationship “is, in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings” (Noddings, 1992, p. 15). The reason why such encounters occur stems from the universally accepted fact that all humans desire social interactions

and have a need to be cared for. This is due to the inherent mutual concern associated with caring relationships. Each participant in the caring relationship believes that the care that they offer will result in reciprocating care (Noddings, 1992). Concerning the value of care in the school setting, “students noted that increasing the frequency and duration of their time spent with caring teachers improved and enhanced the student/teacher relationship” (Owens & Ennis, 2005, p. 400). In this section, the two participants in every caring relationship, the care giver and the care receiver, will be examined. Furthermore, a description of the four components associated with developing caring through moral education: modeling, dialogue, experience, and confirmation will be discussed.

### *Participants in Caring*

By examining the respective roles of the “one-caring” or care giver and “cared for” or care recipient, it is possible to better understand the dynamics of a caring relationship (Noddings, 1992). Additionally, it is necessary to examine the reasons why the care giver and care recipient act as they do. It is important to begin by stating that a relationship can only be considered as “caring” if both parties contribute. For example, if a student refuses to accept the care that a teacher extends, the relationship fails to be one that can be classified as caring. However, if both parties embrace their respective roles and accept the role of the other, a successful caring relationship can be established (Noddings, 1992).

### *Care Giver*

In many ways, the role of the “giver” is simply to extend care. However, in order to label someone as a care giver, that individual must demonstrate (1) the actions

associated with giving care and (2) the proper intentions. If someone only performs the actions for selfish means, care, as defined by an attempt to extend goodwill for the purposes of helping others, is not offered. To complicate the matter, there is no set standard by which to measure whether the care giving was altruistic or given at an appropriate level (Noddings, 1992).

Considering the care giver, there are two distinct reasons for which care is extended. First and foremost, the care giver extends care out of personal concern for the other's well being. By looking out for the well being of another, the care giver truly demonstrates caring actions. Such benevolence serves as the root of a caring relationship. "Teachers are motivated by this philosophy to perform conscious acts of "being with" and "doing for" for the sake of their students" (Owens & Ennis, 2005, p. 393)

Noddings (1992) presents the concepts of "engrossment" and "motivational displacement" to characterize one's consciousness when caring. Engrossment involves "a nonselective receptivity to the cared-for" (Noddings, 1992, p. 15) that ultimately results in a genuine attempt to care. Simply put, the care giver extends care because of a genuine concern for the cared recipient rather than a veiled personal motive. "Motivational displacement" refers to the shifting of personal focus of the care giver so as to direct complete attention to the needs of the care recipient. Additionally, Owens and Ennis (2005) introduce "commitment" as an additional characteristic. Commitment "reflects the attitude that there is nothing that can take precedence over the one-caring teacher's responsibility to care for students" (Owens & Ennis, 2005, p. 394). Through the combination of the three, an appropriate and compelling care response can be extended.

A second, and less significant, reason why the care giver extends care results from a personal belief that the care recipient will in turn respond by returning care to the care giver (Noddings, 1992). It is important to recognize the subtle but significant difference between hoping that a caring relationship will be established from a primary act of care rather than from performing an act of care with the motive of gaining a return favor. While the first serves as an example of caring, the latter may be an attempt to better oneself.

### *Care Recipient*

Like the role of the care giver, the role of the care recipient is more complex than simply receiving care. In fact, receiving care is only part of the role. In addition to receiving care, the care recipient needs to demonstrate to the care giver an appreciation for the care that has been extended. Examples of such appreciation can be seen in virtually all caring scenarios. For example, when students are actively participating in physical education they may demonstrate appreciation through interest and attention given to the teacher. Such appreciation may serve to motivate the teacher to continue the practice (Noddings, 1992).

The care recipient's reasons for accepting care may stem simply from the need to receive from another the care that cannot be self-provided. While the care recipient is likely to later demonstrate reciprocal care, at the time when that individual is the recipient, he/she is solely receiving. However, if the care received is sufficient to improve the situation of the recipient, the roles are likely to reverse (Noddings, 1992).

Although the roles of the care giver and care recipient are distinct, they are by no means permanent labels. "Mature relationships are characterized by mutuality"

(Noddings, 1992, p. 17). Each participant serves as either the care giver or the care recipient depending on the given circumstance. Even in examples involving teacher and student, where the teacher inherently assumes a heavier burden to care, there must exist reciprocity (Webb & Blond, 1995). Relationships result in webs that intertwine as the various participants take turns in offering goodwill. Ultimately, as the caring relationship between student and teacher becomes stronger, a level of trust is developed that serves to improve overall learning (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

In order for caring relationships between teachers and students to grow, it is important to establish trust. For such trust to be initiated, it is necessary for the care giver and care recipient to become knowledgeable of the other. Information such as personal strengths, limitations, goals, and needs give each individual insight into the other. Through two-way communication, such knowledge can be attained. More importantly, from such knowledge, the gains associated with a caring relationship can be effectively translated from the care giver to the care recipient through actions (Webb & Blond, 1995).

#### *Developing Caring through Moral Education*

“The ability to enact an ethic of care in teaching should be an expectation of effective teachers” (Owens & Ennis, 2005, p.392). In an attempt to describe how caring can and should be related through moral education, Noddings (1992) suggests four major strategies that can be used to illicit caring: (a) modeling, (b) dialogue, (c) practice, and (d) confirmation. Through the proper use of each of these components, the importance of caring can be imparted from one individual to another. Webb and Blond (1995) emphasize that these are of great importance for youth in today’s ever changing society.

If proper moral ideals can be instilled during the formidable years, there is a greater likelihood that such ideals will remain intact as an individual matures.

### *Modeling*

Modeling is a demonstration of how to properly care. By acting and living in a manner that constantly demonstrates caring ways, others are able to experience first hand the effects of caring. Care is effectively demonstrated through the development of caring relationships, thus encouraging others to care (Noddings, 1992). For example, when teachers in a school setting act and react to their students in a way that demonstrates appropriate caring, they begin the moral education process (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). “Modeling provides teachers with the opportunity to demonstrate how to care through their own relations with cared-for students” (Owens & Ennis, 2005, p. 395).

For some, “the capacity to care may be dependent on adequate experience in being cared for” (Noddings, 1992, p. 22). Lapses in caring could provide misinformation that can confuse those who are looking to the care giver for direction. However, by properly modeling appropriate caring, an example can be set that will allow for moral growth (Noddings, 1992).

### *Dialogue*

Dialogue represents the type of communication that is necessary between parties if a caring relationship is to flourish. Dialogue is an attempt to find understanding, empathy, or appreciation from a caring relationship. Each of these aspects proves to deepen the understanding between the parties involved (Noddings, 1992).

Because caring encourages both participants to acquire knowledge of one another, it is important to establish dialogue. Through dialogue, an adequate knowledge base of

one another can be formed (Webb & Blond, 1995). Furthermore, dialogue offers the participants in a caring relationship an opportunity to understand the actions of the other through questioning. Ultimately, this allows for better informed decisions that can enhance the value of the relationship. In the school setting, dialogue represents open and honest talk between teachers and students (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). Furthermore, dialogue “contributes to the development and maintenance of caring relationships because it allows students to connect to each other and the teacher through language and shared experiences” (Owens & Ennis, 2005, p. 395).

It is important to point out that dialogue “is not just talk or conversation – certainly not an oral presentation of argument in which the second party is merely allowed to ask an occasional question” (Noddings, 1992, p. 23). In order for dialogue to be effective within the context of a caring relationship, it should be open ended with decisions consensual between the involved parties. If one participant within a given caring relationship has already come to a decision, dialogue is rendered useless. Within the Ethic of Care, dialogue is more than an attempt to convince another that a decision is correct (Noddings, 1992). Only by entering into dialogue without a predetermined outcome can caring relationships be furthered.

### *Practice*

Practice represents the behaviorist belief that actions are reinforced through repetition. In almost every area of expertise, there is a type of training regimen that allows one to become proficient at a given skill by having that individual repeatedly perform the desired skill. Within the Ethic of Care, just as a teacher becomes more skilled in teaching through practice, so a care giver becomes more effective at caring

(Noddings, 1992). “Through practice, attitudes and ways of thinking are shaped by experience” (Owens & Ennis, 2005, p. 396). By continually placing oneself in a position to care, the appropriate actions associated with caring become ingrained.

In practicing to become a better giver and receiver of care, individuals should recognize that practice must go beyond simply learning the correct caring behaviors. To truly learn caring, one must understand the philosophical and ethical perspective that motivates individuals to care. By coupling the actions associated with caring to the appropriate mentality, one is able to more fully develop into an effective care giver (Noddings, 1992).

### *Confirmation*

Confirmation involves affirming and encouraging others who demonstrate caring actions. By confirming such actions, one is made aware of a potentially better self and may continue to develop their caring potential. In many ways, confirmation provides a rationale for why it is important to care (Noddings, 1992). As was discussed in the section on “practice,” this is the pivotal understanding that brings caring from simply performing actions that are expected to performing actions because it is the morally right thing to do.

Within the Ethic of Care there is no standard or set method by which to measure or confirm caring actions. Additionally, there is no defined ideal that serves as a mark that a person must reach for their actions to be considered adequate. Confirmation simply serves to identify the positive actions of others (Webb & Blond, 1995). Whether a person performs a small act of kindness or an enormous act of benevolence, confirmation is warranted and justified. Furthermore, such confirmation is likely to



create within the care giver a sense of reward that encourages additional caring actions (Noddings, 1992).

For confirmation to be effective, “a relationship of trust must ground it” (Noddings, 1992, p. 25). It is through this relationship that the confirmation becomes legitimate. Because the actions of the care giver are understood, the confirmation can be taken as truthful and sincere. “One-caring teachers accomplish confirmation by developing a relationship with students and knowing their students well enough to realize what they are trying to become” (Owens & Ennis, 2005, p. 396). Furthermore, in the school setting, teachers confirm “their trust and care for students by permitting them to follow alternative curricular avenues while guiding them to expend effort and devote time to learning” (Ennis & McCauley, 2002, p. 161). Ultimately, the process of caring is confirmed, the care giver draws closer to a better self, and, as a result, continued care is more likely (Noddings, 1992).

By examining the participants in a caring relationship and the process by which caring is developed through moral education, it may be possible to better understand how trust and caring interrelate within teacher-student relationships. While there are some trust relationships that stem solely from a given need being weighed against the inherent risks, some trust relationships appear to originate from and grow because of the mutual existence of caring. Through caring, one simultaneously accepts another as worthy of being trusted and presents himself/herself as a person who is also trustworthy. In educational settings, social constructivist theory provides the foundation for the ethic of care to be manifest within trusting relationships.

## Conclusion

Using the social constructivism ideology as a basis for understanding how learning is achieved, the necessity of trust and care within the associated teacher-student and student-student relationships becomes obvious. Regarding trust, its presence allows individuals to feel confident that what they are learning is accurate, relevant, and necessary for their personal development. Regarding care, applying the various strategies associated with fostering care can result in enhanced relationships.

Ultimately, trust, care and social constructivism are interdependent. By striving to enhance the quality of a trusting relationships through the implementation of specific trust building beliefs and initiatives, the effects of caring can be initiated and/or amplified. Similarly, caring not only serves to aid those in need of care, but also serves to promote a general atmosphere of trust. Finally, without such trust and care, social interactions can serve to short circuit the growth that social environments foster and ultimately deter personal development. However, without social interaction, trust and care also cannot exist. Herein lies the interdependence of trust, care, and social interaction and thus the importance of trust and care to the social constructivist theory.

The purpose of this research is to demonstrate the importance of trust and care within the social constructivist learning environment. Through the finding of such researchers as Baier, Noddings, Ennis and McCauley, and Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, it is evident that trust and care play significant roles in education. However, there is much research left to be done in order for this important focus to be effectively integrated into common teaching practices. This research will attempt to build on the existing body of research as well as excite the need for further study.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the roles of trust and care in the implementation of a social constructivist curriculum in physical education. Specifically, I focused on determining the existing relationships between and among teachers and students in middle school physical education. Also, I explored to what extent these relationships reflected the concepts of trust and care. Finally, I examined the ways that teacher-student and student-student relationships influenced students' willingness and ability to learn in a social constructivist physical education curriculum. An ethnographic design was used to describe the physical education setting, subject matter taught, and teacher-student and student-student interactions. Data was collected through observations (teacher log), informal conversations with students, and structured interviews and focus groups with students. This chapter is divided into four sections that include (a) curriculum, (b) setting and participants, (c) research design, (d) data collection and analysis procedures, and (e) trustworthiness and reliability of the research.

#### Curriculum

The curriculum used in this study reflected social constructivist teaching strategies and teaching objectives maintained by the State of Arizona. Specifically, the constructivist curriculum, Teaching Games for Understanding, sometimes described as the Tactical Games Approach to teaching physical education, was implemented because of its focus on helping students construct their understanding of games using problem solving and decision making that rely, in part, on developing trusting and caring relationships. "The tactical approach aims to improve students' game performance, by

combining tactical awareness and skill execution” (Mitchell, Oslin, & Griffin, 2006, p.8). In this approach, teachers use tactical problems to encourage students to focus on game tactics or decisions within the game itself, rather than on its isolated skill components.

In the Tactical Approach, learning begins with an explanation and exaggerated representation of the game or game form. From this, the students begin to understand the game at a tactical level. Finally, because the game has been examined from a tactical perspective, the desired skills emerge based on the students’ discovery of necessity. To aid in this discovery, “questions are necessary, and the quality of questions is the key to fostering students’ critical thinking and problem solving” (Mitchell et al., 2006, p.13-14). By questioning students at critical points in the game and having them in turn actively determine logical solutions to the existing dilemma, the natural learning progression is allowed to continuously flow. Ultimately, the cycle repeats as skill discovery leads to a deeper understanding of the game (Mitchell et al., 2006).

The tactical games approach was selected for this research because it appeared to be an appropriate curriculum for effective examination of trust and care because it would allow students to continually examine the situation and determine effective solutions, thus demonstrating personal success. This should begin with the caring teacher’s genuine desire to develop the student and understanding of how the student views the situation at hand (Noddings, 1992). According to Noddings (1992), the caring teacher understands that allowing students to share in the decision making process fosters trust. By using the tactical games approach, students are encouraged to examine the situation and determine suitable solutions. “In creating Teaching for Understanding classrooms, teachers work to share authority with students and to create a community of learners. This is a gradual

process that builds on trust and mutual respect nurtured over time” (Wiske, 1998, p.153). Furthermore, the caring teacher understands that the student needs to achieve success to trust in the curriculum and the teacher (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Because students achieve success often and repeatedly through a tactical games curriculum, it is likely that such trust will be fostered.

To ensure that the student experiences both shared decision making and personal success within the tactical games curriculum, the teacher effectively controls the learning environment. First, small-sided games should be used. Small-sided games reduce tactical complexity, thus simplifying the decision making process and maximizing the potential for each student to be a decision maker (Mitchell et al., 2006). Additionally, rules, equipment, and playing area should be modified in a way that will allow students to experience success at a higher rate than would be experienced through the normal playing of the game (Mitchell et al., 2006).

## Setting and Participants

### *Setting*

The study was conducted in one middle school which was a part of a school district located in the suburbs of a large metropolitan area in the Southwest region of the United States. The school district had a mix of both suburban and rural schools. The mission/philosophy of the school district was:

“It is the mission of the ... School District to provide parents with safe and nurturing school communities, where their children can obtain a quality education.”

The district had approximately 7,500 students of which 52% were male and 48% were female. The ethnic student composition of the district was 72.1 % White, 19.8% Hispanic, 5% African American, 2.5% Asian, and 0.7% American Indian. The district was one of low to middle socioeconomic status.

The middle school where the study was conducted was very characteristic of the school district of which it was a part. Specifically, it was located in a suburban, middle to low socioeconomic area. The mission/philosophy of the school was:

“(The) Middle school is a community dedicated to the academic success and personal development of each individual. At (the middle school), we promote responsibility and mutual respect.”

The student body was comprised of 660 students of which 51% were male and 49% were female. The ethnic student composition was 67.3 % White, 20.9% Hispanic, 8.6% African American, 2.9% Asian, and 0.3% American Indian.

The physical education program at this particular middle school was led by three full time physical education teachers (one male and two females). The school’s physical education program did not have a formalized philosophy. Each of the three teachers had his/her own personal teaching style/philosophy. The facilities included one baseball field, one softball field, one football field, one soccer field, and one gymnasium. Physical education was part of the required curriculum for all grades (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Summary Physical Education Classes*

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Days Per Week</b>	<b>Class Duration</b>	<b>Class Size</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2 quarters	5 days per week	43 minutes classes	15 – 20 students
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	3 quarters	5 days per week	43 minutes classes	20 – 24 students
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	3 quarters	5 days per week	43 minutes classes	25 – 30 students

All grades were exposed to a variety of striking/fielding, net/wall, invasion, and target games. However, specific skill focus was based on the grade specific standards set by the State of Arizona. Like the other two physical educators, I was responsible for teaching all grades. Prior to the beginning of this study, I had taught lessons in flag football, soccer, basketball, badminton, lacrosse, and golf to sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. Additionally, I had taught “Project Alert (substance resistance training)” to seventh and eighth graders.

### *Participants*

The participants for this study included one experienced teacher and two middle school physical education classes. Because I was both the teacher and the researcher, I was involved in the study as a co-participant and was known to the other participants in my co-capacity as both teacher and researcher. Rossman and Rallis (1998) describe this perspective as “semi-overt.” Therefore, I conducted the study in two of my classes as well as participated in the study. At the beginning of my study, I had seven years of teaching experience, one of which was at this particular middle school. My teaching focused on social constructivist teaching strategies in physical education.

The two sixth grade physical education classes selected had had limited interactions with me because they were new to the school and the beginning of my research coincided with the beginning of the school year. The first class was comprised of fifteen students of which 40% were male and 60% were female. Its ethnic student composition was 73% White, 27% Hispanic. The second class was comprised of fifteen students of which 60% were male and 40% were female. Its ethnic student composition was 53% White, 40% Hispanic, and 7% African American.





## *Procedures*

### *Entry into the Setting*

I explained the purpose of this research to both the school district superintendent and the middle school principal and attained approval to conduct this research. The school district did not have a research director.

### *Parental Permission and Student Assent*

Written parent permission and student assent were obtained during the first week of school. Also, in advance of sending home permission forms, I phoned each parent in order to explain the meaning of the research terminology associated with the request for permission. Additionally, I explained that I would be conducting research that focused on my specific teaching practices and how this relates to student learning practices in my class. Finally, I explained that overall, I desired to refine my teaching practices, improve my communication skills with students, and explore a new way of teaching games. I used this same explanation with colleagues and students. I felt that by personally calling parents and explaining that I had support from the superintendent and principal, permission would be granted.

## Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

### *Data Collection*

My research officially began at week two, once parental permission had been obtained. The data collection for this study was organized into five sources. Table 3 provides a summary of the five sources of data collected in the study. First, throughout the entire nine week study, I maintained a teacher log detailing my personal observations relating to trust and care. Second, starting the third week, I conducted formal one-on-one

interviews with students. Third, also starting the third week, I conducted focus groups with the students. Fourth, an outside observer visited four times to ensure that I was teaching from the constructivist perspective. Finally, member checks were conducted during the final two weeks of research in lieu of student interviews.

Table 3. *Summary of Data Sources*

<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>How</b>
<b>Teacher Log</b>	Daily	Researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jottings</li> <li>• Recordings</li> </ul>
<b>Interviews</b>	Weeks 3 – 8	1-on-1 Researcher & Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 per week per class</li> <li>• During lunch or before/after school</li> <li>• Audio-taped</li> </ul>
<b>Focus Groups</b>	Weeks 3 - 10	Researcher & Group of Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 per week per class</li> <li>• During lunch or before/after school</li> <li>• Audio-taped</li> </ul>
<b>Member Checks</b>	Weeks 9 & 10	1-on-1 Researcher & Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 per week per class</li> <li>• During lunch or before/after school</li> <li>• Audio-taped</li> </ul>
<b>Outside Observer</b>	Weeks 4, 6, 8, & 10	University Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre lesson discussion</li> <li>• Post lesson summary</li> </ul>

### *Teacher Log*

I maintained a daily teacher log throughout the entirety of the study. Emerson et al. (1995) stress that such logs should take on a flowing approach. A flowing approach involves how the researcher organizes the observations in order to make sense of the data later in the study. This can effectively be accomplished by being sensitive to detail in interaction and in the setting. By being acute to the environment, the researcher may more effectively recreate the observed experiences.

In my teacher log, I attempted to capture the existence, evolution, and learning value associated with trusting relationships and caring relationships. I did this by

answering specific questions both daily and weekly related to the teacher (self-observer), students, and climate (see Appendix A). To enhance accuracy, I used jottings after each class to capture key aspects. Additionally, I recounted my daily thoughts in a recording device during my commute home (approximately one hour). Furthermore, each evening I compiled the information that I captured that day. Finally, at the conclusion of each week, I reviewed my daily logs in order to identify emerging themes.

While the underlying themes associated with these questions were not immediately obvious, by keeping such a daily record I was able to uncover the relevant and important themes associated with trust and care. To capture the themes that emerged from my daily logs, I responded to a set of questions (see Appendix A). By identifying and examining these themes, I was able to understand the natural progression of my research. While I generally used the set of questions detailed in Appendix A to guide my discoveries of themes, I understood that additional questions would arise and did not let this pre-defined list of questions limit my research.

By answering each of these questions weekly, I was able to know if trusting and caring relationships did occur and if so under what circumstances. Additionally, when such relationships did occur, I recognized them and described what I observed.

### *Interviews and Focus Groups*

Formal one-on-one student interviews and student focus groups were conducted beginning in week three and continued through week eight. Actually, the interviews and focus groups continued throughout the entirety of the study, however, their purpose was that of member checks. It is important for the researcher to display emotional understanding when interviewing (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). When a researcher can relate

to the interviewee (or focus group member), the interviewee may be more willing to convey information relative to the study. Being empathetic in an interview, allows the researcher to show concern and make the interviewee feel important. Neutrality in interviewing is not a desirable goal because a certain degree of empathy is needed to elicit detail from the participants. Rubin and Rubin (1995) emphasize that the researcher should seek a balance between the needs of the researcher and the needs of the participants that fit your questions and participants' responses, listening for the questions implicit in their answers.

Interviews were conducted with five students from each class. Those selected for interviews represented students falling along a continuum of trust/care ranging from non-trusting/non-caring to trusting/caring. Focus groups involved two groups of five students from each of the two classes (four groups in all). Focus group participants were "selected because they share(d) certain (similar) characteristics" (Rossman & Rallis, 1998, p. 135). Unlike those selected for interviews, those selected for focus groups were students who demonstrated similar characteristics regarding their level of trust and care. Specifically, there was a non-trusting/non-caring focus group and a trusting/caring focus group. Some students were used in both interviews and focus groups depending on whether the personal characteristics of the student being interviewed fit those of a given focus group.

Interviews and focus groups were conducted beginning at week two and continued each week for the entirety of my research. I interviewed the same students each week in order to recognize any developments that may occur. Similarly, the focus groups remained consistent. Interviews and focus groups were conducted before school, during lunch, and after school. Interviews lasted approximately fifteen minutes and focus

groups lasted approximately twenty to thirty minutes. Both interview and focus groups were conducted either in my office or in the lobby of the gym so as to avoid interruption and to ensure the privacy necessary to allow for candid responses. Additionally, all interviews and focus groups were audio-taped.

Interview and focus group questions were derived from data that emerged from the observation period. Specifically, themes relating to trust and care were identified and examined. In order to conduct effective interviews and focus groups that led to valuable data collection, significant time was expended on the design of the questions each week. When developing such questions, it was necessary to create questions that were representative of the interview stages which include a “warm-up,” “peak,” and “cool down” period (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). The questions used for interviews and focus groups reflected a structured, open-ended format so that the participants answered the questions freely. However, probes and follow-up questions were used to help the participants remain focused on the content of the questions (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

#### *Outside Observer*

On four occasions, an outside observer observed my classes to verify that I was teaching from the constructivist perspective. This individual taught physical education methods courses at a local university. I had specifically discussed constructivist teaching theories with this individual and was confident in her understanding and ability to observe me objectively. Before each of her four observations, we discussed the lesson and its associated strategies and tasks. The observer was given each lesson plan in advance. This individual observed constructivist teaching practices, the nature of interactions within the class, and student responses within the teaching environment. To

capture the data she collected, after each observation, she discussed with me her thoughts as well as provided me with a written summary that described the observed strategies and assigned tasks and how well they adhered to constructivist teachings.

### *Member Checks*

To establish trustworthiness, member checks were conducted during the final two weeks of my research by sharing my interpretation of the emergent findings with the students whom I had been interviewing and on which I had been conducting focus groups (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). During the interviews and focus groups that I conducted during the final two weeks, in addition to asking the student being interviewed about the recent happenings, I shared with him/her my interpretations. Specifically, I asked him/her/them whether or not they agreed with what I had discovered and if they had anything to add. By doing this, I hoped to validate my interpretation of the emergent findings.

### *Data Analysis*

Three types of coding were used to analyze the data: open, axial, and selective (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The three levels built on each other, ultimately resulting in data that were appropriately grouped to suitably describe and explain the findings of the study as they related to the questions being considered. Additionally, data triangulation was used to verify data accuracy and reinforce emergent findings.

### *Open Coding*

Initially, open or microscopic examination was used by the researcher in order to provide an in depth analysis of the data. Open coding refers to the process of examining data for similarities and differences, which can then be grouped into initial categories,

properties, and dimensions. Categories represent abstract explanatory terms used to group similar concepts that begin to accumulate (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). “Once a category is identified, it becomes easier to remember it, to think about it, and (most importantly) to develop it in terms of its properties and dimensions” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 114). The characteristics or attributes of a category are properties, whereas dimensions represent the relative location of a property along a range (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). “Through delineation of properties and dimensions, we differentiate a category from other categories and give it precision” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 117). I began analyzing my data using coding each weekend beginning at the inception of my research. This allowed me to effectively perform selective coding later in my study as themes begin to appear.

#### *Axial Coding*

Axial coding is the second level of coding that occurred in the data analysis. The purpose of axial coding was to provide interpretations of the categories, properties, and dimensions identified during open coding. Axial coding involves “the act of relating categories to subcategories along the lines of their properties and dimensions” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 124). The process of axial coding allows the researcher to develop explanations regarding the nature of what is being studied (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Axial coding resulted in the development of abstract themes that were linked to the literature.

#### *Selective Coding*

In selective coding, the researcher integrates and refines the research findings to reflect the theory being studied. Strauss and Corbin (1998) emphasized that to reach the

desired goal of a qualitative research project; the researcher must implement selective coding to identify integrated relationships among student-teacher and student-student interactions. Selective coding often requires the researcher to refocus the research and reenter the setting to collect data from additional classes, students, or settings to more elaborate and integrate categories.

The open and axial coding that was done throughout the first eight weeks of the study produced abstract themes. Selective coding allowed those themes to be reevaluated and adjusted. During the final two weeks, when selective coding was conducted, student interviews became more in depth as specific focus was placed on trust and care. Ultimately, through selective coding, I was able to abstract the collected data into grounded data that may relate to the validation of a theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

#### *Triangulation of Data*

Data triangulation through the use of multiple sources of data allowed for better and more accurate findings (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). Mathison (1988) explains that triangulation improves both the validity of research and the evaluation findings. The purpose of triangulation is to extract meanings and emerging themes from several data sources, such as, field notes, interviews, participant interactions, or theories in order to increase the robustness of the study (Rossman & Rallis, 1998).

Specifically, this study will use five unique sources of data including (1) teacher log, (2) student interviews, (3) focus groups, (4) outside observation, and (5) member checks. By using multiple sources, initial impressions or single source bias was reduced. Additionally, such triangulation “assists in correcting biases that occur when the



ethnographer is the only observer (as is the case in this research) of the phenomenon under investigation” (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 11).

### Trustworthiness and Reliability of the Research

In this section, I examine various methods used to better assure trustworthiness, or validity, and reliability within the context of a qualitative study. “Whereas reliability is concerned with the replicability of scientific finding, validity is concerned with the accuracy of scientific findings” (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 210). Additionally, I address the ethical sensitivity of this research. The standards to which ethnographic studies are held are arguably quite different from the standards held for experimental studies (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Unlike quantitative studies, which can occur within the “controlled” environment, qualitative studies occur within the confines of a more “natural” environment. Research that meets the criteria for trustworthiness and reliability conforms to standards of acceptable and competent practice and is conducted in an ethically sensitive manner (Rossman & Rallis, 1998).

### *Conforming to Acceptable Standards*

In order for a study to conform to acceptable standards, Rossman and Rallis (1998) suggest that the researcher consider (a) the truth-value of the study, (b) how rigorously the study was planned and conducted, and (c) how useful the study is in other situations.

### *Truth-value*

Truth-value relates to whether or not the reader believes that the study represents the actual atmosphere of the environment or the sentiments of the subjects. Similarly, “internal validity refers to the extent to which scientific observations and measurements

are authentic representations of some reality” (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 210). To improve the truth-value and internal validity of the study, I (a) collected detailed data, (b) selected participants that have a direct role in the setting, (c) triangulated conclusions resulting from the collected data, and (d) identified and guarded against biases that could have harmed validity.

*Detailed data collection.* In order to better ensure an acceptable level of truth-value, the researcher gathered very detailed data over an extended period of time. Specifically, the study extended over an eight week period. During this period, detailed daily notes were recorded. “Ethnography uses as its primary data collection technique the writing of field notes, either in situ or as immediately following the event observed as is ethically and logistically possible” (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 212).

*Selecting participants who have a direct role.* A second means by which to improve truth-value is selecting participants who have a direct role in the setting. In ethnographic research, participants are selected in an ongoing process throughout the study in an effort to gain the insight of important individuals in the setting (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This was the purpose of the student interviews and focus groups. For this study, student participants were selected during the first week based on criteria for one-on-one interviews or focus groups as defined in the “Data Collection and Analysis” section.

*Triangulation.* A third method that was used to improve the truth-value of the study was triangulation. As described above, triangulation can be used to compare data from different sources to determine the truth value of the evidence. It is a system of checks and balances that compares perspectives to arrive at conclusions based on a

wealth of collected data (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). Triangulation helps to ensure that the bias inherent in any particular data source, investigator, or particular method will be minimized through the use of other data sources, investigators, and methods (Mathison, 1988). For this study, the data collected from my teacher log, student interviews, student focus groups, member checks, and the outside observer were triangulated in order to attain the most accurate and valid findings.

*Identifying and guarding against biases that could harm validity.* Finally, the researcher identified and guarded against biases that could influence the validity of the research. The most obvious biases resulted from the teacher-researcher relationship. Because I was both teacher and researcher, my accuracy concerning implementing the Teaching Games for Understanding curriculum from the constructivist perspective could have been called into question. To mitigate this challenge, I used two specific safeguards. First, I tailored my lessons strictly from the Teaching Games for Understanding curriculum. Second, I used an experienced outside observer to ensure that I was teaching from the constructivist perspective. “Without the corroboration of other observers, such investigations may be seen as idiosyncratic, lacking a careful and systematic recording of phenomena” (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 218).

#### *Rigor of the Study*

Critical to the reliability of a study is how rigorously it was conducted. One measure of such rigor lies in how accurately the study can be reproduced. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) describe the importance of maintaining both external and internal reliability in order to achieve research that is reproducible. In quantitative research, this often represents whether the results can be duplicated in subsequent studies (Rossman &

Rallis, 1998). However, in most qualitative research, while the research process can often be replicated, it is unlikely that the results can be replicated. Given the dynamic nature of social settings, the reliability of qualitative studies typically focuses on the research design process used in the implementation of the study. If a reader believes that the study was well planned and effectively conducted, they are more likely to believe in the results (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

To rigorously protect the reliability or reproducibility of this study, I employed several strategies. To protect the external reliability of my study, I precisely documented its design, context, and content. This included clearly identifying my role and status, thoroughly describing those informants who provided information, and accurately describing the social setting from which the data were collected. Additionally, I outlined the theoretical premises and defined the constructs that informed and shaped the research. Furthermore, I tailored my lessons directly from the Teaching Games for Understanding curriculum (see Appendix B). Finally, I thoroughly described the methods used for data collection (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

To protect the internal reliability of my study, I maintained accurate and detailed records throughout my study. Specifically, I used jottings to record my personal observations throughout the day. Additionally, I kept descriptive accounts of all conversations, interviews, and focus groups. Furthermore, during my commute home, I tape recorded answers to pre-determined questions. Finally, each of these data sources were synthesized and summarized weekly.

### *Usefulness of the Study*

The final aspect of conforming to acceptable standards involves the usefulness or applicability of the findings in other situations (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). Goetz and LeCompte (1984) refer to this as external validity and define it as “the degree to which such representations can be compared across groups” (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 210). “Comparability refers to the degree to which the components of a study – including the units of analysis, concepts generated, population characteristics, and setting – are sufficiently well described and defined that the other researchers can use the results of the study as a basis for comparison with other studies addressing related issues” (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 210). The most effective way to do this is to be as descriptive as possible (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). Through the use of my teacher log, student interviews, and student focus groups, I described the setting and the interactions of the participants using as much relevant detail as possible. This will allow the reader to better understand and evaluate whether the research focus represents his/her area of concern and whether the means from which outcomes were attained are consistent with other relevant settings.

### *Ethical Sensitivity*

It is paramount that any study be conducted with an appropriate amount of concern for ethical sensitivity. If results were attained through unethical practices, the value of those results can be greatly diminished. To initially guard against unethical practices, the appropriate authority and permissions to conduct this research was attained from The University of Maryland, the school district, and the parents of the students. Additionally, the students were made aware of the broad purpose of the research. By

attaining such authority, I ensured that the methods and content associated with this study were appropriate. Furthermore, the school administration monitored my study to assure that I adhered to the approved format.

Additionally, research that is ethically sensitive protects the confidentiality of the subjects, informs subjects of the studies' focus, and maintains trust relationships between the research and participants. First, given that qualitative research deals with specific people in actual environments, the privacy and confidentiality of all participants must be maintained (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). Secondly, the researcher must assure that proper permission is established. By gaining permission, both the participants as well as the researcher are protected (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). Lastly, because qualitative research depends on building trust among participants in order to elicit responses that reflect their perceptions of the setting, it is crucial that a given participant understands that his/her openness will not result in personal betrayal (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). By maintaining these standards, the researcher is confident that the study was conducted properly with respect to ethical sensitivities.

### Summary

This ethnographic research involving two sixth grade classes examined how the development of trust and care influenced teacher-student and student-student relationships and ultimately students' willingness and ability to learn in a social constructivist physical education curriculum. By adhering to the details provided in this chapter regarding the (a) curriculum, (b) setting and participants, (c) research design, (d) data collection and analysis procedures, and (e) trustworthiness and reliability of the research, a reliable conclusion was drawn from sound research. Specifically, the data

collected from multiple sources was triangulated to produce topic focused insights.

Additionally, the trustworthiness of this research was established to the extent possible using truth-value, rigor, and usefulness. Finally, this study was conducted in a manner that is considered ethical by the University of Maryland, the school district, and the school under study.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The purpose of this research was to examine the roles of trust and care in the implementation of a social constructivist curriculum in physical education. The research questions that guided this study were, (a) “What are the teacher-student relationships that evolved in the selected setting?” (b) “To what extent did these relationships reflect the concepts of trust and care?” and (c) “In what ways did the teacher-student and student-student relationships developed in this setting influence students’ willingness and ability to learn?”

The findings suggested that students’ willingness and ability to learn were positively influenced through the implementation of the social constructivist curriculum Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) combined with strategies and initiatives associated with developing and fostering relationships that embody trust and care. Specific strategies that were used to meld TGfU, trust, and care effectively included small-sided games including the modification of playing areas, equipment, and rules, frequently changing partners and teams, frequently questioning students both individually and through class discussion before, during, and after activities, and shared decision-making regarding playing areas, equipment, rules, and partner/team selection. Through the effective implementation of each of these strategies, students were able to develop both teacher-student and student-student relationships that embodied the characteristics of trust and care, enhancing their willingness and ability to discover and refine the requisite skills associated with each of the associated games.



In this chapter, findings that address the research questions are arranged in four sections. In the first two sections, (a) implementing the TGfU curriculum and, (b) creating the classroom environment, I will examine the first research question, “What are the teacher-student relationships that evolved in the selected setting?” In the third section, (c) examining the teacher-student and student-student relationships for trust and care, I will examine the second research question, “To what extent did these relationships reflect the concepts of trust and care?” Finally, in the fourth section, I will examine research question three, “In what ways did the teacher-student and student-student relationships developed in this setting influence students’ willingness and ability to learn?”

#### Implementing the TGfU Curriculum

In the following two sections, I will examine the first research question; “What are the teacher-student relationships that evolved in the selected setting?” For my research, the Teaching Games for Understanding curriculum model appeared to be instrumental in creating a classroom environment consistent with the concepts of trust and care. Specifically, students were challenged to think through game related “problems” to determine the best tactics to use for a given situation. Additionally, through the effective implementation of the “discovered” tactics, students experienced an increased ability to perform various game related skills and play the game. This ultimately resulted in students’ experiencing success that helped to create an engaging environment.

#### *Previous Student Experiences in Physical Education*

Because this study began at the beginning of the school year and was conducted using two sixth grade classes, students did not seem to have established expectations

regarding the structure and composition of middle school physical education. However, students described their previous elementary physical education experiences in a way that led me to believe that they had experienced a traditional multi-activity model.

Specifically, when asked to compare how their elementary physical education teachers' styles differed from my style, students commented that their former teachers had explained the rules, given them skill related instruction, and followed up with corrective suggestions. One student, Jason, commented that:

My PE teacher use to just tell us what to do and then we would try to do it. We didn't get to do it that much because we didn't know what to do. Every time people would try to ask questions, she would have to go through the whole thing again.

Additionally, students described playing traditional games (i.e., basketball and soccer) using traditional rules and playing areas.

#### *Introducing TGfU into the Middle School Classroom*

TGfU was introduced to students not as a teacher decision, but rather by way of its associated curricular strategies. Such an approach seemed very fitting given that TGfU represents a specific attempt to avoid the more traditional sport transmission model. Specifically, questioning led to the discovery of game relevant tactics that challenged students to determine and implement solutions to game based problems. Rather than telling students what to do, I challenged them to take the given game situation and determine how best to succeed given the specific rules, objects, and playing areas. By providing students with the opportunity to develop tactics based on their own individual abilities, I worked with students to create an enjoyable and engaging

experience. Peter reinforced this point when he commented, “Pretty much for me, because if it was harder to figure out how to do it most of the time, it’s more fun and it’s a better game because there is more to it and it is not simple.”

To students, the introduction of the TGfU curriculum model represented a significant change in how physical education was taught compared with their past experiences. However, because the students were experiencing so many changes associated with becoming middle school students, the changes associated with shifting from the transmission model to the TGfU model in physical education class seemed to be accepted as part of the natural progression. Regardless, students were aware of the changes. Specifically, when asked to compare middle school with elementary school physical education, students were able to recognize the differences. For example, Jane commented:

At my old school, the PE teacher would just tell us the rules of how you play if you didn’t already know. They wouldn’t help you with strategies or anything.

They would just tell you how to play, what to play and then you would play until PE was over.

For me as the teacher, using the TGfU model did not represent a significant change for several reasons. First, I was familiar with the TGfU model and had been formally trained in appropriate implementation. Additionally, I had taught previously using the TGfU curriculum in this middle school at this grade level. Finally, because I was the only teacher participating in the study, I did not have to explain or negotiate the use of this model with a co-teacher.

This is not to say that implementing TGfU was an easy change. I previously had experienced challenges and “growing pains” associated with introducing such a complex model to students who were accustomed to a traditional approach. For example, Diana pointed some of the problems such as “some people might be lazy and let you do all the work or, like, be more confident and be the boss and just say this, this, and this.”

Similarly, Peter commented:

It [work together] helped and hurt [relationship development] because, one time, me and my friend were playing a game and we disagreed a lot about whether it went in or out of bounds and it kind of effected us outside of P.E. because we weren't that friendly with each other.

I, too, recognized the challenges of implementing the TGfU model. In my teacher log dated 7-26-06 (lesson three, net/wall games), I wrote:

The lesson today focused on placing the object away from the opponent on the opposite side of the net into open space. The students chose partners and started off by using the large beach balls. Most of the partner groups were working diligently to toss the ball over the net and away from their partner, but it was difficult using the beach balls. I noticed that Heath and Jack were not staying on task and I approached the two. I asked them what the directions for the game were and they attempted to state them, but had difficulty. So after I refocused their attention to the game they resumed play and minimized the off task behavior. I stopped play and brought the students in to discuss their games. We talked about spacing on the court and where you need to be when you are waiting for your opponent to hit the object over the net and also where you need to be

when throwing the object. After several minutes of discussion, students were asked to choose a new partner and play the game again with different conditions.

### *TGfU Lessons – Tactical Progression*

My TGfU unit was divided into three small-sided game units, net/wall games, fielding/striking games, and territorial games. For each, I developed a three-week lesson set. In each lesson set, we explored tactical problems through the use of small-sided games. Specifically, I modified traditional games (i.e., badminton, softball, and soccer) by either altering the rules, changing the playing area, or replacing equipment to incorporate the use of different objects. Such modifications enabled students to discover solutions for the related tactical problem. Furthermore, students were able to discover which skills were necessary to accomplish a given task as well as which skills best fit their personal style and ability level. This point was well summarized by Tessa who stated:

It made me perform better, because it gives us clues and you work with your partner or team to figure it out. I liked it because it was like a puzzle and you had to put everything together. With the clues that you gave us, we would put a little extra information about what we had been doing throughout the week and we just kind of put it all together with our players.

Throughout each lesson set, the tactical problems increased in complexity. Similarly, throughout each lesson set, the games progressed from being a simple small-sided game to a more complex small-sided game, closely resembling the actual game. These progressions seemed to allow students both to gain a deeper level of understanding

and achieve success at a greater rate. David recognized this point by saying “You can figure out how to play the game more and ways to do better in the game.”

Additionally, each lesson contained specific strategies intended to foster trust and care. Appendix C presents a step-by-step teaching progression for these three TGfU units emphasizing the tactical progressions, trust and care strategies, and associated game modifications employed. The impact of the trust and care curricular strategies will be examined later in this chapter.

### Creating the Classroom Environment

The classroom environment created using the Teaching Games for Understanding curriculum model provided the context for the trust and care relationships fostered among students and between the students and the teacher. Moreover, the unique nature of the teacher and student relationships within the environment appeared to be essential to the development of trust and care. The classroom environment was created through the implementation of the TGfU teaching model coupled with the adoption of trust and care strategies. In this section, four distinct, yet interdependent, aspects of the TGfU trust and care environment that fostered teacher-student and student-student relationships will be examined. These are (a) enhancing student interactions through small-sided games, (b) questioning, (c) fostering teacher-student relationships, and (d) nurturing student-student relationships.

While, each of the four aspects will be examined independently, it is important to note that they were not necessarily implemented in a linear approach. Instead, they were interdependent, cumulative, and mutually reinforcing throughout the course of the study. Additionally, in examining each of the three aspects, both the task structure (i.e., the

“what” and “how”) and rationale behind employing each (i.e., the “why”) will be explored.

### *Enhancing Student Interactions through Small-sided Games*

To enhance students’ opportunities to learn about trust and caring relationships, I felt it was important for students to experience multiple quality interactions that both promoted and resulted from an engaging environment. To facilitate student interactions within an engaging environment, I introduced the TGfU curricular structure of small-sided games (see Appendix C for a detailed description of the unit). Specifically, I emphasized three constructivist-oriented strategies that are often easier to implement within small-sided games: (a) small teams, (b) short games, and (c) reduced game complexity.

*Small teams.* By keeping teams small, quality student interaction was promoted through increased participation necessitating the need for all team members to communicate and be actively involved. Unlike traditional sport play where large team size allows some students to take dominant roles, while others fade into the background, in TGfU, the use of small-sided teams maximized student interactions resulting in higher levels of engagement for all students. Alice recognized the value of small teams when she stated, “when we played net games, we only played with one partner or we played doubles. Now I have to play with a team of four or three and it is different because you have to work together more.” Similarly, Catie commented that “with doubles, we needed teamwork and communication just to get the ball over the net. To play a whole game, you would have to be talking with them [teammates] constantly and figuring things out.”

*Short games.* Similarly, I structured short duration games (e.g., five to ten minutes) to promote increased student interactions with different classmates during the forty-three minute class period. Playing a number of short games with different teammates and different opponents provided each student with multiple opportunities to interact with everyone in the class. Enhancing the frequency of interactions helped students get to know their classmates, increasing their comfort and often resulting in enhanced student engagement. For example, Jack commented “last year our class was big. Now we have less people and it is nice because you are not just standing there and it is more fun – you move around a lot more and it is not as slow.”

Further, more opportunities to participate and play appeared to increase students’ opportunities to become more skillful and understand the game, enhancing their feelings of success. For example, in my teacher log from 8-24-06 (lesson eight, fielding striking games), I commented:

Students began the guided practice task by striking with an implement to a target area. They started off by hitting an oversized ball off of a tee. Some students were quick in picking up the skill, while others struggled at first. Later, after students had multiple opportunities to bat, almost everyone was able to successfully hit the ball to the desired target.

Logically, by achieving success, student engagement and enjoyment was increased. For example, when I asked how achieving success makes you feel, Erica stated:

Really, really good because you are doing something. If you don’t succeed, you don’t really want to keep trying. However, if people encourage you and say “good try,” you will try harder. I feel good because I feel like I am getting better



at the games and that the people around me are getting better at the games and that you are helping us to get better.

When the frequency and diversity of student interactions were increased, student's feelings of success also were enhanced promoting a more engaging environment.

*Reduced game complexity.* Small-sided games also reduced the number of players, both teammates and opponents. Fewer participants reduced game complexity, helping students understand player movement and game tactics. When game complexity was reduced students appeared better able to grasp the game and to realize success. In addition to reducing the number of players, I reduced game complexity further by modifying objects, decreasing playing areas, and simplifying rules. These curricular structures challenged students to dissect the game and analyze strategies (i.e., object placement and space utilization). For example, Alice explained that in small-sided games:

I could think about what I was doing and then I can share it. This helps us get better. Talking about stuff makes us better. I am actually trying to think about what I am doing and what is working.

Additionally, by simplifying the games, students were able to achieve success early and often. Like with 'short games,' success promoted student engagement. For example, Thomas stated that "it [achieving success] makes me feel like I did a good job. It makes me feel like I can do this. It makes me feel like I can trust my teammates more."

Similarly, Diana commented, "It was fun because I never thought of playing games like the ones we did. I hope we can do it again." Ultimately, the creation of an engaging

environment resulted in positive student interaction that allowed students to achieve success that, in turn, fostered an engaging environment.

### *Questioning Students*

Questioning provided an open climate and allowed students to learn and develop through discovery. Throughout each lesson, I questioned students both individually as well as within structured class discussion. Individual questioning occurred at critical points throughout the game, while class discussion occurred before, between, and after game play.

Unlike traditional classrooms, where one-way, teacher to student knowledge transfer can restrict teacher-student and student-student interaction, in TGfU, I did not simply tell students how to play or perform a skill. Instead, through questioning, I guided students to discover logical tactics and arrive at a deeper game understanding. This appeared to create an open climate, encouraging student engagement and dialogue. Further, questioning seemed to energize students and promote active involvement. For example, when asked about questioning, Heath stated “talking about the game makes me want to try harder.” Additionally, by answering questions as a class, students appeared to interact with each other in a way that is not typically possible using a one-way traditional transmittal model. Erica, commented:

Questioning improved it [participation]. Like when we were talking, if someone said something that sounded like a good idea, then we would likely try it. We then would try a bunch of different things and find out what works for us and then we get better.

Questioning also allowed students to consider new strategies, discovering for themselves the rationale and best practices related to the associated game-related challenges. Specifically, I used questions to guide them to think through the problem at hand and determine how it could be solved. For example, Bridgette commented:

You give us a chance to talk about it. Other teachers would ask at the end of the lesson if you get it. Everybody probably says yes whether they get it or not. You have us stop and it allows us to see other points of view.

Again, unlike with the traditional teaching model where game strategies and skills are teacher-controlled, in this constructivist approach, teacher questioning enabled students to learn through discovery, resulting in three positive outcomes. First, students seemed to gain a deeper understanding of the desired learning outcome. Peter explained that questioning “made us think about what we had to do and helped us understand how the game is played.” Second, the fact that the tactics were developed by students to fit their own individual style and ability resulted in successful skill performance. For example, during the volleyball portion of the net and wall game unit, Jane said:

You teach us how not every hit is perfect for every person in a certain way, but how it matters what’s best for you to work with and ... instead of doing your best and all that, it is more about, do your best...but be able to focus on knowing how much energy to put into [the hit]... because some people, if they are right up [at the net], it is easier for them to jump up and hit [the ball] down [into the court, while for other] people it’s easiest for them, instead of jumping, to just hit it [up] and let it go over.

Finally, students seemed to enjoy discovery-based learning that appeared to result in greater participation both during questioning and play. Tessa confirmed this by stating:

If it is harder to figure out how to do it, it is more fun. I don't like things just being easy, I like it to be more challenging and using the whole class to figure things out makes it more fun.

In closing, it is important to note that both the type of question and timing of the question were instrumental in guiding my students. Specifically, by asking questions at critical or key moments, students were able to analyze the game as well as their own performance within the game. Also, I was careful to recognize opportunities to promote student "buy-in" regarding the TGfU curriculum and to foster both teacher-student and student-student relationships that reflected trust and care. Finally, questioning allowed me to evaluate their level of understanding and ultimately tailor additional guiding questions based on my evaluation.

#### *Fostering Teacher-Student Relationships*

A second key element when creating a classroom environment conducive to trust and care involved building effective teacher-student relationships. To accomplish this, two strategies were employed including, (a) teacher-student shared decisions and expectations and (b) commitment to constructivist teaching.

*Teacher-student shared decisions and expectations.* By sharing decision-making, students assumed an active role in creating a learning environment that was conducive to trust and care. I asked students to make choices associated with partners/team selection as well as game conditions, such as rules, objects, and playing areas. Shared decision-

making was introduced early in the first set of games and played a prominent role throughout the quarter. Ultimately, during the last week of class, students essentially controlled all game conditions. Outside observer, Lynne, commented “Teams determined the rules of their games, boundaries, and game objectives...After approximately fifteen minutes, one team from each field switched to the other field. Teams taught their designed games to one another and then played.”

Shared decision-making appeared to encourage student engagement and increased participation. As an example, in my teacher log from 7-28-06 (lesson five of net/wall games) I commented:

Students were allowed to choose the object being used in the games today. They had experimented with objects all week and today they seemed excited to choose which object they would play with for each game. The lesser skilled students chose the beach ball. The skilled students selected small foam balls and the volleyballs. Once play began, if they wanted to change their selection they would run back and switch out the object for another and then try it. To me, it appeared obvious how and why they are making their selections, but it is interesting to watch them play and then make the decision to switch again.

In experimenting with shared decision-making in this research, I found that allowing my students to make decisions was very empowering to them. An example of this came when Jack, a student whom I had originally classified as “non-trusting” stated, “it [decision-making] makes me achieve success because it makes me want to involve more students.” Similarly, Thomas, a quiet and reserved student, stated that he “was able

to talk out with my team what the rules were and that made the game really challenging and more fun.”

Additionally, giving students authority seemed to create and enhance the feeling of trust between my students and me that may not have been possible under a traditional teaching model. Similarly, by empowering students to make choices, I tried to demonstrate to the students my trust in their judgment. Increasingly, this allowed traditional teacher-student barriers to break down. For example, as a follow-up to his previous comment, Thomas stated that making decisions in the game:

...made me feel more mature, like I could handle decisions because I could choose what I wanted and what the rules were and stuff and I had to compromise with my teams with what they wanted and this made me feel good.

One notable byproduct that resulted from students participating in the decision-making process was the setting of certain classroom expectations. By allowing students to control various aspects of the classroom environment, they essentially help shape the resulting expectations. Moreover, because students were directly involved, both through in class discussion and partner/team dialogue, the expectations that were set were reasonable and reachable. For example, Alice commented that “making decisions made you feel like the game is yours and that you can shape it in a way that best fits you and your opponent and then you want to participate more.” Similarly, the feedback and insight that was elicited from interviews and focus groups also provided valuable input into the future parameters to establish reasonable expectations.

In conclusion, engagement was enhanced by creating an environment where students were trusted to help shape their environment that, in turn, enabled a high rate of

success. Additionally, by sharing the various decision making processes with students, they appeared to become more invested in the associated lesson and more trusting of the TGfU model, each other, and me.

*Commitment to constructivist teaching.* A second component associated with building teacher-student relationships involved me acting in a way that demonstrated that I was a committed constructivist teacher. This involved me assuming three unique, but interdependent roles. Specifically, I acted as a facilitator, partner or teammate, and researcher. By employing each, I was able gradually to shed the perceptions associated with traditional teachers and create an environment that was conducive to fostering relationships that reflected trust and care.

First, I assumed the constructivist-teaching role of student facilitator. To be an effective facilitator, I designed and implemented lessons that promoted a social constructivist learning environment. Additionally, as will be described later in this chapter, I employed specific strategies intended to promote trusting and caring relationships.

First I had to develop lesson plans that would allow for the effective implementation of these strategies. This involved creating lessons based on the TGfU curricular model that utilized strategies such as “small teams,” “short games,” and “reduced game complexity.” In implementing my lessons in a way that supported each of these strategies, I was careful to “guide” my class to discover solutions and build relationships rather than dictating right and wrong answers and forcing interaction. This most often involved active questioning. For example, when asked about how I teach, Catie commented:

You don't really come out and tell us. You will ask us to figure out a way to do things best. For example, with the racquets today, you would ask us how to hit the birdie overhand or underhand or to the side. When you pulled us aside, people said that they used underhand because it would go over the net and not go out of bounds. The role of facilitator was the foundation in creating the TGfU environment in which relationships that reflected trust and care were developed. Specifically, by establishing myself as a "facilitator and mentor," I was able to establish a foundation on which my roles as "partner and teammate" and "researcher" could be built.

A particularly effective strategy that I used to enhance the teacher-student relationship involved frequent participation as a teammate or partner rather than as a facilitator or classroom leader (as is the case in the traditional teaching model). Specifically, I participated actively during specific and defined "moments" of play. For example, during doubles of the net wall games unit, I stepped in when there was an odd number of players. Furthermore, by using this strategy in lessons that involved short games and where students frequently switched partners, I was able to interact with all students.

While in hindsight this seems like an obvious way to promote teacher-student relationships that reflect trust and care, it was an unexpected realization for me that was made apparent by students during interviews and focus groups. For example, Catie commented that when "you come in and play the games with us, this makes the students feel more comfortable with you."

Although my participation was not planned initially, as the semester progressed and the benefits became more apparent, I intentionally inserted myself into games



furthering the development of trusting and caring relationships. For example, Tessa stated:

I can gain trust with you when you play with us and when you do that [student is demonstrating special hand shake]. None of my other PE teachers did that kind of stuff and none of them were really cool. You are pretty cool.

This practice also helped *me* to get to know my students from another perspective. For example, I was able to experience both competitive attitudes and playful attitudes.

Engaging with students outside of class as a researcher during both interviews and focus groups proved to enhance the teacher-student relationship by increasing students' comfort with me, thus promoting an additional layer of trust and respect. Although my initial purpose for conducting interviews and focus groups was to collect data from my students' perspective, an unanticipated outcome of these encounters was to facilitate dialogue with students outside of class.

Similar to the unexpected outcome of my participation in small-sided games, the relationship building benefits associated with student interviews and focus group interactions were not planned initially. However, as the focus groups and interviews progressed, the positive effects became more pronounced. For example during one interview, Julie shared that “actually doing this, like talking with you now has helped me because at first I was nervous, but now it is easy and I want to come.”

Unlike other strategies that appeared to enhance teacher-student relationships, dialogue outside of class permitted me to alter students' expectations of me as a traditional teacher, employing more constructivist teacher strategies, such as soliciting, listening, and valuing student voice. Interestingly, despite the more formal data

collection setting, the results of this setting for relationship building were positive. Students appeared to take pride in the fact that their opinions were valued. In this way, I demonstrated to students that I trusted and respected them and it appears that students in turn, reciprocated. For example, Jane explained:

I like that we get to come in at lunch and tell you about what we think and that you might make some changes. Teachers don't know what kids want and so I wish other teachers would ask our opinion so that we could tell them what we think about the lesson so that we can make teaching and learning more fun.

#### *Nurturing Student-Student Relationships*

The final element in creating a classroom environment conducive to fostering trust and care involved nurturing effective student-student relationships. Specifically, I felt that to create a community of learners, it was necessary for student-student relationships to be established that resulted in student willingness and desire to both learn from and share knowledge with peers. To accomplish this, I employed three strategies: (a) frequently changing partners and teams, (b) facilitating student talk and communication, and (c) encouraging students to depend on others.

*Changing partners and teams.* To promote and accelerate widespread student-student relationships, I asked students frequently to change partners or team members. During each class in the first unit, students changed partners multiple times. During the second unit, students changed partners/teams each day. However, during the third and final unit, because the students were now familiar with each other, teams were established and remained constant. At first, I did not allow students to choose the same partner/teams with whom they had worked previously, but rather required them to pick

individuals with whom they had not yet worked. However, as time went on, this was not sustainable given that there were only fifteen students per class. Lynne, the outside observer, confirmed that “students were allowed to choose their own partners. Additionally, they changed partners with each task.”

The purpose of frequently changing partners with respect to relationship building appeared to be the opportunity for class members to meet and interact with classmates with whom they were not familiar and may not have necessarily associated. Diana emphasized this point when she explained:

Usually only girls go with girls because it was too weird to have a boy as a partner, and boys feel the same way, but now that you say we have to go with a different partner that we have never been with, the girls will get to know the boys and the boys will get to know the girls and we can concentrate more than if you were with your friend the whole time.

Additionally, class members found the interaction with new and unfamiliar individuals to be personally rewarding. Marcie explained, “When you put us with new partners, you allow us to have new friends.” Finally, because students were working with partners and teams rather than as individuals, success was dependent on effective student-student communication and cooperation.

*Student talk and communication.* A second strategy I employed to promote the development of student-student relationships was encouraging student talk and communication. I frequently encouraged students to communicate with others both during game play and class discussion. For example, during the fielding/striking unit, Lynne, the outside observer, commented, “Throughout all tasks, students were

encouraged to discuss hitting placement or strategy with their team members.”

Additionally, during the territorial games unit, she observed, “After teams engaged in game play, student groups discussed and collaborated to solve unplanned issues of their designed games.” Such communication appeared to foster both relationship development and peer learning. During game play, students provided feedback and suggestions to each other that appeared to enhance learning. Through this strategy, it appeared that students took advantage of opportunities to get to know each other. For example, Marcie commented, “It is important to get together and learn about each other by playing games and interacting in sports and asking people what they like.” During class discussion, I asked students questions and allowed them to respond with personal insights and advice. Through such dialogue, students were able to learn from each other. Furthermore, it seems that this strategy assisted students to gain credibility and demonstrate respect for each other. For example, Marcie stated:

When you ask us questions as a group, they get to share something they made up and you get to share also. You can determine the character of another by listening to what they said. You get to know what they like and interact with them a lot more.

*Learning to depend on others.* The final component of building student-student relationships involved creating situations that *necessitated* interaction and teamwork, leading to the development of trust. To accomplish this, early in the unit I created tasks in which students began working with partners or in teams the second week of the quarter. For example, during the first week of the net-wall games unit, I asked students to work together to keep the “object” in play. By doing this, instead of trying to “beat” their opponent, students were encouraged to work together. By creating such situations,

students were encouraged to depend on and learn from others *how* to succeed and progress. For example, Richard stated, “I can trust them better because they have shown me that they will catch the ball when I need them to and play fairly.” Additionally, students readily commented on the need to trust partners or teammates to perform effectively. For example, Erica explained, “It is hard to communicate and play together if you don’t trust each other and don’t work well together.” Similarly, for both individuals and teams to improve, it was necessary for students to learn from each other. In doing this, both individual and team performance were enhanced.

To summarize, I selected and implemented several strategies that I projected would foster a classroom environment that supported the building of teacher-student and student-student relationships. Specifically, these included (a) enhancing student interactions, (b) questioning, (c) fostering teacher-student relationships, and (d) nurturing student-student relationships. My findings suggest that these strategies enhanced the class context for the teacher-student and student-student relationships facilitating trust and care relationships.

### Examining the Teacher-Student and Student-Student Relationships for Trust & Care

In this section, I will examine the second research question, “To what extent did the relationships reflect the concepts of trust and care?” As described above, the classroom environment enabled the creation of both teacher-student and student-student relationships that embodied the concepts of trust and care. However, it is important to keep in mind the interdependency and iterative nature of relationship building. Specifically, student perceptions of effective teacher-student relationships enhanced the

development of effective student-student relationship. To better understand the process, an examination of both the strategies and characteristics associated with the resulting trusting and caring teacher-student relationships is necessary. Because the purpose of this study was to examine the role of trust and care in the implementation of a social constructivist curriculum and how this influenced *students'* willingness and ability to learn, this section will focus on the student perspective of the teacher-student relationship. Specifically, I will analyze (a) the student's perspectives on teacher-student trust and care building strategies, (b) student described characteristics of a trusting and caring teacher-student relationship, (c) nurturing student "friendships," and (d) characteristics of a trusting and caring student-student relationship.

#### *Student's Perspectives on Teacher-Student Trust and Care Building Strategies*

In building relationships that reflected the concepts of trust and care, I attempted to foster experiences that allowed my students to trust me and to realize that I cared for them. Additionally, it was important for my students to realize that I trusted them. Therefore, it was necessary for me to begin the process by granting my students a level of trust and care that was greater than what they expected upon first meeting their teacher. Because Noddings (1984) points out that it is the teacher's responsibility to initiate the circle of care, I acted first to begin this process. As Alice stated, "we will trust you if you trust us."

To effectively foster trusting and caring teacher-student relationships, I implemented strategies to demonstrate and reinforce these concepts. Specifically, this involved (a) modeling appropriate behavior, (b) repetition of appropriate trusting and caring behaviors, and (c) providing positive reinforcement. It is important to note that

these strategies expanded the relationship building strategies previously examined (i.e., “teacher-student shared decisions” and “expectations and committed constructivist teaching”).

*Modeling appropriate behavior.* Modeling of trusting and caring behavior was described by Noddings (1984) and required that I demonstrate my care and trust for my students. In the implementation of TGfU in this environment, modeling served two purposes. First, I was able to demonstrate to my students that I did indeed trust and care for them and could myself be trusted. For example, in allowing students to make choices, I demonstrated my trust in their judgment. Additionally, by working with them individually, I demonstrated that I cared for their personal development. This was reinforced by Kyle when he stated “It [decision-making] makes you feel like you have more responsibility. Instead of being bossed around, it’s nice that you get to make the decisions and that you are responsible.” Second, I was able to act as a role-model for trust and care, encouraging them indirectly to tailor their own behavior to reflect mine. For example, because I attempted to involve all students in both games and class discussions, the students in turn promoted widespread involvement. While this was not explicitly described by students, one student, Reilly stated, “You are always so nice to us and it makes us want to be nice to each other too.”

*Repetition of appropriate trusting and caring behaviors.* A second trust and care building strategy that I employed involved consistently repeating appropriate actions. In dissecting this strategy, three aspects emerge. First, my actions needed to appropriately embody trust and/or care to avoid providing an inappropriate example. For example, participating in the games showed that I could be trusted as a teammate and mentor. This

point was highlighted by Alice when she stated, “Last year, our teacher would just tell us what to do and not play with us. You play the game with us and this helps us to trust you.” Second, it was necessary to repeat the actions, such as my game participation, so as to reinforce its importance. Finally, my actions needed to be consistently inclusive to avoid confusion. If I were to play with some students and not others, I would not provide a consistent example that I could be trusted to be a good teammate to all.

*Providing positive reinforcement.* The final teacher-student strategy intended to foster trust and care involved providing students with positive reinforcement. Throughout each class period, there existed a myriad of opportunities to provide positive reinforcement for appropriate skill performance or effort. Additionally, I provided similar feedback during periods of one-on-one or group discussion that encouraged students to further explore and discover potential game related tactics and strategies. For example, when I asked students to identify ways that I used to build trust, Jane said, “You give us tips that help us and encourage us which makes us feel better.” Finally, I provided positive reinforcement when students acted in a trusting or caring manner towards their classmates; an example that demonstrated the adoption and progression of trust and care in the classroom environment. By providing such positive reinforcement, students were not only reminded of the correct performance, but also realized that I felt that they were worthy and deserving of my comments and that I cared enough to talk, correct, and encourage them. This point was emphasized by Marcie when she stated;

I know that you care for us because of how you told everybody that you liked their passing and how you are concerned about everything we did including our behavior. This encourages people to care more about other people.



*Student Described Characteristics of a Trusting and Caring Teacher-Student Relationship*

Students readily identified teacher related characteristics associated with trust and care, including the importance of (a) openness, (b) honesty, and (c) friendliness and encouragement. When questioned during interviews and focus groups, students discussed these characteristics and pointed to examples of how such characteristics had been developed and demonstrated throughout the quarter. Additionally, it is important to point out that students did not readily discern a difference between trust and care. Actually, although students were specifically questioned about each concept on different occasions, the resulting answers demonstrated they perceived that trust and care were similar, interdependent concepts. For example, in talking about a healthy student-teacher relationship, Marcie stated, “I trust her [my teacher] because I know that she will be there caring for me, if anything happens she will still care for me.”

*Openness.* Students identified teacher openness as a characteristic of teacher demonstrated trust and care. Furthermore, they pointed out that teacher-student dialogue was instrumental in establishing openness. For example, Julie commented, “since the class began, I’ve gotten [to know you]. If I had a problem, I would be able to talk to you, like more than any other teacher. Similarly, Jane stated:

Before we were strangers; it was teacher talking and student listening. Now it is more like friends talking. Teachers do not always know what students want. They are not mind readers. I like that we get to come in and talk with you. We have asked you questions and have found out things about you. This makes it able to talk with you more easily.

*Honesty.* Similarly, students identified the importance of being honest. Students explained that honesty meant that the teacher should be open and forthright regarding their true intentions and motivations. Consistent with student perceptions of openness, honesty appeared to be best established through dialogue. Additionally, a second component to honesty was follow-up action that had been discussed in the dialogue. For example, Richard stated:

It [the student-teacher relationship] has changed a lot for me because my old teacher didn't do this [talk to them] and she just let us play and she didn't talk about it. Now you actually get involved and talk about what is good and bad. She [old teacher] told us what to do, but she didn't tell us all about it like you do.

*Friendly and encouraging.* Students identified that a trusting and caring teacher should be friendly and encouraging. For example when asked about what makes a caring and/or trusting teacher, Alice stated, "You are friendly and you do not yell at us." Similarly, David said, "You don't discourage us, you encourage us." Interestingly, the importance of being friendly and encouraging was not always described through positive experiences. Sometimes it represented preventing or correcting negative experiences. For example, when asked about how students felt about a caring teacher, Diana commented, "It makes me feel good that they [teachers] are there for you; like if you don't get something or if your feelings are hurt or if you have a problem." Finally, like with "honesty," fostering such sentiments took time and required being open so that my students could get to know me. For example, Heath stated:

We know you and we know your name. At first we didn't know exactly what to do because we didn't know you and now we know you better than most

[teachers]. At first, I was scared to meet you and now we are kind-of friends and it helps because if I am stuck on something, I get to ask you and I am not nervous to talk with you.

### *Nurturing Student “Friendships”*

Student-student relationships that reflected trust and care emerged and developed throughout the semester as students interacted both in class and out of class. From the students’ perspective, these relationships were described as friendships. Although my actions directly impacted my relationship with students, I appeared to have less direct control over the outcome. Because the relationship existed only between the involved students, I could only participate by fostering situations and scenarios that were conducive to friendship development. Similarly, because the students interacted both in and out of class, there were many situations over which I had little or no control.

To foster “friendships” (i.e. student-student relationships that reflect trust and care), I employed three strategies in addition to the strategies previously introduced. Specifically, the three “friendship” building strategies included (a) increasing student familiarity through interaction and dialogue, (b) structuring multiple student encounters, and (c) fostering student encouragement. Similar to strategies for teacher-student relationships, friendship strategies complemented the general student-student relationship building strategies and added a greater focus on building trust and care. By examining both the strategies and the associated characteristics, I was able to achieve a more complete understanding of how trust and care evolved in student-student friendship relationships.

*Increasing familiarity through interaction and dialogue.* Not surprisingly, when

students described how they build friendships that involved trust and care, the primary enabler was becoming familiar with or getting to know one another. This involved both interaction and dialogue that allowed students to discover common interests and compare likes and dislikes. For example, Julie explained, “Getting to know each other will allow you to know if you can trust someone.”

During class, I encouraged friendship building interaction through small-sided games and group discussion. Additionally, I promoted student-student dialogue by including games that required partners or teammates. Finally, students were able to listen and respond to each other during group discussions. Catie explained, “You need to get to know them [your classmates] because you trust people you know. If you know them better, you will like them more and trust them more.” Essentially, based on the structure and design of the class, student interaction and dialogue was frequent and continuous and fostered the development of friendships. Predictably, student relationships strengthened throughout the quarter as students became more familiar with each other. For example, on 9-19-06 (lesson 13, territorial games) I commented:

Today was the second day of students designing and implementing their own games. They rushed to the playing area and broke out into their groups. Each group discussed the rules that they wanted to try. Every group had great ideas and they confirmed themselves that their ideas were good. If a given strategy didn't work, they stopped to discuss. They also discussed with the other teams what was working and what was not working.

*Structuring multiple student encounters.* A second strategy that emerged to promote trust and care in student-student friendship relationships was the opportunity to

have multiple encounters in which they could interact and dialogue. When asked how to build trust, Marcie stated, “You have to work with each other more” while Neil, commented that, “Working with each other a lot helps us to rely on each other more.” All students agreed that it takes time and multiple encounters to build friendship.

To provide students with many opportunities to interact, I used several classroom strategies. During the first two game units, I frequently required students to switch partners between games and activities. Additionally, I kept the games intentionally short to provide time to play many different opponents, maximizing interaction. Finally, the students regularly came together for group discussion. Catie pointed out that, “we have [been] paired up with different people. We get to know them better and their characteristics come out. You become more comfortable with them because you are talking to them every day.” Students reported that by providing them with multiple opportunities to interact, I facilitated friendship development through trusting and caring relationships. Alice commented, “after we play the game with the same people for a week, it is easier to trust people because you feel comfortable with the game and comfortable with the people.”

*Fostering student encouragement.* A final strategy that proved effective in promoting student-student relationships that reflect trust and care involved strategies to foster student-student encouragement. Similar to my efforts to provide positive comments, student-provided encouragement appeared to motivate students to try harder and perform better. This point was well illustrated on the second day of fielding/striking games when I noticed that Raleigh was having a hard time and was becoming self-critical. Specifically, I commented in my teacher log on 8-15-06 (lesson two,

fielding/striking games) that:

Today, I observed that Raleigh was having a hard time catching the ball. His body language suggested that he was disappointed with himself and he was slumped over and looked sad. His teammates began to encourage him and give him pointers. This seemed to give Raleigh a renewed motivation and he began to play better and he had a smile on his face.

Additionally, it suggested that the student providing encouragement cared about the student receiving the comments. When I asked students how they let others know they care, Reid stated, “You encourage each other instead of putting each other down.”

Similarly, Marcie explained:

I pat them on the back and say “good job” when they do something good. When they didn’t quite get it, I will say “nice try” and then give them a little advice. If they miss, I will tell them it is OK.

While I could not control or force students to provide positive feedback, I did employ strategies to encourage student-student feedback. First, I used a lesson design that encouraged interaction and team play and positively reinforced student effort and skillful performances, modeling the interactions I sought. Similarly, I often praised students when they provided positive reinforcement to each other to encourage these actions.

Interestingly, the students’ reasons for providing feedback to each other served both utilitarian and altruistic purposes. Students often described utilitarian goals, such as providing positive encouragement so that their teammates would be encouraged to keep playing or try harder. For example, Alice stated, “If they say you are doing good, you feel good about yourself. If they say you need to work on something, you listen to them

and try to work on that.” Students also reported providing encouragement because they cared about their friends and/or classmates feelings. For example, when asked about creating a trusting and caring environment, one student, Jack commented, “I help players that are struggling in the game by helping them understand, by teaching them good tips.” Additionally, my outside observer, Lynne, wrote, “Students were observed giving one another encouraging and positive corrective feedback. Students made statements such as “See, you’re not so bad,” and “That was pretty good. Next time don’t toss it up so high.”

Students receiving encouragement responded positively and often reciprocated with both increased effort and appreciation. For example, Jane said, “When they said good job, like when you score a point, it makes you want to try harder to score more points.”

#### *Characteristics of a Trusting and Caring Student-Student Relationship*

Similar to their perception of teacher-student relationships, students seemed not to distinguish between the trust and care concepts. For example, Jason related trust to helping other, a care concept, by stating, “If someone is not trustworthy, they will not help you if you are having a hard time.” Likewise, students associated trust and care with friendship. Marcie when asked about trust explained, “You are able to befriend someone and they are also able befriend you.” In examining student-student friendship relationships for trust and care, students identified five characteristics (a) openness, (b) honesty, (c) loyalty, (d) kindness, and (e) forgiveness.

*Openness.* Openness served as conduit for increased familiarity that appeared to facilitate friendship. For example, Anna commented, “When we talk in groups, we get to know each other better.” While Catie explained:

If you have at least met the person, you are a little more comfortable playing with them because you know their name and know a little bit about them. If they open up and talk with you more, you feel like you can start to trust them.

*Honesty.* Honesty represented a second characteristic identified by students as important to trusting and caring relationships. Similar to trust and care in the teacher-student relationship, honesty was described less often as a characteristic and more as a definition for trust. Specifically, when asked about characteristics associated with relationships, Jane said, “Honesty [is important] for example, someone who doesn’t agree with everything I say. I want to hear their opinion. They don’t suck up or agree with everything you say.” Also, like with the teacher-student relationship, honesty was evaluated through dialogue over a series of encounters. As a follow-up question to Jane, I asked “What we are doing in class to determine whether someone is honest?” She replied, “We are getting to know people better.”

*Loyalty.* Loyalty was a characteristic identified by students as crucial to friendships. Students defined it as a willingness to count on a fellow classmate for support not just during good times, but also during challenging times. Loyalty was referred to within the context of friendships that had progressed and deepened. For example, when asked about characteristics of friendship, Carter referred to loyalty by stating, “If you care about someone, they may care for you, you will still be friends even if you have a bad day or a bad game.” Further, when asked about a caring relationship, Julie explained, “They have to show me that they would be a good friend and not say things behind my back.”

*Kindness.* Being kind was a characteristic that enhanced enjoyment and pleasure



within a friendship. Amy explained, “Someone who is nice tries to be nice to others and doesn’t give insults.” However, the characteristic of nice and/or kind also appeared to influence perceptions of trustworthiness and caring. For example, Erica stated:

If someone is kind to me, it is easier for me to be kind back to them. This helps to break the ice and we talk more. By talking more with each other after a while we can start to trust each other and hopefully we will be friends.

Similarly, Julie stated that:

Getting to know each other will allow you to know if you can trust someone. Depending on who the person is will determine how long it takes to trust them. If people are nice, it is easier to trust them.

Finally, Jason stated, “If they are rude, they are probably not trustworthy. If they are nice, they are probably trustworthy.”

*Forgiveness.* Forgiveness was a characteristic identified by students as necessary for new friendships and present in established friendships. Erica explained:

Thomas got upset with me the other day because I messed up in the game, but shortly after, he came up to me and apologized. Because we are friends, I felt like he meant it, so I forgave him.

However, unlike the other characteristics that dealt with relationship building, forgiveness dealt with relationship repair. For example, Marcie stated, “If someone got hit, the other person would apologize and hopefully they would be forgiven.” Therefore, for students to be in a situation to forgive (or be forgiven), the friendship relationship that involved trust and/or care had already been established.

*Friendships.* In response to interviews and focus group questions examining

student-student relationships of trust and care, students repeated identified the concept of friendship. For example, when asked about the benefits that come from caring about someone, Andrew identified “Friendship - because they feel that you care about them.”

When describing characteristics of friendships, students pointed out the importance of support and companionship. For example, Erica stated, “You have their back. If they need your help, you are there for them if you have formed a bond.” Similarly, Alice stated, “If someone yelled at me and someone else stuck up for me, I would feel really good because I would feel that I had friends.” Additionally, students found value in friendships that fostered companionship and led to fun and personal enjoyment. Friendships involved humor and game playing that resulted in good times. For example, Kyle stated, “I like to have a fun time with my friends. I don’t want them to be boring. I like for friends to tell jokes and to play around.”

In summary, the teacher-student and student-student relationships that developed with in the TGfU unit seemed to reflect the concepts of trust and care. Additionally, it appeared that the process of building such relationships was enhanced through teacher implementation of specific strategies. The teacher-student and student-student relationships that developed consisted of both shared similarities and unique features. Specifically, both teacher-student and student-student relationships shared the characteristics of openness and honesty. Students also identified the need for teachers to be friendly and encouraging. Finally, students described trusting and caring student-student relationships as friendships, identifying kindness, loyalty, forgiveness, trust, and care as essential characteristics of friendship.

## The Influence of Trusting and Caring Relationships on Students' Willingness and Ability to Learn

In this section, I will examine research question three, "In what ways did trusting and caring relationships developed in the (TGfU) setting influence students' willingness and ability to learn?" Data collected in this research study suggested several ways that trusting and caring relationships developed in the TGfU setting increased students' willingness and ability to learn. Specifically, trusting and caring relationships enhanced willingness and ability to learn by (a) encouraging student interest and engagement, and (b) promoting classroom citizenship. In this section, I will connect these components with trust and care, emphasizing how each contributed to students' willingness and ability to learn.

### *Student Interest and Engagement*

The existence of teacher-student and student-student relationships that reflected trust and care positively influenced students' willingness and ability to learn by encouraging interest and engagement. This occurred in two distinct ways: (a) increasing reluctant students' participation and engagement, and (b) eliciting effort and hard work. With both, the existence of trusting and caring relationships provided unengaged students with support and encouragement, that in turn led students to participate actively and with legitimate effort. By willingly participating, students' willingness to learn was enhanced. Because TGfU is designed to promote learning and growth through the implementation of discovered solutions to game based problems, simply getting students to engage represented a significant first step in fostering learning. Similarly, when students put forth increased effort, their learning was amplified.

*Increasing reluctant students' participation and engagement.* Students who originally seemed reluctant to engage in activity appeared to be more willing to try unfamiliar games and tasks due to the support and encouragement that resulted from trusting and caring relationships. As described above, students who were willing to participate, typically seemed more willing to learn. Taken from the opposite perspective, if students were not willing to try, they were likely less willing to learn. Additionally, when students willingly engaged in the TGfU curriculum, its design structures (e.g., small-sided, discussion-oriented) appeared to inherently increase students' ability to learn.

It is important to note that an increased willingness to try did not benefit all students equally. Some students were naturally willing to try and would have participated regardless. However, for those students who were initially reluctant, increased participation did positively influence their learning environment. For example, during the first lesson of the second unit (8-14-06) (lesson one, fielding/striking games), I commented:

The class appears to have made the switch from net/wall games to fielding/striking games with little disruption. Unlike at the beginning of the quarter, students seemed comfortable with the questioning and dialogue. Also, they did not question why the rules of the game were different - more like baseball...Bridgette impressed me today by participating actively in the "defending space" drill and communicating with her classmates. This is a good sign given that she took a lesser role and did not readily communicate for a week or so during the first unit.

Looking back at this teacher log and thinking through what my students said to me in interviews and focus groups, it became apparent that building relationships that reflected trust and care played a significant role in initiating and perpetuating students' willingness to try. To best examine *how*, it is important to first understand *why* students were initially reluctant to participate. In essence, they appeared to be concerned that they might fail, and, moreover, they wanted to avoid the associated consequences. By establishing student-student relationships that reflected trust and care, individual failure was met with student support and encouragement. For example, Alice commented:

When we are working with our teammates, we all have to cooperate, and you got to talk to each other about how to, like, to hit the ball, when to hit the ball, and where to hit the ball. Then we, like, have to encourage each other 'cause if they say, like, negative stuff, like 'you could have done that better' or 'you should have tried harder' or something like that, it will hurt people's feelings then we won't want to play as well or we wouldn't want to play with them. But, if they say stuff like 'good try, you almost had it' or stuff like that, then they would understand and like if I say something mean to them and, like, if I didn't tell them I was sorry for saying that, then they wouldn't really want to be my friend because they know I would say something mean to them.

*Eliciting effort and hard work.* The existence of trusting and caring relationships seemed to encourage students to work hard and give significant effort. Effort appeared to enhance students' willingness and ability to learn. Students responded directly to encouragement and support from fellow classmates and responded with effort. When asked about giving effort and working hard, students described a desire to put for effort

so as to not let their friends down.

Students' willingness to be engaged in the game and give effort appeared to increase throughout the quarter. Both eager and reluctant students became more willing and able to learn in the trusting and caring environment. An example of this was noted in my teacher log from 8-4-06 (lesson nine of net/wall games) when I commented:

The students got really excited today as we introduced doubles. They worked together to figure out strategies and supported each other when they hit good and bad shots. Diana, was supportive of her partner, Reilly, and encouraged her to keep trying even though she was having difficulty putting the object in play. This really seemed to give Reilly a desire to try harder.

Further, the support and encouragement that resulted from trusting and caring relationships motivated students to go beyond minimal effort and strive for excellence.

For example, Alice stated:

If somebody said something nice to you, you would want to play harder and try to get better and you would get better complements or more complements, maybe. If you, like, work together, and they give you positive complements, you would play better.

Additionally, the fact that relationships had been established encouraged students to give effort based on their desire not to let down their fellow classmates and friends. For

example, Heath commented that:

If they drop it, you know they are feeling bad by their face. They are probably disappointed because they let down the team so I tell them good try and show them how to do better for the next time.

It appeared that in the trusting and caring environment, student interest and motivation directly influenced students' *willingness* to learn by promoting engagement and effort. Further, it also indirectly affected students' *ability* to learn through increased engagement in the TGfU curriculum.

### *Classroom Citizenship*

The promotion of classroom citizenship positively influenced students' willingness and ability to learn in several ways. It facilitated (a) peer learning/coaching (b) empathy, and (c) widespread involvement. As with "student interest and engagement," these benefits were enabled through the existence of relationships that reflected trust and care within the TGfU curriculum. In this section, each aspect will be examined within the context of trust and care to better understand the influence on student learning.

*Peer learning/coaching.* Enabled by relationships that reflected trust and care, peer learning and/or coaching positively influenced students' willingness and ability to learn by allowing students an alternative to the traditional teaching model where information flows from teacher to student. Specifically, students participated by both sharing and receiving information. Students felt empowered to share tactics that worked for them. Equally important, students also seemed willing to *receive* such information and use it in the next game. For example, Diana stated that:

You work with more people to figure it out... it [peer learning] helps me because they tell me answers that I never thought of so you get other people's opinions and what they want to say on the question also.

Students appeared to increasingly welcome opportunities to share and receive

information throughout the semester as the TGfU model became more familiar and student relationships grew. Specifically, while students appeared naturally inclined to give advice, the acceptance of such advice was not initially present. However, as relationships grew and students began to trust and care for each other, their willingness to receive and implement the tactics shared by other students increased. This point was articulated by Erica who stated, “We feel like we are actually participating and teaching ourselves in a way to be better and to be better friends.” Similarly, Marcie commented:

Well um, from the beginning I was kinda shy than usual because I didn't know everybody. But now, since we have interacted with throwing the ball and spiking it and talking and with other things that help us like different strategies, I thought that really helped because it improved my grade of what I was doing and maybe somebody else's and I actually got to learn more about other people as well as they got to learn more about me.

This in turn seemed to promote an even greater student willingness to share information, again reinforcing the circular nature of such relationships. For example, David said, “We can partner up with people we knew a lot, that you knew their strategies and stuff and we could use which idea was better.”

Similarly, as “friendships” grew, students seemed more willing to work together and negotiate with each other both during class discussion and game play. This created an environment where students were able to learn from each other during the unit.

Lynne, the outside observer wrote:

The teacher asked questions about the previous game (the questions/nature of the questions was the same for each class). Students were then instructed to play



game or practice task focused on a specific strategy of game play. Following the practice task, students and teacher again gathered to discuss strategy and problems and then played another game utilizing the strategies or suggestions discussed.

The class ended w/final discussions about effective placement or “creating space” strategies and making connections to previous net/wall games.

*Empathy.* A second way in which the promotion of classroom citizenship positively impacted students’ willingness and ability to learn involved students helping and encouraging fellow students or being “empathetic.” Specifically, this process involved students recognizing that help and/or encouragement was needed and then acting upon that recognition and providing help and encouragement. It appeared that, the existence of trusting and caring student relationships played an integral role, enhancing students desire to help and support others.

Regarding enhanced willingness and ability to learn, student empathy provided several benefits. First, the student being helped was afforded an additional avenue for knowledge and/or guidance. Encouragement also gave students the confidence to actively participate and ultimately partake in the benefits of the TGfU curriculum.

Regarding helping others, students were able to be empathetic by recognizing when a classmate was struggling and helping them out. Similarly, students provided encouragement when fellow classmates seemed discouraged or after unsuccessful efforts. Often, help and encouragement were provided in tandem and served to reverse the negative cycle involving struggle and discouragement. This point was reinforced in my teacher log from 8-16-06 (lesson three, fielding striking games) when I commented:

During class today, Thomas was attempting to explain to Catie strategies related

to defending space. It was clear to me (and Thomas) that Catie was struggling to find a solution to the tactical problem. However, I observed that Catie appeared to be frustrated with Thomas because he seemed a bit overbearing. Then I saw Thomas pull Catie aside and say “don’t get mad at me, all I am doing is caring. I just want to help you do better.” Catie smiled and they went back to the game.

Students’ willingness to provide help and/or encouragement increased throughout the semester as relationships were formed. Students began to trust and care about each other which resulted in the providing of help and/or encouragement. For example, Julie stated:

Playing in groups let you know if someone likes you or wants to be your friend. If you make a mistake, they will encourage you if they are your friend. If not, they will yell at you. After a while, you can trust and rely on them more because you know them.

Finally, as trusting and caring relationships grew, students seemed more willing to seek out opportunities to help and encourage their fellow classmate. An interesting example came from the outside observer who observed students intentionally implementing a “second chance” rule to give students more opportunities to develop.

Specifically, Lynne commented:

One team came up with a “2<sup>nd</sup> chance” rule that allowed a team 1 more opportunity if a pass was incomplete... At the end of class, the teacher asked students what they liked about the other team’s game. She also asked them to compare the games from a playing perspective. Most students appeared to like the “2<sup>nd</sup> chance” rule.

Similarly, the existence of trusting and caring relationships promoted empathy that allowed students to feel comfortable and not fear the potential ridicule that comes with failure. Jason reinforced this point by stating, “I don’t want to celebrate too much because if someone doesn’t do well, it may make them sad. It is like taunting the other team.”

In summary, it is important to point out that the concept of students being willing to help and encourage each other exists at several levels. Student encouragement served as a relationship building strategy and led students to give effort and feel confident that classmates were supportive. These examples demonstrate the mutuality and interdependence associated with caring and trusting relationships.

*Widespread involvement.* Encouraging students to both involve and rely on their classmates positively influenced learning by providing opportunities for all students to participate and learn. When all students were involved in both games and discussions, opportunities to learn were enhanced. Additionally, the existence of relationships that reflected trust and care were critical to students’ reliance and dependence on each other. Although students, at times, were placed with partners or on teams, they naturally had a choice regarding how much each player was involved and how much they wanted to rely on others. In this study, when students were willing to rely on each other, their involvement increased.

The establishment of relationships that reflected trust and care was instrumental in encouraging students to involve and rely upon all class members. Specifically, for students to rely upon each other, a level of trust needed to be established. For example, Alice stated:

I would have to know them first. If I can trust them - because reliability is kind of like trustworthiness. You have to be able to trust someone to kind of rely on them and they have to trust you before they can rely on you.”

Similarly, care was necessary for students to involve others, especially those of lesser skill levels. For example, when asked, “What do you do to let someone know that you care about how they feel?” Jack responded, “You congratulate them if they do something good. You can encourage them to do better and support them. You can actually throw them the ball.” Additionally, Lynne, the outside observer commented, “It appeared important to students that all players were included in game play regardless of skill or ability.”

Over the course of the quarter, it appeared that students gradually became more willing to both rely on and involve others. This was specifically apparent from my teacher log on 9-1-06 (lesson 3, territorial games) when I wrote:

Today was the first day in which students played in teams of three or four. I was concerned that some students would be left out based on a lower skill level. I was pleased to see that all team members appeared to be engaged. Students were talking and encouraging each other. One student, Reid, really stood out by not only encouraging Alice, who was lesser skilled, but also intentionally passing her the ball and involving her in the game.

### Summary

The purpose of this research was to examine the roles of trust and care in the implementation of a social constructivist curriculum in physical education. In this study, I attempted to identify specific strategies associated with building relationships that

reflect trust and care as well as the resulting benefits. The findings suggested that students' willingness and ability to learn was positively influenced through the implementation of the social constructivist curriculum Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) combined with strategies and initiatives associated with developing and fostering relationships that embody trust and care.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to examine the role of trust and care in the implementation of a social constructivist curriculum in physical education. In this research, I examined the nature of the trusting and caring relationships that evolved and how the relationships developed within this setting influenced students' willingness and ability to learn. The findings indicated that students' willingness and ability to learn were positively influenced through the successful initiation and development of relationships that embodied trust and care within the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) curriculum. Further, the trusting and caring TGfU environment promoted classroom citizenship and student interdependence.

In this chapter, I will discuss the unique nature of the environment that promoted TGfU, trust, and care. In the first section of this chapter, I conceptualize the key components of this process as a "roadmap" central to the implementation of a trusting and caring classroom environment. This section will be followed by the presentation and explanation of the central theme that emerged from this research, community interdependence. I have created a model highlighting the relationships among the key environmental components leading to an interdependent class community. This model represents the process of student growth and interdependence that can result from developing a social constructivist environment that reflects trust and care.

#### Developing an Environment that Promotes TGfU, Trust and Care

"From the very first days of the child's development, his activities acquire meaning of their own in a system of social behavior and, being directed towards a

definite purpose, are refracted through the prism of the child's environment" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 30). Therefore, by developing an environment that promoted TGfU, trust, and care, I was able to positively influence my students' willingness and ability to learn. To develop such an environment, I implemented dynamic games and teacher- and student-structured tasks.

In this section, I have conceptualized a six-category matrix, presented in Table 4, that emphasizes the role of TGfU, trust, care, dynamic games, teacher structured tasks, and student structured tasks within the class environment. The matrix is proposed as a roadmap for teachers' implementation of a social constructivist curriculum that reflects trust and care. I will use the matrix to structure the first section of this chapter.

*Developing the TGfU Constructivist Environment (Column 1)*

Social constructivism provides students with an instructional learning environment that promotes interactions between individuals. It represents not only how individuals create meaning, but also how teachers and students can guide each other in the quest for personal meaning (Jewett & Mullen, 1979; Richardson, 1994). Therefore, when developing the constructivist curriculum, presented in Column 1 of Table 4, I initiated teacher tasks associated with creating dynamic games and teacher- and student-structured tasks. This process was consistent with Mitchell et al.'s (2006) findings that learning in tactical games models, such as TGfU, begins with teacher explanations and exaggerated representations of the game or game form. From these, students begin to understand the game at a tactical level. As students become comfortable with this tactical perspective, the desired skills emerge based on the students' discovery of necessity (Mitchell et al., 2006).

Table 4. *Developing an Environment that Promotes TGfU, Trust, and Care*

	① <b>Developing the TGfU Constructivist Environment</b>	② <b>Developing Trust</b>	③ <b>Developing Care</b>
Ⓐ <b>Dynamic Games</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small-Sided Games</li> <li>• Modified Games</li> <li>• Success Oriented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple Interactions</li> <li>• Promotions of Success</li> <li>• Dialogue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple Interactions</li> <li>• Dialogue</li> </ul>
Ⓑ <b>Teacher Structured Tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal Discussion During Games</li> <li>• Formal Class Discussion</li> <li>• Shared Decisions</li> <li>• Success Oriented</li> <li>• Knowledge Growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiation of Relationship</li> <li>• Open Communication</li> <li>• Shared Decision Making</li> <li>• Teacher Participation in Games</li> <li>• Student Forum (Interviews &amp; Focus Groups)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue</li> <li>• Modeling (Care Giver)</li> <li>• Positive Feedback</li> <li>• Confirmation</li> </ul>
Ⓒ <b>Student Structured Tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussions during Class/Games</li> <li>• Discovery</li> <li>• Decision Making (Game/Teams)</li> <li>• Knowledge Construction and Growth</li> <li>• Developing Personal Style</li> <li>• Achieving Success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Communication</li> <li>• Ownership</li> <li>• Expectations for Self &amp; Others</li> <li>• Shared Decision Making (w/ Classmates)</li> <li>• Peer Learning</li> <li>• Achieving Success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue</li> <li>• Encouraging Others</li> <li>• Empathy</li> <li>• Expectations for Self &amp; Others</li> <li>• Demonstrating Appreciation</li> </ul>

*The role of dynamic games in developing the TGfU constructivist environment*

(Box A1). In TGfU, teachers use tactical problems to encourage students to focus on game tactics or decisions within the game itself, rather than on isolated skill components (Mitchell et al., 2006). In this research, dynamic games (see Col. 1, Box A1) provided my students with a forum from which to build content knowledge through the discovery and implementation of game related skills and tactics. Moreover, TGfU was a foundational component in establishing the social constructivist environment.

Implementing small-sided games, for example, reduced the game's tactical complexity, helping students to focus on the tactical problem or dilemma. Similarly, rules, equipment, and playing areas were modified further to exaggerate game-specific problems (Mitchell et al, 2006). By employing small-sided games and modified games, students had a clearer representation of the problem and were more likely to arrive at suitable solutions. These TGfU curriculum structures fostered student achievement and



permitted them to experience success at a greater rate than is typically experienced in traditional game play (Mitchell et al, 2006).

*The role of teacher-structured tasks in developing the TGfU constructivist environment (Box B1).* Social constructivism centers on the belief that social interaction is paramount to effective and meaningful learning (Byrnes, 2000; Hausfather, 1996; Richardson, 1994). Therefore, to develop an effective TGfU constructivist environment, it was necessary for me to structure tasks (see Col. 1 Box B1) to help students realize that their input was required and valued.

Richardson (1994) found that effective constructivist educators often relinquish direct control of the learning environment to provide opportunities for students to explore content and construct solutions. In this study, I encouraged student “voice,” relinquishing control on some aspects of the class. Additionally, I promoted frequent discussions, in both group discussion settings and during games to encourage students to construct and transfer knowledge by sharing their opinions with classmates. However, to minimize student off-task or negative comments that distracted student focus, I deliberately controlled and guided the discussion at critical instructional points, redirecting the conversation through targeted questioning (Hausfather, 1996). Similarly, as Mitchell et al. (2006) suggested, I asked questions to guide students to logical solutions, increasing their opportunities to experience success.

In addition to promoting student development and discovery, my efforts to create a constructivist TGfU environment for my students enhanced my own learning and growth. For example, I discovered benefits associated with active teacher participation and dialogue with sixth grade students outside class during interviews and focus groups.

Richardson (1994, p. 4) explained, “Knowledge is constructed by a person in transaction with the environment; that is, both the individual and the environment change as a result of this learning process.” Similar to my students’ responses within this environment, once I discovered and confirmed the effectiveness of the TGfU strategies, I consciously employed the tactics, experiencing a greater level of personal and professional success. Certainly, my success also enhanced my willingness to seek additional opportunities to encourage student constructions within the TGfU environment, thus, deepening the meaningfulness of the experiences for my students and me.

*The role of student-structured tasks in developing the TGfU constructivist environment (Box C1).* Hausfather (1996) explained that social constructivist curricula, such as TGfU, operate most effectively when students work cooperatively to examine new concepts and processes, arriving at meaningful solutions. By pooling the talents of group members, individual students can benefit from other’s ideas, increase and deepen their conceptualizations, and assist others to reach understandings that may not have been possible when working alone (see Col. 1, Box C1). In this study, students learned to value and encourage others while collectively arriving at a suitable answer.

Through partner, small-group, and team discussions, students were able to construct and assimilate new knowledge with existing knowledge to create deeper understandings (Richardson, 1994). Furthermore, students gradually became more effective decision makers, confirming for themselves the value of individual game tactics within specific situations. Students increasingly demonstrated a willingness to share and receive group-discovered knowledge, accelerating their personal learning and growth.

Further, students adapted their ability to work cooperatively and to play the game in a way that fit their personal style. This created an enjoyable and meaningful environment where students genuinely appreciated playing an active role in knowledge discovery. Student enjoyment appeared to increase their willingness to participate and give effort that, in turn, contributed to their achievement and personal feelings of success. Ennis and McCauley (2002) pointed to the importance of encouraging students to infuse their unique personalities or beliefs into the classroom environment as a means of enhancing engagement.

In this study, the TGfU constructivist environment functioned as Hausfather (1996) and other constructivist pedagogists envisioned. Specifically, students' content understanding is enhanced when they can exchange knowledge through functional, social interchanges that allow all parties to actively participate in the process. (Hausfather, 1996).

#### *Developing Trust (Column 2)*

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998) found that trusting relationships typically develop within established social settings between individuals with defined relationships. Additionally, Ennis and McCauley (2002) demonstrated the importance of both teachers and students working cooperatively to form trust relationships that encouraged learning. Together, their findings illuminate the importance of establishing an environment where curricular design, teachers, and students play an integrated role in developing trust. In this section, I will describe the initiatives that I employed in developing trust. Specifically, this involved creating dynamic games, implementing teacher structured tasks, and encouraging student structured tasks.

*The Role of Dynamic Games in Developing Trust (Box A2).* Dynamic games fostered trust by promoting multiple opportunities for students to interact with both their classmates and me, necessitating dialogue during these interactions. These interactions occurred in different settings and with different students, contributing to each student's opportunities to succeed (see Col. 2, Box A2). Small-sided games coupled with strategies, such as frequent partner switching created multiple interactions that occurred regularly throughout the lesson. These interactions fostered, a sense of familiarity among students, contributing to a higher level of trust between and among individuals (Kramer, 1999). Additionally, games that encouraged students to work together to solve problems, frequently lead to regular dialogue, contributing to student's ability to judge other's dependability and reliability. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) suggested that these judgments are central to the formation of trusting relationships. Finally, dynamic games allowed students to experience success that also contributed to the creation of trusting relationships. Additionally, students' trust in the TGfU curriculum and their developing friendships enhanced their perceptions of personal success (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

*The Role of Teacher-Structured Tasks in Developing Trust (Box B2).* I structured tasks beginning with relationship initiation. I continued to employ strategies throughout the unit such as open communication, shared decisions, active game participation, student interviews, and focus groups (see Col. 2, Box B2). Given that I did not know my students at the beginning of this study and, therefore, did not know their trust histories (Ennis & McCauley, 2002), I took it as my responsibility to foster an environment that was conducive to the development of trusting relationships.

At first, this involved fostering an open climate that encouraged open communication. Additionally, by sharing decisions with students and allowing them to participate in the creation of meaningful classroom policies, I fostered trusting relationships (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). Also, I demonstrated respect for my students by participating actively in games. Similarly, I treated students like adults by eliciting and valuing their opinions during student interviews and focus groups held outside of class. Ennis and McCauley (2002) argued that teachers “were most successful in creating trust bonds when they treated students with respect and integrity, joked and teased, and made them feel important” (Ennis & McCauley, 2002, p. 163).

*The role of student-structured tasks in developing trust (Box C2).* Students played a significant role in developing trusting relationships. As the unit progressed, they assumed ownership by embracing the open climate, setting expectations, making decisions within games, and teaching and responding positively to others (see Col. 2, Box C2). Just as I tried to be an open communicator, students reciprocated by being open with classmates and me. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) found that regular open communications assist students to determine dependability and reliability leading to trusting relationships.

Students furthered the development of trusting relationships by sharing classroom ownership and setting expectations for themselves and their classmates (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). Specifically, student ownership and expectations involved game related decision-making, such as decisions about objects, playing areas, rules, and team composition. Tasks that fostered peer learning encouraged students to both contribute

and receive knowledge, reinforcing trusting relationships (Ennis & McCauley, 2002; Vygotsky, 1978).

*Developing Care (Column 3)*

“Whilst caring can be connected to teachers’ pedagogical or classroom management strategies, it also exists and is demonstrated within the broader social context of teacher-student interactions in and out of the classroom situation” (O’Connor, 2008, p. 117). Clearly, O’Connor recognized the importance of the setting, the teacher’s role, and the students’ responses in developing educational caring relationships. In this section, I will describe the initiatives that I employed in developing caring in dynamic games and teacher- and student-structured tasks.

*The role of dynamic games in developing care (Box A3).* Dynamic games provided a foundation for caring relationships (see Table 4, Col. 3, Box A3). Students experienced multiple opportunities to interact both with classmates and me. Each game-oriented interaction necessitated dialogue and provided opportunities to “practice” caring. Additionally, dynamic games provided a forum for continuous dialogue, communication necessary for the development and maintenance of caring relationships (Nodding, 1992). Specifically, I encouraged students to converse openly both during games and class discussions. “Through practice, attitudes and ways of thinking are shaped by experience” (Owens & Ennis, 2005, p. 396).

*The role of teacher-structured tasks in developing care (Box B3).* “The ability to enact an ethic of care in teaching should be an expectation of effective teachers” (Owens & Ennis, 2005, p. 392). I embraced this expectation and attempted to establish an environment that fostered caring relationships (Noddings, 1984) by modeling care,

encouraging dialogue, facilitating student opportunities to practice caring, and confirming caring actions (see Col. 3, Box B3).

I began to employ Noddings' (1984, 1992) strategies early in the unit. Specifically, I modeled care by demonstrating engrossment, motivational displacement, and commitment for my students. I emphasized the value of caring relationships within games and group discussions (Noddings, 1992). Additionally, my students reported that I frequently provided positive feedback and encouraged my students to participate and give effort. Because "the capacity to care may be dependent on adequate experience in being cared for" (Noddings, 1992, p. 22), my efforts encouraged and fostered caring relationships.

Because caring encourages participants to acquire knowledge of another, I established tasks and discussions that lead to dialogues between the teacher and students and among the students. Dialogue can result in increasing each participant's knowledge of the other (Webb & Blond, 1995). In the school setting, dialogue represents open and honest talk between teachers and students (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). However, dialogue "is not just talk or conversation – certainly not an oral presentation of argument in which the second party is merely allowed to ask an occasional question" (Noddings, 1992, p. 23).

Finally, I was quick to confirm students when they demonstrated caring actions. Specifically, I wanted to provide a rationale for the importance or value of caring (Noddings, 1992) and make my students more aware of a potentially better self. Confirmation was instrumental in fostering continued development of student caring relationships.

*The role of student-structured tasks in developing care (Box C3).* Noddings (1992) explained that a relationship can only be considered “caring” if both parties contribute. Therefore, students played a critical role in developing caring relationships. Specifically, as reflecting Table 4 (see Col. 3, Box B3), students openly participated in dialogue, encouraged others and demonstrated empathy, set expectations for peer skill level development, and demonstrated appreciation for the care they received.

Through open and honest talk, dialogue provided students an opportunity to understand the actions of others, strengthening caring relationships (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). However, as Noddings (1992) pointed out, dialogue is most effective within the context of a caring relationship; when it is open-ended with consensual decisions involving all parties. In this study, dialogue provided a means by which students could encourage each other and demonstrate empathy (Nodding, 1992).

Students were able to develop and strengthen caring relationships through actions that encouraged others and reflected empathy (Nodding, 1992). During class, for example, I witnessed numerous examples of students’ supporting, helping, and encouraging others that represented caring behaviors for these sixth graders. Additionally, students demonstrated their understanding of the role of the “one-caring” by setting group or team expectations, such as the “second chance” rule, that demonstrated forgiveness and encouraged all students to continue to participate. Through these actions, students followed my example, demonstrating engrossment, motivational displacement, and commitment (Ennis & McCauley 2002; Noddings, 1992). Finally, “cared-for” students, who received care from their “one-caring” peers, responded by showing appreciation for the care they received and to the student(s) extending that



care. Specifically, I observed and experienced appreciation both explicitly, when students I cared for directly commented or said thanks, and implicitly, when students responded by trying harder and increasing their engagement. Thus, the circle of care was closed for both the one-caring students and for me, supporting and strengthening our willingness to care. As posited by Noddings (2002), such appreciation appeared to justify the care that was extended and motivate continued caring from both classmates and the teacher.

### Community Interdependence

Community interdependence emerged as the principal theme in describing how relationships that reflected trust and care were established, grew, and influenced students' willingness and ability to learn within a social constructivist environment. To explain community interdependence, I have created a model, presented in Figure 1, highlighting the relationships among the key environmental components. This model represents the student growth and interdependence process that can result from developing a social constructivist environment that reflects trust and care. Furthermore, it highlights environmental factors that contributed to an enhanced conceptual understanding of how TGfU, trust, and care lead to an interdependent class community that enhances student growth and learning.

The Community Interdependence model reflects an integration of the factors presented in Table 4 in an upward spiral, leading to teacher and student interdependence. Beginning at the bottom left box and progressing upward toward the top right box, the model demonstrates that for each of the three headings or constructs, TGfU, Trust, and Care, there exists an established *foundation* (see Table 4, Row 1) that

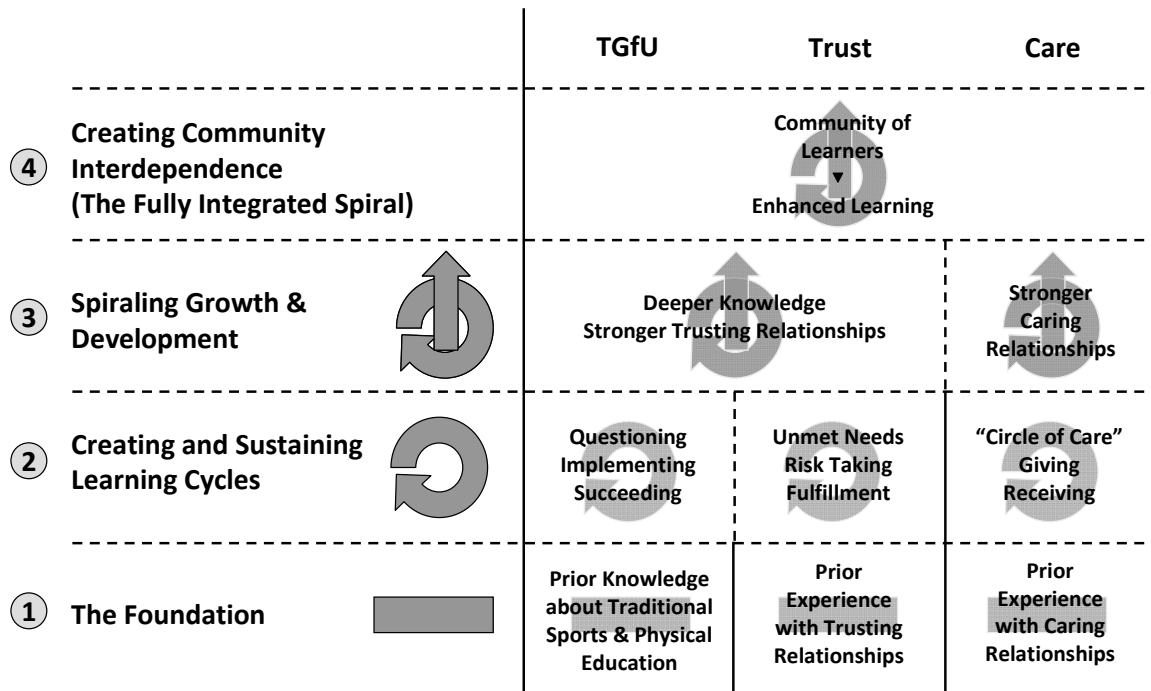


Figure 1. Community Interdependence

each student brings to the learning environment.

Constructivist teachers working within this model begin by acknowledging the unique, prior experiences that students have had with sport, trust and care. Building on this set of individual foundations, the teacher initiates the TGfU, trust, and care *cycles* (see Row 2) with the goal of melding individual student understandings into common class knowledge that students' value and find meaningful. For student learning to occur, however, the cycles must spiral upward (see Row 3), denoting cumulative learning integral to the constructivist teaching and learning process. Spirals represent student ownership leading to a sense of connection or interdependence within the class community (see Row 4). In this section, I will describe the foundation, cycles, and spiraling process, leading toward community interdependence.

### *The Foundation*

The foundation serves as a starting point for the teacher-initiated development process. This foundation includes the unique knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs that each student brings to the lesson from their past experiences. In this study, students gradually came to realize that success in the TGfU game environment required not only sport knowledge and skills, but also the willingness and ability to give and receive trust and care. At the foundational level (see Figure 1, Row 1), students arrived at the first lesson with diverse histories within each construct. It was my responsibility to meld these experiences into a common integrated foundation prerequisite for learning.

Students' initial sport based foundations reflected their prior sport beliefs, knowledge, and experiences in youth sport and physical education classes. Typically, students experience traditional presentations of sports as isolated game forms. Competition often is the lesson focus characterized by minimal skill-oriented instruction. One challenge that Richardson (1994) exposed when comparing social constructivist theory to the traditional model is that "the traditional approach to teaching 'the transmission model' does not promote the interaction between prior and new knowledge necessary for deep understanding" (Richardson, 1994, p. 1). In physical education this approach has resulted in students who repeat the same sport experiences at each grade, with few opportunities to interact with classmates in meaningful ways (Ennis, 1999).

In the TGfU unit that I constructed for this study, students were challenged to reconceptualize their knowledge of traditional sport. In my lessons, for example, they analyzed tactics and examined conditional knowledge about when and under what game conditions to use the skill or select the tactic. As they gained a greater understanding of

game complexity, including the supporting and helping roles essential to effective team play, they became increasingly aware that sport knowledge and skillfulness, alone, were inadequate to address the tactical problems I presented. In the process of game and tactical analysis, students realized gradually that trusting and caring for others was instrumental in game success.

At the beginning of the TGfU unit, my individual student's initial willingness to trust was based on both their general and specific past experiences related to trust. Kramer (1999) posited that one's general trusting dispositions are developed over time based on one's experiences and are correlated to that individual's beliefs regarding human nature. Conversely, students' specific trusting experiences were based on each individual's prior relationships. Together general and specific trusting histories form the student's foundation for trust (Kramer, 1999). Ennis and McCauley (2002) found that teachers' efforts to initiate and integrate trust into the urban class environment are often challenged by students' past experiences. They found that when "students brought histories of distrust to the educational process" (Ennis & McCauley, 2002, p. 166), teachers' opportunities to create a trusting educational environment were constrained.

Noddings explained this phenomenon, further asserting "the capacity to care may be dependent on adequate experience in being cared for" (Noddings, 1992, p. 22). In this study, students' foundation of care, like trust and sport knowledge, was based on their past caring experiences. Those who had experienced the benefits of a caring environment were more willing to receive and give care, while those who had not been cared for were less willing and, at times, unable to care. Noddings (1992) pointed out that some students' caring history reflects both positive and negative experiences with care. Lapses

in caring that may have occurred can result in misinformation and distrust, confusing students and leading to an uneasiness or rejection of future efforts to care.

Caring teachers use caring strategies and their own personal commitment to care to shape and guide the creation of a jointly shared caring environment. In my class, I initiated the circle of care and then emphasized care as a primary class objective by explicitly talking about care, modeling care, encouraging care and celebrating caring events with my students. The environment created by TGfU provided both challenges and opportunities to create a new perspective on games through the lens of trust and care.

Thus, the foundation of community interdependence reflected not one, but three constructs, the game, trust, and care. Initially, each was separate and unique for each student. It was my challenge to use these as a platform from which to initiate relationships, integrated circles, or learning cycles that were mutually enhancing and sustaining.

#### *Creating and Sustaining Learning Cycles*

The game environment created opportunities for students to examine past sporting experiences and construct new understandings of team membership based on trust and care. Based on the established foundations, I instituted strategies (see Table 4) aimed at initiating and sustaining TGfU, trust, and care. As described in Chapter 2, each of these three concepts progress in a cycle. Specifically, the TGfU cycle involved presenting students with game related tactical problems, posing questions to elicit solutions, and allowing students to test, refine, and implement the discovered tactics to arrive at a higher level of understanding (Mitchell et al., 2006). The trust cycle involves an identified need, a willingness to risk vulnerability to meet the identified need, and the success fulfillment

of that need (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Similar to Noddings' circle of care, learning cycles evolved as relationships deepened, extending, receiving, and demonstrating appreciation for the care that was extended (Noddings, 1992). During the unit, the three cycles gradually became more interdependent, growing into single integrated spiral.

At the beginning of the first unit, the TGfU, trust, and care constructs reflected independent cycles. However, during the first TGfU cycle, I observed that the TGfU environment provided the foundation for trust development among students. By the completion of this first TGfU cycle, the two constructs were inherently interdependent. For example, students began to believe and trust in the TGfU model because it allowed them to experience successful sport development and growth (Mitchell et al., 2006). Students also began to trust in me based on a realization that my questions were helping them to discover valuable game related tactics (Mitchell et al., 2006). Additionally, their trust in me deepened because I trusted them to make game related decisions and come to their own conclusions (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Throughout the second unit (weeks 4-6), students began to trust in each other as they worked together successfully to create and implement game related tactics (Mitchell et al., 2006).

By the end of the first unit (week 3), students appeared to understand that their success and personal growth and new friendships resulted from their participation in TGfU games and the trust they were now more willing to place in their class and teammates (Mitchell et al., 2006). Initially, however, students did not appear to grasp the importance of the role that caring relationships played in the environment. Therefore, I focused on teaching the most basic element of the caring cycle, student response to my

efforts to care for them. Thus, it was my initial goal to complete just one circle of care, receiving the care that I was extending. This required that I assume a heavier burden and take ownership of initiating and fostering care (Webb & Blond, 1995; Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

Although most students were willing to receive the care that I was deliberately providing and modeling, others seemed hesitant; likely based on negative past experiences (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). Similarly, even when the care that I had extended was received, students often did not complete the cycle by demonstrating appreciation (Noddings, 1992). As a committed teacher, I persevered in my attempts to close the circle even with students who were reluctant to respond to my care (Owens & Ennis, 2005). Additionally, by extending care, I modeled the behavior that I wanted my students to emulate (Noddings, 1992). Eventually, most students did respond positively to my caring, closing the circle of care.

#### *The Growth and Development Spiral*

The TGfU, trust, and care cycles that I initiated at the beginning of the quarter stretched upward into spirals as both students and I gradually created a class community. For TGfU and trust, instead of forming two related spirals, they combined to form one interdependent spiral. Although a caring spiral did emerge, its relationship to the combined TGfU/trust spiral and importance in the broader community was only partially evident.

As the unit continued, students turned their attention from the TGfU model, focusing instead on working together as they realized the social benefits of cooperative tasks (i.e., dynamic game, questioning, discovery, and decision making). Specifically,

students worked together to discover and implement tactics (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Through frequent interaction, students became more comfortable with each other and more willing to communicate openly, promoting trust and strengthening relationships (Ennis & McCauley, 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

This change in focus allowed TGfU to fade into the background, serving as an underlying structure that promoted the development of trusting relationships. TGfU and trust spiraled upward together as an integrated phenomenon as students' understanding increased. Students built on existing knowledge arriving at a new and higher level of understanding (Richardson, 1994). Through targeted questioning, they became better problem solvers and decision makers, cooperatively implementing and refining the discovered skills and tactics (Mitchell et al., 2006). As students recognized the benefits, they sought additional opportunities to cooperate, forming stronger relationships that facilitated the increased upward progression of the spiral (Mitchell et al., 2006).

The care cycle or circle appeared to develop more slowly, delaying the development of the progressive spiral. In this research, students appeared more willing at first to respond to and show appreciation toward the teacher than to other students. As students became more willing to close the teacher-student circle (Noddings, 1992), they appeared more willing to help their fellow classmates (Noddings, 1992); a concept that Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) and Ennis and McCauley (2002) refer to as organizational citizenship. During games, for example, students actively encouraged others when it appeared that a classmate was struggling. Also, they created rules that allowed students multiple opportunities to try a skill or practice a tactic until they succeeded. Additionally, they chose to take turns giving and receiving care. In this way,



students formed reciprocal bonds that fostered concern for others' well being (Noddings, 1992). Caring strengthened "friendship," facilitating students' upward progress on both the TGfU/trust and care spirals. Students reported during interviews and focus groups that they were becoming aware of their growing interdependence.

*Creating Community Interdependence (The Fully Integrated Spiral)*

Entering into the final TGfU unit of the quarter, it was clear from focus groups and interviews that students no longer described their class experiences in isolation. Working together, the students and I demonstrated an interdependent community through our words and actions. In our community, care and trust fostered cooperation, teamwork, and empathy (Ennis & McCauley, 2000; Noddings, 1992; Vygotsky, 1978).

The emerging integrated spiral nurtured community interdependence that these sixth graders described as friendship. Friendships were characterized by a desire to work and learn together and to support and encourage each other. Ennis and McCauley (2002) posited that, as caring relationships strengthen, the developing trust improved learning. Additionally, the sixth graders explained that friendships made class "fun" and "enjoyable."

Students displayed not only an enhanced ability to solve game related problems and successfully implement discovered tactics, but also a desire to include and support all students in these processes (Nodding, 1992; Wiske, 1998). During student-designed games in the third unit, for example, they worked together to design rules that encouraged everyone to participate (Ennis & McCauley, 2002). They established rules that permitted all students to have "second chances" reaching out to teammates who were struggling and facilitating success (Noddings, 1992). These demonstrations of care also extended to

student-team selections. When choosing teams, captains actively discussed how best to divide players. Rather than “choosing teams” simply based on player ability as is common in the traditional model, captains made selections based on making teams fair and balanced (Noddings, 1992). Finally, when they determined that a game modification was needed, they stopped play, discussed the issue, decided on, and instituted the change. These decisions to me represented the student-student circle of care that had been elusive earlier in the semester. Through each of these examples, I witnessed maturing relationships and found evidence that students were acting purposefully to create and sustain an interdependent community.

### Conclusion

By establishing an environment that promoted TGfU, trust, and care, the students and I created an interdependent community that fostered learning and growth. This study provided evidence that student growth and interdependence can result from developing a social constructivist community that reflects trust and care.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

Social constructivism centers on the belief that social interaction is paramount to effective and meaningful learning (Byrnes, 2000; Hausfather, 1996; Richardson, 1994). “From the very first days of the child’s development his activities acquire meaning of their own in a system of social behavior and, being directed towards a definite purpose, are refracted through the prism of the child’s environment” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 30). Therefore, “knowledge is constructed by a person in transaction with the environment; that is, both the individual and the environment change as a result of this learning process” (Richardson, 1994, p. 4).

To foster such social interaction, it is imperative that the instructional learning environment provides students with a medium for such interactions between individuals to occur. Additionally, social constructivism represents not only how individuals create meaning, but also how other individuals guide one to that meaning. Within the school environment, it is important for trusting relationships to be established to allow the beliefs of social constructivism to be realized. Similarly, it is important for students to believe that they are genuinely cared for, for such trusting relationships to be established (Ennis & McCauley, 2002).

Unfortunately, “most constructivists would agree that the traditional approach to teaching ‘the transmission model’ does not promote the interaction between prior and new knowledge necessary for deep understanding” (Richardson, 1994, p. 1). Such traditional models limit the student’s potential development by requiring them to receive

and accept knowledge rather than assuming an active role in its conceptualization and construction (Richardson, 1994).

As an alternative, constructivists encourage the Tactical Games Approach to teaching physical education that focuses on helping students construct their understanding of games using problem solving and decision making. In this approach, teachers use tactical problems to encourage students to focus on game tactics or decisions within the game itself, rather than on its isolated skill components (Mitchell et al., 2006). Furthermore, “In creating Teaching for Understanding classrooms, teachers work to share authority with students and to create a community of learners. This is a gradual process that builds on trust and mutual respect nurtured over time” (Wiske, 1998, p. 153).

Trust appears to be critical in developing the relationships required for social interaction to promote effective and meaningful learning (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998) explained that trust relationships typically occur within established social settings between individuals whose relationships have been defined. “Trust allows individuals to focus on the task at hand, and therefore, to work and learn more effectively” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998, p. 341). Conversely, when trust is nonexistent, individuals become reluctant to take risks and are forced to employ alternate means to guard against a presumed vulnerability (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998).

The concept of caring in education is based on Noddings’ (1984) work and appears essential to the development of relationships. Caring “is, in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings – a care giver and a recipient of care or cared-for” (Noddings, 1992, p.15) and represents a genuine desire to uphold or

enhance the general well being of another (Noddings, 1992). Because social constructivism is based on healthy social interaction, the development of a caring relationship enhances and deepens perceptions of care.

This study examined how trusting and caring teacher-student and student-student relationships influenced students' willingness and ability to learn in a social constructivist physical education curriculum. Specifically, the research questions that guided this study were, (a) "What are the teacher-student relationships that evolved in the selected setting?" (b) "To what extent do these relationships reflect the concepts of trust and care?" and (c) "In what ways do the teacher-student and student-student relationships developed in this setting influence students' willingness and ability to learn?"

### *Methods*

The purpose of this study was to examine the roles of trust and care in the implementation of a social constructivist curriculum in physical education. This study took place in one middle school that was part of a school district in the Southwest region of the United States. The participants for this study included one experienced physical education teacher who was also the researcher and two middle school physical education classes (30 students). The research was conducted over a nine and one-half week period in which Teaching Games for Understanding was implemented. Data were collected through student interviews and focus groups, teacher observations (teacher log), student member checks, and independent observations. Data were analyzed using open, axial, and selective coding consistent within the ethnographic research design. Because the teacher was also the researcher, certain safeguards were implemented to uphold the trustworthiness of the study. To guard against possible threats to the reliability and

validity of the study, findings represented a triangulation of several data sources in addition to my own, thus tempering my influence on the conclusions.

## Conclusions

### *Conclusion 1*

*Students' willingness and ability to learn were positively influenced through the successful initiation and development of relationships that embodied trust and care within the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) curriculum.* Specific strategies that were used to effectively meld TGfU, trust, and care including small-sided games including the modification of playing areas, equipment, and rules, frequently changing partners and teams, frequently questioning students both individually and through class discussion before, during, and after activities, and shared decision-making regarding playing areas, equipment, rules, and partner/team selection. Consistent with social constructivist theory and through the effective implementation of these strategies, students developed both teacher-student and student-student relationships that embodied the characteristics of trust and care, promoting classroom citizenship and community interdependence.

### *Conclusion 2*

*Trust and care are interdependent and essential to creating an effective social constructivist community.* Specifically, as trusting and caring relationships mature within the TGfU environment, a single spiral emerges representing an interdependent community (see Figure 1). Within such an interdependent community, care and trust foster cooperation, teamwork, and empathy (Ennis & McCauley, 2000; Noddings, 1992; Vygotsky, 1978). Students described trust and care relationships as “friendships”

characterized by a desire to work and learn together and to support and encourage each other. This conclusion may be specific to this context in which the participants consisted of a new group of sixth grade students who were new to the middle school environment. Additionally, the classes were small in size (approximately 15 students per class) and the teacher had previous experience with implementing the TGfU curriculum.

### *Conclusion 3*

*The establishment of an interdependent community involved a sequence of events beginning with the implementation of the TGfU curriculum, followed by the development of trusting relationships, and concluding with the development of caring relationships.* Because students bring unique, prior experiences with sport, trust and care, these findings were achieved by first implementing the TGfU model to create a structure for student trust. As students became more familiar with each other and trusting relationships developed, the TGfU curriculum became less prominent and teacher-student and student friendship relationships become the focus. At this point, students begin to realize the importance of care within relationships. Figure 1 represents this progression, detailing how TGfU first combined with trust followed by the addition of care as the interdependent community emerged.

### *Conclusion 4*

*The social constructivist teacher assumed three integrated roles within the interdependent community: facilitator, partner/ teammate, and researcher.* The role of “facilitator” provided the foundation for the TGfU environment that, in turn fostered student acceptance of teacher as partner/teammate and researcher. The “partner/teammate” role was a particularly effective strategy to enhance the teacher-

student relationship, using frequent participation as a teammate or partner to help students become more familiar and comfortable with the teacher. In the third role, the “researcher” talked with students outside of class during interviews and focus groups. This interaction further enhanced the teacher-student relationship by increasing students’ comfort (with teacher), thus promoting an additional layer of trust and respect.

### Recommendations

#### *Recommendations for Physical Education Teachers*

*Recommendation 1: Teachers can use the matrix presented in Table 4 as a roadmap for building an independent community.* Specifically, this matrix conceptualizes the key components central to the implementation of a trusting and caring TGfU classroom environment. The six-category matrix emphasizes the role of TGfU, trust, care, dynamic games, teacher-and student-structured tasks within the class environment. Teacher initiatives related to dynamic games, teacher-structured tasks, and student-structured tasks facilitate the development of the constructivist TGfU community, characterized by the gradual development of teacher and student trust and care. It is important to note, however, that the matrix reflects the findings collected in a particular setting and may not be generalizable to other sixth grade physical education classrooms. That said, the matrix can serve as a guide to teachers in their efforts to construct an interdependent class community.

*Recommendation 2: Establishing an interdependent community through the implementation of TGfU and the development of relationships that reflect trust and care is a gradual process that takes time.* “In creating Teaching for Understanding classrooms, teachers work to share authority with students and to create a community of



learners. This is a gradual process that builds on trust and mutual respect nurtured over time” (Wiske, 1998, p.153). Like Wiske, I too realized that establishing such a community takes time. For example, I was not willing to implement “student designed games” until I felt the class had developed mature relationships. In this setting, I spent seven weeks, consisting of one introduction week and two 3-week units, to develop mature relationships and establish an interdependent community. This interval could be shorter or longer depending on class composition and teacher familiarity with TGfU.

*Recommendation 3: Teachers should initiate the process to establish an interdependent community on the first day of class (e.g., at the beginning of the year, semester, quarter, etc.).* Because my students had not met me prior to the beginning of the study, I was able to facilitate relationship building based on a “clean slate.” Additionally, because they already were expecting to experience the inherent change associated with beginning a new class, they did not appear to resist a change in curricular procedure (i.e., from traditional sports to TGfU). Together, both of these factors created a “foundation” conducive to establishing an integrated community. Conversely, even if teachers know their students well, they can still foster change by implementing TGfU and strategies to enhance student and teacher trust and care. Transitioning from a multi-activity sport model to constructivist teaching is a complex process requiring the teacher to plan carefully and to be patient as both s/he and the students change focus.

#### *Recommendations for Future Research(ers)*

*Recommendation 4: Replicate the study with data collection and analysis conducted by a researcher not directly associated with the class.* Although I employed safeguards to address threats to the validity, such as data source triangulation, I was

always influenced by my commitment to the value of trust and care. Therefore, I would recommend that this study be replicated separating the researcher and teacher roles.

Although action research in which the teacher examines issues of professional importance is valuable, this research design does not include the protective safeguards that ensure objectivity and reliability.

*Recommendation 5: Replicate the research in other settings and with students in different grades and who represent different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds.*

This research was conducted in small sixth grade classes with only 15 relatively homogeneous middle to lower-income students in each class. It is much easier to teach for change when fewer individuals with similar beliefs and past experiences are involved. Individual differences inherent in classes that are culturally and economically diverse may affect the findings. Therefore, I recommend replicating this study in larger, more diverse classes with 22-35 students to examine the effects of class size and different forms of diversity on community development.

*Recommendation 6: Replicate the research over a longer time period.* Although ten weeks appeared to provide enough time to establish an interdependent community, it is important to examine how relationships mature over a semester or year. One theory is that caring relationships would mature and play an even more prominent role. Specifically, caring could be extended beyond friends to all members of the class; including class members who may be dissimilar.

## APPENDIX A

### Daily Teacher Log and Weekly Theme Related Questions

#### Daily Teacher Log Questions

1. What constructivist strategies did I use today?
2. How well did the students respond to these strategies?
3. To what extent did students have to work cooperatively in today's lesson?
4. Did students treat each other appropriately?
5. Did the specific tasks require trust and/or care?
6. What was the nature/level of the trust and/or care required by these tasks?

#### Weekly Theme Related Questions

1. Were my personal engrossment, commitment, and motivational displacement appropriate for creating and maintaining caring and trusting relationships?
2. What were the resulting teacher-student and student-student interactions?
3. What characteristics of trust and care were evident?
4. Who are the participants in identified caring/trusting relationships and how are they acting out their respective roles?
5. What specific constructivist strategies fostered care and trust?
6. What were the characteristics of care and trust that validated that care and trust had been fostered from the identified constructivist strategies?
7. What were the origins from which specific caring and trusting relationships were derived?

## APPENDIX B

## Sample Lesson Plans using TGfU

<b>Week 1, Day 1</b>	<b>Net and Wall Games</b>	<b>Name: Hope Tolley</b> <b>Content: Physical Education</b>
<b>Standard(s) (Applied in unit)</b>	<p><b>1PA-E1</b> - Demonstrate competence in a variety of movement forms PO 1. Throw, strike and kick a variety of objects demonstrating both accuracy and force</p> <p><b>1PA-E2</b> - Apply more advanced movement and game strategies PO 1. Utilize basic offensive and defensive skills in a modified version of a team sport</p> <p><b>5PA-E3</b> - Cooperate with a group to achieve group goals in competitive as well as cooperative settings PO 1. Participate in establishing rules, procedures and etiquette that are safe and effective for specific activity situations PO 2. Resolve interpersonal conflicts with a sensitivity to rights and feelings of others</p> <p><b>5PA-E4</b> - Identify the social benefits of participation in physical activity PO 1. Demonstrate appropriate sportsmanship</p> <p><b>6PA-E2</b> - Identify behaviors that are supportive and inclusive in physical activity settings PO 1. Display sensitivity to the feelings of others during interpersonal interaction PO 2. Demonstrate cooperation (through verbal and nonverbal behaviors) with peers of different gender, race and ethnicity in a physical activity setting</p> <p>Arizona State Standards for Physical Activity</p>	
<b>Physical Education Objective(s)</b>	<p><u>Tactical problem</u>: Students will experiment with different ways to create space on the opponent's side of the court using different shaped courts, which will allow them to understand the benefit that such a tactic creates.</p> <p><u>Objective</u>: Students will be able to move an opponent by placing an object into open space on the opponent's side of the net.</p>	
<b>Student/Student Trust &amp; Care Strategies</b>	<p>Dialogue (C) (Worked with multiple partners-critiqued play); Dialogue (C) (Group Discussion-listened to others)</p>	
<b>Teacher/Student Trust &amp; Care Strategies</b>	<p>Creating an Open Climate (T) (Group discussion to examine strategies); Shared Expectations (T) (Reasonable expectations); Second Chances (T) (Multiple games/multiple partners); Modeling</p>	

	(C) (Demonstrating caring behavior)
<b>Instant Activity</b>	<p>Students choose a partner and stand on opposite sides of the net, but in their own court. Each partner group will be given a large beach ball and students will toss the ball to each other while attempting not to drop the ball. Identify boundary lines and net to students (court is square).</p> <p><u>Conditions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternate initiating play after a point is scored</li> <li>• Score one point if the ball hits the opponent's side of the court</li> <li>• Must toss the ball from where you are standing when the ball is caught</li> </ul>
<p><b>Set</b></p> <p>*active participation *past experience *relevancy</p>	<p>Yesterday we discussed optimal placement relating to initiating play and receiving an object. We discussed that the more time you have the easier it is to get to the ball and the less amount of time you have, the harder it is to get to the ball. Therefore, as a class you determined that by having a ball move more quickly in the air, the less likely your opponent would have time to get to the ball. We also discovered that by getting to the middle of the court, you increase your chances of being ready to get to the ball as it comes over the net.</p>
<p><b>Lesson Overview</b></p> <p>*4 Teacher Actions (Direct Instruction) Information Responses Activities Questions</p> <p>*Guided Practice</p> <p>*Independent Practice</p> <p>*Active Participation</p>	<p><u>Guided Practice:</u> Choose a new partner and stand on opposite sides of the net, but in their own court. Each partner group will be given a medium sized ball and students will toss the ball to each other while attempting not to drop the ball. When you play the game try and see if there are areas on the court where you want to be as well as where you want your opponent to be. Identify boundary lines and net to students (court is square). Ask questions at the beginning and throughout this game.</p> <p>Q: Were you able to throw to receive the ball in the middle of the court?</p> <p>Q: Were you able to throw the ball to the back of the opponent's side of the court?</p> <p>Q: Did this allow you to be able to throw the ball from close at the net?</p> <p><u>Independent Practice:</u> Every court represents a different shape such as circle, diamond, hourglass, triangle and rectangle. Students start off on the first court with a new partner and then students will rotate to a new partner and new court. Students will now use the court shape to determine how to have the ball hit the opponent's side of the court. Students will answer the following questions after</p>

	<p>the first game and before rotating to each new court.</p> <p>Q: What did you do to have the ball hit the opponent's side of the court?</p> <p>Q: How did you solve the problem in each different shaped court?</p> <p>Q: How did the court shape affect your game play?</p>
<p><b>Closure</b></p> <p>*active participation *student summary *relevancy</p>	<p>Today, what problems did we focus on? How did the shape of the court affect the nature of the task or did it affect the task at all? Depending on the shape of the court, it is still necessary to find the open space relative to the student's partner. How did the size of the ball affect the nature of the task? The larger beach ball will have more flight time and result in the partner having more time to get to the ball, whereas the partner may not get to the ball as frequently when using a smaller size ball. What other factors may have affected the results of the task (force and time)? The more force used and the faster the ball is tossed will possibly result in a partner not getting to the ball as frequently. Therefore, there are several factors that can influence your ability to have the ball land on the opposite side of the net. We will continue with this concept more in depth when we meet again tomorrow.</p>
<b>Assessment</b>	<p>Constantly check for understanding. Students will answer questions related to the tactical problem in the independent practice portion of the lesson.</p>
<b>Resources</b>	<p>Large soft balls, medium sized balls (hard and soft), 50-100 ft of rope to create concrete boundaries for the oddly shaped courts, nets and clipboards.</p> <p>Arizona State Standards for Physical Activity Tactical Games (Model Used) and TGfU</p>

- Doolittle, S. (1995). Teaching net games to skilled students: A teaching for understanding approach. *Journal of Physical Education Recreation and Dance*, 66 (3), 18-23.
- Griffin L.L., & Butler, J.I. (2005). *Teaching games for understanding: Theory, research, and practice*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Mitchel, S.A., Oslin, J.L., & Griffin, L.L. (2006). *Teaching sport concepts and skills: A tactical approach (2nd ed)*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

<b>Week 4 Day 1</b>	<b>Fielding/Striking Games</b>	<b>Name: Hope Tolley Content: Physical Education</b>
<b>Standard(s)</b> (Applied in unit)	<p><b>1PA-E1</b> - Demonstrate competence in a variety of movement forms PO 1. Throw, strike and kick a variety of objects demonstrating both accuracy and force</p> <p><b>1PA-E2</b> - Apply more advanced movement and game strategies PO 1. Utilize basic offensive and defensive skills in a modified version of a team sport</p> <p><b>5PA-E3</b> - Cooperate with a group to achieve group goals in competitive as well as cooperative settings PO 1. Participate in establishing rules, procedures and etiquette that are safe and effective for specific activity situations PO 2. Resolve interpersonal conflicts with a sensitivity to rights and feelings of others</p> <p><b>5PA-E4</b> - Identify the social benefits of participation in physical activity PO 1. Demonstrate appropriate sportsmanship</p> <p><b>6PA-E2</b> - Identify behaviors that are supportive and inclusive in physical activity settings PO 1. Display sensitivity to the feelings of others during interpersonal interaction PO 2. Demonstrate cooperation (through verbal and nonverbal behaviors) with peers of different gender, race and ethnicity in a physical activity setting</p> <p>Arizona State Standards for Physical Activity</p>	
<b>Physical Education Objective(s)</b>	<p><u>Tactical problem</u>: Students will experiment with throwing an object in order to send it to the field in a place where they can easily get on base.</p> <p><u>Objective</u>: Students will be able to throw a ground ball to the open space of the infield and run to three bases.</p>	
<b>Student/Student Trust &amp; Care Strategies</b>	Positive Interactions ( <b>T</b> ) (Worked as a team on offense & defense); Dialogue ( <b>C</b> ) (Worked as a team on offense & defense); Dialogue ( <b>C</b> ) (Group Discussion–listened to others)	
<b>Teacher/Student Trust &amp; Care Strategies</b>	Creating an Open Climate ( <b>T</b> ) (Group discussion to examine strategies); Shared Expectations ( <b>T</b> ) (Reasonable expectations); Second Chances ( <b>T</b> ) (Multiple games); Modeling ( <b>C</b> ) (Demonstrating caring behavior)	
<b>Instant Activity</b>	Students get into groups (four total). Two groups will each share a modified playing area. Groups are instructed to discuss as a group the best possible way of throwing the ball along the ground in order to travel to first base the fastest. Groups will share their ideas	

	as they attempt to throw the ball.
<b>Set</b> *active participation *past experience *relevancy	So where is the best location to throw the ball so that you can run to first base quickly without being concerned of getting thrown out? During the activity we just did in our groups, were you able to control the direction of the ball? What were some tips or strategies that you discussed in your group so that as a group you were successful with throwing the ball along the ground? Let us continue to implement these strategies as we continue to move toward a game situation.
<b>Lesson Overview</b> *4 Teacher Actions (Direct Instruction) Information Responses Activities Questions *Guided Practice *Independent Practice *Active Participation	<p><u>Guided Practice:</u> Students get into groups (four total). Two groups will each share a modified playing area. Groups are instructed to discuss as a group the best possible way of throwing the ball along the ground in order to get to first base quickly. Groups will share their ideas as they attempt to throw the ball. Each group will practice throwing a larger ball to the area on the field that allows them to more easily get on first base. After the initial use of the large ball, students can select from different objects. The non-throwing group is spread out in the playing area and attempts to stop the ball and throw to a designated person at first base (students take turns).</p> <p>Q: Where is the best place to throw the ball in order to get to first base?  Q: Why is this so?  Q: How did you make it to the base in order to before the throw?  Q: Which object allowed the runner to have more time to get to the base?</p> <p><u>Independent Practice:</u> We are now going to have a game situation. One group will attempt to throw the ball to an area that will allow the player to reach first base before the other group of student gets the thrown ball to first base. If the runner gets to the base before the ball reaches the player at first base, the runner receives a point. If the ball reaches the player at the base before the runner gets to first, the player at the base receives the point. After the first group reaches three points, groups will switch places.</p> <p>Q: Where was the best place to send the ball in relation to getting on first base?  Q: How did you make it to the base in order to before the throw?  Q: What did the players in the field have to do in order to get the ball to the designated player at first base before the person throwing the object?</p>



<b>Closure</b> *active participation *student summary *relevancy	Today, on what problem(s) did we focus? Was it important to throw or send the object/ball to a specific area in the field? If so, why? If not, why? What are some things that are important and that we need to keep in mind when we are trying to throw the ball in order to get on base? What was the focus of the players in the field? What were some examples or ways you were able to get the object to first base before the person that threw the ball? We will continue more with this concept when we meet again tomorrow.
<b>Assessment</b>	Constantly check for understanding. Students will answer questions related to the tactical problem in the independent practice portion of the lesson.
<b>Resources</b>	Bases, large balls and small balls. Arizona Standards for Physical Activity Tactical Games (Model Used); TGfU (Model Used)

Griffin, L.L., & Butler, J.I. (2005). *Teaching games for understanding: Theory, research, and practice*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Mitchell, S.A., Oslin, J.L., & Griffin, L.L. (2006). *Teaching sport concepts and skills: A tactical approach (2nd ed)*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

<b>Week 7, Day 4</b>	<b>Territorial Games</b>	<b>Name: Hope Tolley</b> <b>Content: Physical Education</b>
<b>Standard(s)</b> (Applied in unit)	<p><b>1PA-E1</b> - Demonstrate competence in a variety of movement forms PO 1. Throw, strike and kick a variety of objects demonstrating both accuracy and force</p> <p><b>1PA-E2</b> - Apply more advanced movement and game strategies PO 1. Utilize basic offensive and defensive skills in a modified version of a team sport</p> <p><b>5PA-E3</b> - Cooperate with a group to achieve group goals in competitive as well as cooperative settings PO 1. Participate in establishing rules, procedures and etiquette that are safe and effective for specific activity situations PO 2. Resolve interpersonal conflicts with a sensitivity to rights and feelings of others</p> <p><b>5PA-E4</b> - Identify the social benefits of participation in physical activity PO 1. Demonstrate appropriate sportsmanship</p> <p><b>6PA-E2</b> - Identify behaviors that are supportive and inclusive in physical activity settings PO 1. Display sensitivity to the feelings of others during interpersonal interaction PO 2. Demonstrate cooperation (through verbal and nonverbal behaviors) with peers of different gender, race and ethnicity in a physical activity setting</p> <p>Arizona State Standards for Physical Activity</p>	
<b>Physical Education Objective(s)</b>	<p><u>Tactical problem</u>: Students will experiment with effectively moving an object toward a goal line. <u>Objective</u>: Students will be able to get open by changing directions and speed.</p>	
<b>Student/Student Trust &amp; Care Strategies</b>	Positive Interactions ( <b>T</b> ) (Worked as a team on offense & defense); Dialogue ( <b>C</b> ) (Worked as a team on offense & defense); Dialogue ( <b>C</b> ) (Group Discussion–listened to others); Practice ( <b>C</b> ) (Extend Care to others)	
<b>Teacher/Student Trust &amp; Care Strategies</b>	Creating an Open Climate ( <b>T</b> ) (Group discussion to examine strategies); Shared Expectations ( <b>T</b> ) (Reasonable expectations); Second Chances ( <b>T</b> ) (Multiple games); Modeling ( <b>C</b> ) (Demonstrating caring behavior); Confirmation ( <b>C</b> ) (Acknowledging caring behavior)	
<b>Instant Activity</b>	Students get into groups (four total). Two groups will each share a	

	<p>modified playing area. Groups are instructed to get into even groups three on three or four on four. Both sets of groups will have their own playing area. The playing area will be a rectangle area marked with cones. The object of the activity is to have one group get an object from one end of the field to the other end without dropping the ball or having the defense intercept the object.</p>
<p><b>Set</b> *active participation *past experience *relevancy</p>	<p>Given that the person with the object cannot move, what does the team have to do to get the object down the field? What allows you to successfully pass the object other players? How is it possible for a teammate to get open? Now that you have identified how to successfully pass the object from one person to another, lets go back and play the same game as you try to use these new strategies. Let us continue to implement these strategies as we now move into a game situation.</p>
<p><b>Lesson Overview</b>  *4 Teacher Actions (Direct Instruction)     Information     Responses     Activities     Questions  *Guided Practice  *Independent Practice  *Active Participation</p>	<p><u>Guided Practice:</u> Students get into groups (four total). Two groups will each share a modified playing area. Groups are instructed to get into even groups three on three or four on four. Both sets of groups will have their own playing area. The playing area will be a rectangle area marked with cones. The object of the activity is to have one group get an object from one end of the field to the other end without dropping the ball or having the defense intercept the object. An offensive player must remain stationary if they have possession of the object.</p> <p>Q: What were some of the things you did in order to change direction? Q: How were you able to disguise speed changes so the defense did not catch on? Q: How did the passer know where to throw the ball if you were changing directions and speeds?</p> <p><u>Independent Practice:</u> Same game as stated in the guided practice. However, game will have a condition. You must move the ball down the field in a maximum of six passes.</p> <p>Q: How did having a maximum of six passes change the game? Q: If so why and if not why? Q: Did your team have a strategy of how to use the six passes to move the ball down the field?</p>
<p><b>Closure</b> *active participation</p>	<p>Today, on what problem(s) did we focus? What are some things that we want to use when trying to support a passer by getting open in order to catch the ball? What are some team strategies that we</p>

*student summary *relevancy	should use in order to move the ball down the field?
<b>Assessment</b>	Constantly check for understanding. Students will answer questions related to the tactical problem in the independent practice portion of the lesson.
<b>Resources</b>	Cones, medium size round balls, and jerseys. Arizona Standards for Physical Activity Tactical Games (Model Used); TGfU (Model Used)

Griffin L.L., & Butler, J.I. (2005). *Teaching games for understanding: Theory, research, and practice*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Mitchell, S.A., Oslin, J.L. & Griffin, L.L. (2006). *Teaching sport concepts and skills: A tactical approach (2nd ed)*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

## APPENDIX C

### Teaching Progression for TGfU Lessons

#### *Net / Wall Games – Lesson Composition and Tactical Progression*

The first three-week segment of lessons (fourteen 40 minute lessons) focused on net/wall games and was conducted inside the school's gymnasium using badminton courts and nets. The games selected represented the net/wall games of volleyball and badminton. Initially, students played a small-sided version of these games focusing on tactical problems, such as creating space, attacking and defending, striking, scoring, and partner play. By the end of the segment, the games closely represent the game of badminton. The first week of the net/wall games lessons focused on creating, attacking, and defending space. In the first two lessons, students were instructed to be mindful of both their location on the court as well as the open space. Students began by simply passing a beach ball over the net, working together not to drop it. Next, the game progressed to include scoring as students attempted to toss the ball into open space. Specifically, points were scored by throwing the ball to a place on the court so that the opponent could not catch it.

Now that the class had explored creating open space, the students were asked to specifically concentrate on attacking and defending the open space depending on whether they were throwing or receiving the ball. To allow students to more fully grasp why attacking and defending open space was important, different types of balls were introduced and different shaped courts were used. By doing this, the importance of creating, attacking, and defending open space was exaggerated. These games began using beach balls and then balls of various sizes and compositions were introduced.

Games were initiated with a traditional rectangular court and then progressed to round, triangle, and hour-glass courts. With both of these game modifications, students were allowed to make choices. Specifically, students were able to choose which ball to use and which court shape to play on based on what best fit their personal style as discovered from trying out the various options.

In the second week of the net/wall games segment, the lessons built on the learning's associated with creating, attacking, and defending space and introduced the concept of striking. Specifically, students explored various hand striking techniques. Like before, students began by using a beach ball and progressed to using a medium sized ball that allowed for faster and more accurate play. Additionally, students began by first catching the ball and then striking it and progressed to continuous striking without catching. Similar to the first week's lessons, the games began by having individuals work together to keep the ball in play. Later in the week, scoring was introduced. After two days of striking, students were asked to experiment with various striking techniques to identify which techniques worked best for them as well as which techniques worked best for a given situation. For example, students were asked to consider what type of shot would work best for various situations (i.e. defensive lob versus spike). Finally, doubles play was introduced and students were required to work together to score points.

In the third and final week of the net/wall games segment, students progressed from striking with their hands to striking with implements. Specifically, for the remainder of the net/wall games segment, students used a badminton racquet, shuttle cock and played on a standard badminton court. Like before students began with singles play and attempted to keep the shuttle in play. As the week progressed, scoring was

introduced and students were encouraged to explore various striking techniques and consider which techniques best fit their personal style as well as the various game scenarios. After exploring various striking techniques, students were asked to consider how best to end the point. In doing this, they were forced to consider each of the previous concepts, including creating, attacking, and defending space as well as striking techniques that both fit their personal style and the specific game situation. Finally, now that the various skills and strategies had been identified and practiced, the net/wall game segment ended with both singles and doubles badminton play.

Throughout the entire net/wall games segment, students were constantly asked to think about various aspects about the day's lessons. During game play, students were questioned individually or as partners/teams. Additionally, each lesson contained three group discussion sessions that occurred before, between, and after game play. During these group discussion sessions, the entire class was brought together and asked to sit down. In both one-on-one questioning and group discussions, students were asked to consider what skills and strategies should be used to best to accomplish a given task or goal.

#### *Fielding / Striking Games – Lesson Composition and Tactical Progression*

The second set of lessons (eleven 40 minute lessons) focused on fielding/striking games and was conducted outside on one of school's athletic fields. Unlike the first lesson set that was conducted over a three week period, the second set of lessons were conducted over a two and a half week period due to the fact that the school calendar contained several "in service" days over the nine week quarter. Because of the shortened schedule, the three distinct lessons groups were not conducted in week long sets.

Regardless, a tactical progression was maintained and allowed students to discover the games in a stepwise approach. The games played closely represented the actual fielding/striking games of kickball and baseball. However, through significant game modification, the small-sided version of these games focused on tactical problems such as defending space, throwing/ kicking/ hitting into open space, getting on base, scoring, and team play. However, by the end of the segment, the games closely represented the game of baseball.

The first set of lessons (5 lessons) in the fielding/striking games explored two distinct tactical problems. Specifically, students explored throwing to reach base, and defending space so as to prevent reaching base. Students were placed on teams of three to four individuals. To reduce the complexity of the game, only one base was used, students were allowed to only throw ground balls and the defensive positions were pre-set. This configuration allowed students to focus on defending space because there was only one base and therefore one base runner. To further highlight defending space, students were allowed to choose their defensive positions based on their team strategy for making an out.

Although the first two lessons focused on defending space, students on offense also were challenged with problems focusing on where to throw the ball to reach base. In the third lesson, this tactical problem was further amplified by allowing the offense to choose the ball while the defense chose their position. Additionally, the “choice” allowed students to consider how best to throw a ball based on the game and their own abilities. Finally, a second base was added. In doing this, the game was changed in a



way that forced students to re-examine each of the three tactical problems to determine how best to adapt to the change.

The second set of lessons reinforced the tactical problems posed in the first set of lessons; throwing to get on base and defending space. Like before, students were allowed to choose teams consisting of three to four members. However, to keep the game enjoyable and exciting, throwing was replaced by kicking. This small change allowed students to use the strategies discovered while throwing to get on base, but introduced the striking skill component common to fielding/striking games. As with the first set of lessons, the offense was allowed to choose the ball and the defense were allowed to choose their positions. Also, complexity was increased as the game progressed from one base to two bases and finally to three bases. Adding bases challenged the offense to kick to a space in a way that would allow both the kicker to reach base and the runner to advance. Similarly, adding bases challenged the defense to defend in a manner to prevent both the kicker and runner from reaching base.

In the third set of lessons, kicking was replaced with hitting with a bat and the game began to resemble baseball. However, despite the change, the same tactical lessons applied and were again explored. To reduce the complexity, the ball was hit from a tee. Furthermore, to concentrate on the challenge of hitting, the game began with students hitting an oversized ball from a tee to a defined target. Later, this oversized ball was replaced with a smaller ball and students were challenged to hit to wherever best allowed them to reach base. Like before, students were allowed to make various choices including team composition, ball size and type (offense), and defensive position. Additionally, the game again progressed from one to three bases. Like in the net/wall

games unit, individual questioning and group discussions were used to help students more effectively explore the games being played.

### *Territorial Games – Lesson Composition and Tactical Progression*

The third and final set of lessons (fourteen 40 minute lessons) explored territorial games and was conducted outside on one of school's athletic fields. Like with the net/wall games and fielding/striking games lessons, the first two weeks (nine 40 minute lessons) of the territorial games lesson set were based on tactical progression.

Additionally, unlike the previous two lesson sets, the final five territorial games lessons focused on "choices" through student designed games. The games being played most closely represented the actual territorial games of soccer and ultimate frisbee. However, through significant game modification, the small-sided version of these games that were played focused on tactical problems, such as maintaining possession, space utilization, penetration, scoring, as well as the offensive and defensive strategies associated with each. By the end of the segment, based on student choice, the games being played most closely represent the game of ultimate frisbee.

The first set of territorial games lessons focused on the tactical problems of maintaining possession, effective space utilization, and penetration. In the first two lessons, students played keep-a-way games to highlight the tactic of maintaining possession. At first, the game utilized a two-versus-three format where student were confined to a ten foot square space and were not allowed to move with the object (ball or frisbee). Next, the game progressed to a three-versus-three format with unlimited movement. Additionally, students were challenged to successfully make six passes with each student getting two touches.

At this point, teams of either three or four students were established and maintained for the remainder of territorial games. To establish the teams, captains were teacher selected. However, rather than following the tradition practice of “picking teams,” captains were asked to negotiate with each other. Specifically, the four captains were sent off on their own and were instructed to divide up the class into fair and equal teams. Because they had to reach consensus, the resulting teams allowed for parity. Once teams were established, one more lesson of keep-a-way was conducted in which the space was increased to twenty square feet and students were challenged to successfully make eight passes with each student getting two touches.

For the next two lessons, scoring was introduced by requiring students make a pass to a teammate across the goal line. To score, teams were required to have each member touch the object before the final pass across the goal line could result in a score. Additionally, the person with the object could not move. Ultimately, this added the tactical problems of space utilization and penetration.

The next set of lessons in territorial games focused on offensive and defensive strategies. Structurally, the games utilized the previous established rules. However, offenses were challenged to think strategically by limiting the number of available passes from ten to eight to six while still requiring that all team members touch the object. On defense, students were first required to use a zone and later man-to-man defensive scheme. Teams were challenged to develop an effective strategy for each defense. Finally, teams were allowed to determine which defensive and offensive strategies worked best.

During the final week of territorial games (also the last week of the quarter and of my study), teams were essentially given control of the game in what was termed “student designed games.” Specifically, teams progressed from choosing objects, to choosing objects and field size, to finally choosing all game conditions including objects, field size, and rules (i.e. touches, passes, and scoring). Ultimately, the games most closely represented the game of ultimate frisbee with teams maintaining the rule of no movement with the object, and experimenting with rules associated with touches and passes.

Finally, like in both previous game classification segments, individual questioning and group discussions were used to help students more effectively explore the games being played and discover necessary skills and useful strategies.

Ultimately, the introduction of the TGfU teaching model did influence the student experience. Small-sided games and constant questioning allowed students to explore game related skills and strategies. Additionally, the constant switching of partners and teams encouraged interaction between all class members. Finally, allowing student choice deepened this exploration and promoted engagement.

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