The lived experiences of four overweight Hispanic adolescent females

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THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FOUR OVERWEIGHT
HISPANIC ADOLESCENT FEMALES

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
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Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Sports Education Leadership
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December 2007

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Dissertation Approval
The Graduate College
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November 13 2007

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Entitled
The Lived Experiences of Four Overweight Hispanic Females

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

PhD Sports Education Leadership

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ABSTRACT

The Lived Experiences of Four Overweight Hispanic Adolescent Females

by

Wanda Lee Rhodes

Dr. Monica Lounsbery, Committee Chair
Associate Professor and Chair
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of four overweight/obese Hispanic adolescents as individuals by utilizing Social Cognitive Theory’s (SCT) (Bandura, 1977, 1986, & 1989) reciprocal interaction of the environment, personal factors and behaviors of the participants in order to investigate the health risk behaviors of the participants as they related to overweight and obesity. Additionally, the commonalities and differences across participants were examined.

Four female Hispanic adolescents whose BMI measured at the 99th percentiles for age and gender were randomly chosen from students enrolled in a junior high school physical education intervention class. Experiences of each participant were examined utilizing school cumulative records, a demographic questionnaire, participant observation in certain contexts, and a series of interviews, based on questions derived from SCT.
Methodological triangulation and grounded theory were utilized in order to examine the research question. The accumulated data were presented in four separate case studies, which examined the life perspectives of each participant. A componential analysis was used to interpret the data.

Results of the individual case studies showed that the school, home, and community environments were found to be influential to the health status of the four overweight participants, with the family appearing to be the primary source of influence. This study's conclusions indicate that the schools, homes and communities of the participants did not encourage physical activity or diet control and health risk behaviors in this regard were reinforced and perpetuated by family and friends.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank my committee chair, advisor and mentor, Dr. Monica Lounsbery. As my committee chair, her guidance, unwavering support and assistance were greatly valued and appreciated. As my advisor, she counseled me and committed herself to my education unselfishly. Her open communication, advice, and dedication were inspirational and for that I thank her.

The professionalism of my committee members was greatly admired and respected. Dr. Jerry Landwer’s encouragement to enter the Sports Education Leadership program was heartfelt and made me feel valued as a student. Dr. Timothy Bungum’s guidance in the area of epidemiology and research has allowed me to pursue this study from various perspectives, allowing for a more insightful and prolific account of the lives of the individuals in this study. From the day I entered Dr. LeAnn Putney’s Qualitative Research class I was impressed by her passionate approach and commitment to this type of research. I was curious and enthused when I completed her first assignment, an observation of Applebee’s Restaurant, and was even more enthused when I did my first qualitative research project. I found that I truly enjoyed this type of work, and realized that I wanted my dissertation to examine childhood obesity from a qualitative perspective. Dr. Putney was extremely helpful in the design and implementation of the study, and without her this study would not have been possible.

I would like to thank all of the people at OMSD who granted me the permission to conduct this study at my school site, especially my superintendent, Dr. Sharon McGehee.

x
I thank my principal, Brian Bettger, who allowed me to conduct the study on his campus and who was supportive of my education. Many thanks to my school counselor, Dan Taylor, who had to make challenging schedule changes to accommodate my travels to UNLV; I know that you had to work extra hard to make that happen, and I truly appreciate you. For covering my classes and being a supportive friend, I thank Angela Gilbert. I am grateful for the accommodations that were made for me, and the kindness that was displayed by the teachers who allowed me to observe their classrooms and/or interview them: Randy Brown, Gil Correa, Irma Hall, Belinda Julien, Kristen Schneyer, and Stephen Winters. I would like to express a special thank you to Alona Hansen-Dell for her encouragement and compassion towards me and my family, and for the continuous support in my life. My loyal friends at OMSD who did everything they could to help me gather student records, format my paper, and provide me with anything that I asked for and needed, I thank you: Mary Agulair, Debbie Billings, Icela Chacon, Ron Dietzman, Suzy Flores, Stephanie Gonzalez, Irene Gonzalez, and Kim Spencer.

A lot of time and effort went into this project and I could not have completed it without my friends and colleagues, Tina Ball, Jeff Joines, and Pat McGee. Though brutally honest and wildly out of control, you three are the best.

I want to thank my family who has always stood by me, guided me, and loved me throughout my life. My mother is the best and words can never express my love and gratitude for all she has done for me. My Aunt Ruby has helped to guide me throughout my life and I can only hope to be as good of a person as she is. I thank my grandmother whom I love and adore, and strive everyday to be like; I miss you. I thank you ladies for everything you did and do for me. My aunts and uncles live in my heart and I thank them...
for my perfect childhood, and for the thousands of memories they gave me. My nieces
and nephews, I adore you and love you, and thank you for the happiness and love you
continue to show to me.

My son, Donte, I thank you for your understanding and support; you are the best kid
ever, and I cherish every moment with you. Monica this is truly for you, for us—
everything you did was not expected, but necessary for us to survive. Thank you my
family...
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

According to the Surgeon General (2001) 13% of children aged 6 to 11 years and 14% of adolescents aged 12 to 19 years in the United States are overweight. The numbers have nearly tripled for adolescents in the past two decades. Good physical and mental health of school children is imperative if they are to concentrate and become successful learners while in school. Studies have shown that proper nutrition and increased physical activity enhances academic performance ("Action for Healthy Kids," 2004). Obese children have been shown to be more sedentary (Fox, 2004) and have poor nutritional habits (Barlow, Dietz, Klish, & Towbridge, 2002). Being an overweight adolescent may lead to serious health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and as such may lead to a shortened life (Barlow, Dietz, et al., 2002; Committee on Nutrition, 2003; Dietz, 2004). Interventions in childhood, such as an increase in organized activity and a decrease in sedentary behavior, may help to control weight gain and reduce excess weight (Barlow, Trowbridge, Klish, & Dietz 2002).

According to The American College of Sports Medicine (2001), those with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or greater are considered to be obese. Additionally, The United States Department of Health and Human Services (2006) defines morbid obesity as being 100 pounds or more over ideal body weight or having a BMI of 40 or higher. Morbid obesity
is a chronic disease, meaning that morbid obesity symptoms build slowly over a extended period of time. Part of the primary goal of obesity therapy is a focused assessment of diet and physical activity (Barlow & Dietz, 1998). Additionally, the According to The American College of Sports Medicine (2001), those with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or greater are considered to be obese. Additionally, The United States Department of Health and Human Services (2006) defines morbid obesity as being enhancement of skill development for behavioral change, and support for individuals who deal with potentially damaging social norms may be necessary factors in prevention interventions of weight-related disorders (Neumark-Sztainer, Story, Hannan, Perry, & Irving, 2002). In order to further understand how cognitive and social factors have contributed to health and disease, Bandura (1977, 1986 & 1989) developed the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT).

Bandura (1977, 1986, & 1989) defined SCT as a reciprocal interaction of personal factors, behavior, and the environment. Bandura further stated that individual behavior is determined by each of these three aspects. However, SCT acknowledged that these interactions do not occur simultaneously, and that some sources of influence are stronger that others. The sources of influence differ with each individual, behavior and situation in which the behavior occurs (Bandura, 1989). In its entirety, SCT denotes factors central to the acquisition of competencies that can profoundly affect physical and emotional well-being as well as the self-regulation of health habits (Bandura, 1998).

SCT analyzed the effects of familial and peer influences, child beliefs and personality on the adoption of a behavior (Strauss, Rodzilsky, Burack, & Colin, 2001). Family, peers and school may have affected physical activity levels in children. Access to community based programs such as park and recreation sport programs are also factors involving
physical activity involvement (Greendorfer & Ewing, 1981). Personal characteristics such as motivation, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-regulation are also associated with physical activity levels (Reynolds, Killen, Bryson, Maron, Taylor, Maccoby, & Farquhar, 1990). SCT in its totality denotes factors governing the acquisition of competencies that may affect an individual's physical and emotional well-being as well as the self-regulation of health habits (Bandura, 1998). According to Bandura (1998) a comprehensive approach to health promotion would require changing the practices of social systems that have widespread detrimental effects on health rather than solely changing the habits of the individuals.

Research Problem

Many adolescents are at risk of becoming overweight or obese adults which may lead to serious health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and as such may lead to a shortened life (Barlow, Dietz, et al., 2002; Committee on Nutrition, 2003; Dietz, 2004). Additionally, Hispanics have been shown to have increased levels of obesity linked disease (Centers for Disease Control, 2007) which may be linked to sociocultural and socioeconomic factors of the Hispanic diet (Zaveleta & Malina, 1983). SCT was utilized in this study in order to examine the health risk behaviors of the participants as they related to overweight and obesity in order to examine the sociostructural determinants as well as the personal determinants of their health. The reciprocal interaction of the environment, personal factors and behaviors may have an influence on the health status of the participants.
Research Question

This study sought to answer the following question: what are the behavioral, environmental, and personal influences on the health status of four overweight and/or obese Hispanic adolescent females?

The insights gained from this research may be the first step in recognizing awareness in how lifestyle habits may affect one’s health status. Environmental influences may affect individuals apart from their behavior, as when thoughts and feelings are modified through modeling, teaching and social influences. Additionally, by observable characteristics, people may affect their social situation due to preconceived notions of their social status, thereby demonstrating the reciprocal interaction between personal characteristics and environmental influences. Additionally, ones personal factors: cognitive, what people think; the affective, what people believe and feel; as well as the biological events of individuals may shape and direct behavior. Expectations, beliefs, self-perceptions, goals and intentions may also shape and direct behavior.

Statement of Purpose

The primary focus of this study was to understand the lived experiences of participants as individuals by learning about the relationship between the environment, individual behaviors and personal factors. Additionally, the commonalities and differences across participants in this regard were also examined.

Significance
There has been a significant amount of research showing the epidemic of childhood obesity in America (Barlow & Dietz, 1998; Barlow, Trowbridge et al., 2002; Surgeon General, 1999; Committee on Nutrition, 2003; Action for Healthy Kids, 2004; Jonides, Buschbacher, & Barlow, 2002). There has also been a great deal of research which has focused on intervention programs for obese and overweight youth (Doak, Visscher, Renders & Seidell, 2006). However, after an extensive review of the literature, no studies were discovered that focused on the interaction between the behavioral and personal factors in relation to the health status of obese and overweight adolescents.

Limiting Factors

Scope

The scope of this study was to understand the lived experiences of overweight and obese adolescent students by learning about the relationship between the students’ environment to their behaviors and personal factors and also to determine what commonalities between participants exist.

Assumptions

1. Participants, parents, and teachers were open and honest with their answers in interviews.
2. Participants read and understood the questions in the surveys.
3. Participants answered survey questions openly and honestly.
4. Participants participated in school (physically, socially, and academically) as they “normally” would during observations.

Limitations
1. Many of the Participants were from low socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and had not traveled more than 20 miles from their homes. Therefore, their life experiences may have been limited.

2. The sample size was small. Therefore, it may be difficult to transfer results in other contexts or with other subjects.

3. Participants had a limited knowledge of health-risks associated with obesity.

4. Family and/or family support may have been non-existent, which may have influenced personal factors such as self-efficacy, motivation, conflict, and emotion.

5. Community and/or community support may have been non-existent, which may have influenced personal factors such as self-efficacy, motivation, conflict, and emotion.

6. Personal factors and behaviors were difficult to measure.

Operational Definitions

1. Body Mass Index (BMI): the ratio of weight to height squared.

2. Behavior: Responses and actions to a situation. How an individual conducts himself/herself.

3. Environmental Factors: The circumstances, objects, conditions, people, and consequences by which one is surrounded.

4. Overweight: a BMI at or above the 95th percentile for children of the same age and sex. Classifications of overweight for children and
adolescents are age- and sex-specific because children’s body composition varies as they age and varies between boys and girls.

5. Personal factors: Individual beliefs and attitudes.

6. Physical activity: Bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that result in energy expenditure.

7. Self-efficacy: A sense of confidence regarding the performance of specific tasks.

8. Training Heart Rate: $200 - \text{Age} = \text{Maximum heart rate}$. Maximum Heart Rate $\times \text{Intensity}$

9. Resting Heart Rate $= \text{Training heart rate}$. 

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CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Childhood and adolescent overweight and obesity have been shown to have a significant impact on both the physical and psychosocial health of a child (Dietz, 1994; Craig, Goldberg, & Dietz, 1996). According to the Surgeon General (2006), being an overweight adolescent may increase the risk of health problems such as diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and heart disease. Further, overweight adolescents have a chance of becoming overweight or obese adults, which may lead to increased health problems.

Research has demonstrated that regular physical activity has enhanced health and has reduced the development of chronic diseases (Dietz, 2004). Additionally, physical activity in adolescents has been shown to help prevent adult obesity and mortality (Committee on Nutrition, 2003). The Surgeon General’s Call to Action Report (2001) recommends that children be physically active for more than 60 minutes each day for weight gain prevention, weight loss and weight maintenance. However, physical activity has been shown to decrease during adolescence, and as a result, obesity rates are on the rise (Owens, Gutin, Allison, Riggs, Ferguson, Litaker, & Thompson, 1999; Grundy,
Blackburn, Higgins, Lauer, Perri, & Ryan, 1999). The encouragement of activity, both moderate and vigorous among youth is imperative. Physical activity in adolescents has been shown to help prevent adult obesity and mortality (Committee on Nutrition, 2003), additionally, exercise has been shown to improve psychological well being (Hayes & Ross, 1986). Health promotion from the perspective of SCT addresses the sociostructural determinants of health in addition to the personal determinants.

The insights gained from this research may be the first step in recognizing awareness in how lifestyle habits may affect one’s health status. The intent of this study is to understand the relationship between the environment, individual behaviors and personal factors of the four adolescent Hispanic females in relation to their health status. According to Bandura (1998), SCT theory is a multifaceted causal structure where perceived self-efficacy functions together with cognized goals, outcome expectations, and perceived environmental barriers. Self efficacy beliefs also facilitate the regulation of human motivation, action, and well-being. Self efficacy is a key factor in the causal structure because it directly operates on motivation and action through its impact on the other determinants.

This chapter provides a review of the literature pertaining to overweight and obese adolescents in relation to the behavioral, environmental, and personal influences that affect their health status. The first section will begin with an in depth review of childhood obesity and physical activity as it relates to the epidemic of adolescent obesity. Following the review of adolescent obesity will be an extensive overview of SCT. In the section of the chapter that follows, SCT and health will be reviewed. The chapter will conclude with how SCT has been utilized with structured exercise intervention programs.
Childhood Obesity and Physical Activity

The epidemic of adolescent overweight and obesity has become a global health concern. According to Lobstein, Baur & Uauy (2004) adolescence is characterized by a significant growth period and is one of the most susceptible periods for the development of overweight/obesity. Risk factors for increased morbidity also increase during adolescence (Dietz, 1994). Further, adolescent obesity has been shown to contribute to increases in adulthood morbidity and mortality (Gunnell, Ranchor, Nanchalhal, Peters & Smith, 1998; Must, Jacques, Dallell, Bajema & Dietz, 1992). Therefore, the prevention and decrease of adolescent overweight/obesity should be considered a priority. In order to treat overweight/obese adolescents, or in order to prevent overweight/obesity in adolescents, it is imperative to understand how a child becomes obese (Lobstein et al., 1994). According to the International Obesity Task Force (2006), overweight/obesity may involve a complex interaction between genetic and environmental factors.

The International Obesity Task Force (2006) suggests that genetics may indirectly influence obesity. Serdula, Ivery, Coates, Freedman, Williamson, and Byers (1993) found that obesity tends to follow an individual from childhood to adulthood, showing that the risk of adult obesity is at least twice as high for obese children as for non-obese children, indicating that overweight/obesity is perhaps a genetic predisposition.

Although genetics may contribute to the development of obesity, the rise in the numbers of obese children and adolescents within a rather stable population indicate that genetic factors may not be the main reason for the steady increase of childhood overweight/obesity (Lobstein et al., 2004). The predisposition of genetics may be trite due to the cultural, environmental and lifestyle influences associated with the
overweight/obese population (Lobstein et al., 2004). Additionally, a shift to a more sedentary lifestyle may be contributing significantly to the dramatic increase in childhood and adolescent overweight/obesity (International Obesity Task Force, 2006; Surgeon General, 2001). Further, the decreased levels of physical activity may be attributed to the cultural, environmental, and lifestyle habits adopted by overweight/obese adolescents and may be the main reasons for the threefold increase in adolescent obesity over the past two decades (Surgeon General, 2001).

Physical activity has been shown to burn calories while preserving lean muscle mass (International Obesity Task Force, 2006) and has been shown to be a prevention and treatment for obesity (Grundy et al., 1999). According to the Surgeon General (2001) overweight/obesity results from an imbalance in energy—eating too many calories and not getting enough physical activity. The cause of the energy imbalance may be a combination of several factors including individual behaviors and environmental factors.

Family, peers, and school may influence physical activity levels in children, whereas access to physical activities, such as community based park and recreation sport programs are also factors affecting involvement in physical activity (Greendorfer & Ewing, 1981). Further, personality characteristics such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-regulation are also associated with physical activity (Reynolds et al., 1990). Therefore, focus must be placed primarily on factors within family, school, and community environments that affect food intake and physical activity in order to prevent obesity in children and adolescents (Dietz & Gortmaker, 2001).
Family Influences

There is strong evidence that suggests the importance of including family-based components to enhance the effectiveness of children's health promotion (Perry, Luepker, Murray, Kurth, Mullis, Crockett, & Jacobs, 1988). Parents appear to be strong influences on the physical activity behavior of children. Children whose parents were physically active were shown to be five times as likely to be active than children whose parents were inactive (Moore, Lombardi, White, Campbell, Oliveria, & Ellison, 1991).

Additionally, Freedson & Evenson (1991) found that there is a dose-response relationship between the number of active parents (0, 1, 2) and the activity levels of the children. Furthermore, Godin & Shepard (1986) suggest that there may be a stronger association between parental and child behaviors than between parental and adolescent behaviors, indicating that the timing of familial influences may be crucial in the development of physical activity levels of children.

According to Dietz and Gortmaker (2001), families and schools may be considered the most important focus for the prevention of obesity in children and adolescents. Further, they examined factors that affected energy balance in children and adolescents in order to identify strategies necessary to prevent or treat childhood obesity. The factors included age and gender, ethnicity, social norms, socioeconomic class (SES) and family composition, parents' knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, and children's knowledge and attitudes. Based on these factors, Dietz and Gortmaker developed a logic model for family-based approaches to prevent obesity. The model followed how the family could influence the energy intake of the child as well the energy expenditure of the child. Food choices of the child could be affected by familial influences in regard to food choice:
quantity, density, amount of fat, and food patterns, inclusive of fast foods. The family could also have an effect on energy intake in the way that the food is prepared and consumed. Dietz & Gortmaker (2001) also suggest that the family may also influence the child’s energy expenditure by various behavioral patterns, such as the allowable amount of television viewing time or video/computer time, or if the child walks (to school), runs errands, and the overall safety (either perceived or real) considerations for the child. Additionally, the access to facilities, the organized sports that the child may be involved with, and the playmates of the child, can also influence the energy expenditure of the child. Physical activity may increase among children with playmates.

Peer Influences

In order to determine the activity-related support from parents, peers, and friends, Krahnstoever-Davison & Schmalz (2006) studied youth at risk for physical inactivity and found that support from all sources were linked to higher levels of physical activity among adolescents. These findings indicate that peers may be a critical source of support for adolescents. Anderssen & Wold (1992) found that the influences of a best friend were more highly associated with physical activity behavior than the influences of the parents. Additionally, peer influences may also be an important factor in organized sports. In a study involving children from nine European nations, sport participation by best friends was more strongly associated with subjects’ sport participation, than sport participation of family members (Wold & Anderssen, 1992). Therefore, activity patterns among peers may shape an adolescents’ participation in physical activity.

According to Bandura (1986), individual social situations interact with psychosocial factors through the evaluative and judgmental subcomponents of each psychosocial
factor. Peers, Parents, Media and other connections to social systems may produce behavior change in individuals. Further, Bandura (1986) states that behavior is influenced by social norms through social or self sanction. Therefore, the social norms that are created by our closest friends, family, and peers are important constructs when regulating behavior, such as physical activity.

**Personal Factors**

Physical activity patterns of peers may influence adolescents to engage in physical activities; however participation in physical activity is also associated with individual personality characteristics such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-regulation (Reynolds et al, 1990). These individual personality characteristics may also be influenced by family and peers. Strauss (2000) showed that approval from peers is an important aspect in the development of self-esteem in adolescences. Further, Franco and Levitt (1998) found that friendship quality was related to family support. Parental and adult relative support was found to be associated with friendships that were valued by the child. Children who received more support from their families also reported higher self-esteem (Franco & Levitt, 1998).

In a cohort study conducted by Strauss (2000) over the course of a four year period, adolescent obese boys, obese Hispanic girls, and obese white girls, aged 13 to 14 years were found to have lower self-esteem levels than their non-obese counterparts. Additionally, the obese children with decreasing levels of self-esteem were more likely to smoke and consume alcohol, showing that obese children with low self-esteem may be more likely to engage in high risk behaviors.
For many obese children and adolescents, the most widespread consequences of obesity are psychosocial (Dietz, 1998). Obesity may be considered a social stigmatism. According to Puhl and Brownell (2003), a stigmatized person possesses some attribute or characteristic that conveys a social identity that is devalued in some particular social context. The stigma of obesity is strong. The social stigmatization associated with obesity may lead to negative or undesirable mood states and a negative self image which leads to low self esteem (Puhl & Brownell, 2003). Walsh-Pierce and Wardle, (1997) found that children who believed themselves to be overweight had low self-esteem, were ashamed of their bodies and felt that it was the reason why they had few friends and were not included in activities by their peers. These children also complained of being bullied and subjected to verbal abuse in school, in their neighborhoods, and at home. They were called names and teased by their peers. Additionally, Neumark-Sztainer, Story, and Faibisch (1998), found that obese children were harassed and experienced rejection from peers at school. Berger (2004) described three broad sets of exercise factors that may influence subjective well-being and self-esteem: exercise enjoyment, mode considerations, and the practice guidelines of frequency, intensity, and duration. Further, personal enjoyment influences the mode and practice factors, which in turn may influence enjoyment thereby showing that physical activity can enhance subjective well-being and self-esteem and decrease ongoing stress levels.

In order to fully understand the health related behaviors of an obese adolescent, self-efficacy must be considered. According to Bandura (1997), self efficacy is a belief in one’s personal capabilities. Bandura further defines efficacy beliefs that affect physical health in two ways: first a belief in the ability to cope with sources of stress and second
the determination whether one will change health habits and whether they will succeed in making and maintaining the change. Self-efficacy is not solely the intent, or desire to become more physically active, it is the belief that one has the capabilities to do so. Self-efficacy has been shown to correlate with physical activity behavior and to predict physical activity participation among adolescents sixteen months after baseline measurements (Reynolds et al., 1990). The exercise of influence over behavior and motivation is controlled by one’s self-regulatory capabilities (Bandura, 1986).

Self-regulation includes the self-efficacy mechanism, which encompasses individual thoughts, affects, motivation and actions (Bandura, 1997). Deci and Ryan (2000) describe self-regulation as the social values and extrinsic contingencies and how people take them in and transform them into personal values and self-motivations. In its totality, SCT specifies factors that govern the acquisition of competencies that affect an individual’s physical and emotional well-being as the self-regulation of health habits (Bandura, 1998).

Research has shown that the activity patterns of children and adolescents are shaped by child characteristics as well as parent and peer activity patterns (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Krahnstoever-Davison & Schmalz, 2006; Moore et al., 1988; Perry et al., 1991; Wold & Anderssen, 1992). Ethnicity and SES may influence activity levels among children and adolescents. Higher levels of activity were observed among non-Hispanic white children in comparison to Hispanic and African-American children (Gordon-Larsen et al., 2000; Sallis et al., 2000). Ethnic differences in activity levels may be explained by differences in SES. However, these activity patterns are shaped by broader contextual factors such as ethnicity, socioeconomic standing (SES), the availability of
recreational facilities, and school physical education programs (Sallis, Prochaska, & Taylor, 2000). Therefore, the demographic and societal characteristics as well as the surrounding community are influential in shaping the physical activity levels of children and adolescents.

**Environment**

In a study that examined the association between the home environment and socioeconomic factors in the development of childhood obesity, Strauss and Knight (1999) found that the home environment is a crucial factor in the development of childhood obesity. Children with lower cognitive stimulation were shown to have an increased risk of developing obesity compared with those having higher levels of cognitive stimulation. The author's deemed this finding important as minority children and children with lower socioeconomic standing (SES) generally have the poorest home environment and the highest incidence of obesity, thereby showing that lower SES may be related to increased risks of obesity due to the decreased levels of physical activity in children from low SES families (Godin & Shepard, 1986).

Ethnicity and differences in SES may also play a role in the access to facilities. Individuals from lower SES and minority block groups had lower physical activity and increased BMI, linking inequalities in availability of physical activity resources to overweight/obesity (Gordon-Larsen et al., 2006). Lower SES children and adolescents may be concerned with neighborhood safety, with few safe parks and recreations facilities available for use. According to Babey, Diamant, Brown, & Hastert, (2005), approximately 30% of teens from lower-income families, as well as 29% of Hispanic and 30% of African American adolescents reported no access to a safe park, playground or
open space in Los Angeles County. Further, the lack of community recreation or exercise facilities and even bike trails may contribute to inactivity, as adolescents who reported no access to parks were significantly more likely not to engage in any physical activity compared to adolescents with park access. Additionally, according to nationally representative data from the 1996 National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, high crime levels were associated with high levels of inactivity between low SES non-Hispanic black and Hispanic youth (Gordon-Larsen, McMurray, & Popkin, 2000). Therefore, lower SES may be related to increased risks of obesity because of the relationship to decreased physical activity in children (Godin & Shepard, 1986). Due to the lack of community facilities, schools may be the only outlet for adolescents to be physically active as schools provide the opportunity for children to participate in a variety of physical activities.

Children's activity patterns may indeed be influenced by schools. The literature has identified and shown that physical education programs promote lifelong physical activity ("Guidelines for School and Community Programs," 1997), denoting the benefits of reducing sedentary lifestyles. However, physical education often receives a low priority in school budgets, negating the chance for children to be physically active on a daily basis. According to Thomas (2004) only 14 states require at least one semester of physical education for middle schools, and approximately 37 states require at least one semester of physical education to graduate from high school. Currently, only forty-three states have state mandated physical education requirements for elementary school physical education. Children who do not engage in physical education classes at school have less physical activity overall (Myers, Strikmiller, Webber, & Berenson, 1996), whereas
schools that promote physical activity may have a significant impact on reducing childhood obesity, chronic disease, and prolonging one’s lifespan (Summerfield, 1998). Therefore, quality, daily physical education programs need to be implemented, in order to eliminate the inexorable nationwide epidemic of childhood obesity (Dietz, 2004).

According to Babey, et al. (2005), school environments that are activity-friendly have a higher participant rate for physical activity. However, due to the increased emphasis on academic testing, school-based physical education as well as recess time has been reduced, limiting the amount of physical activity for children. Dietz and Gortmaker (2001) found that school curricula many alter children’s knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs and may lead to changes in either food consumption or activity levels at both school and home.

Summary Obesity and Physical Activity

The multiple complex factors that determine childhood and adolescent physical activity are complex. SCT analyzes the effects of parental and peer influences, child beliefs, and the adoption of a particular behavior (Bandura, 1986). The family, peers, and school environment may affect the child’s physical activity levels (Dietz & Gortmaker, 2001, Perry et al., 1988). Other factors affecting physical activity involvement include access to physical activities, such as parks or bike trails (Babey et al., 2005; Greendorfer & Ewing, 1981). Additionally, personality characteristics such as self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-regulation have been shown to affect one’s intent, desire, and beliefs and to transform them into personal values in order to become extrinsically motivated to be physically active (Reynolds et al., 1990). Therefore, strategies to increase physical activity should consider these complex and broad determinants of childhood and
adolescent physical activity patterns in order to establish effective prevention and intervention programs. The following section will discuss SCT and how it pertains to overweight and obese adolescents in relation to the behavioral, environmental, and personal influences that affect their health status.

Social Cognitive Theory

Albert Bandura first began publishing work on Social Learning Theory in the early 1960's. According to Thomas (1990), Social Learning Theory was developed utilizing behaviorist theories that focused on understanding human behavior. Social psychologists also contributed to the social learning theory, incorporating principles of learning, reinforcement, punishment, extinction and modeling (Ferguson, 2004). Bandura’s work in the field has been extensive, focusing primarily on motivational factors and self-regulatory mechanisms that contribute to a person’s behavior, rather than environmental factors. In 1986, Bandura branched away from the Social Learning Theory with his book *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A SCT*. The focus on cognition differentiates SCT from the social learning theory. Bandura’s focus is on the behaviors that people acquire from the observation of others.

SCT asserts that the response consequences of behavior are used to form expectations of behavioral outcomes. Therefore, humans possess the ability to predict their behavior outcome. The emphasis on individual cognition suggests that one’s mind may construct its own reality selectively encoding information, and performing behavior based upon values and expectations, while structuring its own actions (Bandura, 1989). According to Bandura and Mischel, (2005), people are viewed as active problem solvers, active
construers of their world, and users of their own cognitive processes. People use their cognitive processes to represent events, anticipate the future, choose courses of action, and communicate with others.

Reciprocal determinism suggests behavior is the result of a continuous interaction between the person and the environment, involving the influences of one's thoughts, emotions, actions, and biological properties (Bandura, 1977; 1986, 1989). The ensuing behavior will then affect one's thoughts and emotions. SCT also takes into consideration the biological personal factors, such as gender, ethnicity, temperament, genetic predisposition and the influences they have on behavior. There is also an interaction between the environment and personal characteristics, where human expectations, beliefs, and cognitive competencies are developed and modified by social influences and physical structures within the environment (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1989).

Social resources are especially important during the formative years when preferences and personal standards are in a constant state of change, and a child is contending with various conflicting sources of influence (Bandura, 1989). People need social supports to give meaning and worth to what they do. According to Bandura, (1989), the life paths of individuals are partly influenced by the nature of their societal systems. The influential societal systems include: peers, family and educational and other institutional systems. Additionally, some may involve biological conditions, while others may be unpredictable occurrences in the physical environment. Other events that may influence ones life path include: illness, accidents, and migration.

The final interaction occurs between behavior and the environment. Bandura (1977, 1986, 1989) suggests that people are both products and producers of their environment.
Individual behavior will determine the aspects of the environment to which they are exposed, and individual behavior is modified by that environment, and thus, the environment may determine which forms of one's behavior are developed and activated (Bandura, 1989). The concept of reciprocal determinism is that people are able to influence their own future, while concurrently realizing that people are not acting upon free will (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1989). Human beings contribute to their own motivation, behavior, and development.

Humans are characterized in terms of five basic and unique capabilities: symbolizing, vicarious modeling, action by forethought, self-regulatory and self-reflective behavior (Bandura, 1986, 1989). These are the capabilities that provide humans beings with the cognitive means by which to determine behavior. Utilizing observation learning, SCT demonstrates these capabilities.

With observational learning, we learn by direct experience and by observing the behavior of others (Bandura & Mischel, 2005). Observational learning is governed by four processes: attention span, retention processes, motor reproduction processes, and motivational processes (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1989; Bandura & Mischel, 2005). Attention span is a person's ability to selectively observe actions and behaviors in his or her environment, and a person’s ability to decipher the specific information derived from each observation. Through the direct experience and observations of others and through direct and vicarious reward, people may learn skills and competencies, develop outcome expectancies, develop goals and standards, and regulate self-produced consequences (Bandura & Mischel, 2005).
Observed behavior or activities can only be modeled if they are retained in one's memory. Retention processes are made possible by the human ability to form symbols from observed behavior that are stored in one's memory (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1989, Bandura & Mischel, 2005). Once symbols are formed and stored in memory, Bandura (1977) suggests that they must be converted into appropriate action for modeling to occur. This process is referred to as motor reproduction processes.

According to SCT, most human behavior is regulated by forethought. Forethought is a person's capability to self-motivate and guide actions anticipatorily (Bandura, 1989). Foresight behavior is possible because of the human’s capability to symbolize. It is through the process of forming symbols that allow a person to represent future events cognitively in the present. Previous experiences create expectations of the outcome that will occur as a result of performing a behavior, before the behavior is performed. Therefore, expectations of behavioral outcomes, more so than actual outcomes, influence the likelihood that a behavior will be performed again.

Expectancy is the degree to which a behavior is seen to result in a valued outcome. Expectancy will influence the likelihood that one will adopt a modeled behavior (the motivational process). And, finally, Bandura (1989) suggests that self-regulatory systems influence and provide a basis for purposeful action, allowing for control over thoughts, feelings, motivations, and actions. Self-Regulatory capability standards can motivate a person to work harder or modify their behavior in order to meet a goal or standard.

Bandura (1986, 1989) identifies three factors that determine the degree of self-motivation that occurs; self-efficacy, feedback, and anticipated time to goal attainment.

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Self-efficacy affects self-motivation; if an individual feels capable of achieving a goal, than he or she is likely to work harder and less likely to give-up. Self-efficacy is imperative for motivation. Secondly, feedback is essential for self-motivation. Through feedback one is able to control or adjust his or her goals in order to make them attainable. Lastly, anticipated time to goal attainment is important to self-motivation as goals that are quickly achieved are more effective than goals that are placed too far in the future.

According to Bandura and Mischel (2005), the strengths of SCT include an impressive research record, concern with important human social behaviors, an evolving theory that is open to change, focus on important theoretical issues, and reasonable views of people and concern with the social implications of the theory. The limitations include the recognition that the theory is not fully systemized and is loosely organized. Also, the theory is controversial: questioning reinforcement as a necessary agent for both learning and performance, and also questioning if self-efficacy is an outcome expectancy. Some of the neglected areas of study are: maturation changes over the lifespan and minimal attention to motivation, conflict, and emotion. And, the final limitation is the findings are preliminary—deeming cognitive processes as the basic concepts of personality and modeling and guided participation as tools to handle many psychological problems.

Despite these limitations, SCT is at the forefront of research guided by psychosocial theories of health behavior (Bandura, 1988, 1998, 2004; Craig, Goldberg & Dieta, 1996; Donnelly, et al., 1996; Epstein, et al., 1995; Gortmaker, et al., 1999; Parcel et al., 1989; Puhl & Brownell, 2003). SCT has provided an understanding of how cognitive and social factors contribute to human health and disease. The approach of SCT helps people to stay healthy through the self-management of their own health habits (Bandura, 1998).
Bandura’s (1986, 1997) SCT may be utilized as a guide to understanding physical activity behaviors and developing interventions to promote the initiation and maintenance of physical activity. SCT is based on the reciprocal relationship between behavior, personal factors, and the environment, all operating interactively as determinants of one another. The following section will examine physical activity behavior utilizing SCT in order to enhance and initiate physical activity.

**Social Cognitive Theory and Physical Activity**

SCT has been utilized to guide the research on the determinants of physical activity in youth. The theory asserts that personal factors, the environment, and behavioral factors interact to determine the behavior. The individual factors associated with physical activity include fitness level, body composition, motor skill development, and personal beliefs, attitudes, and expectations about activity. The environmental factors that affect physical activity may include the individual’s home, neighborhood or the school attended. Other environmental factors include social and cultural influences such as peers, family, and cultural norms regarding physical activity.

Utilizing SCT, Reynolds et al., (1990) studied physical activity self-efficacy and social influences and the intention to be physically active (from the Theory of Planned Behavior). Data were collected on 680 adolescent sophomores that measured 19 self-reported activity physical activity items. Each activity was performed for more than 20 minutes during a typical week. At baseline, body mass index and activity levels were controlled. After four months, the analysis indicated that none of the variables contributed significantly to the prediction of physical activity for males. However, after sixteen months, the results indicated that intention contributed significantly to the
prediction of physical activity for males. Therefore, intention had to be developed in order to become physically active.

For females, intention and social influences added significantly to the prediction of exercise behavior, indicating the intent to be active was important. However, social influences must also be included along with increased self-efficacy for engagement in physical activity. The results demonstrate the importance of self-efficacy and social situation, which are key constructs of SCT, in the prediction of physical activity behavior among adolescents.

Biddle and Goudas (1996) investigated the social cognitive determinants of exercise in adolescent students. The study measured goal orientation, perceived sport competence, perceived adult physical activity, adult encouragement, and knowledge of exercise. The results indicated that vigorous physical activity was significantly correlated with perceived sport competence, adult encouragement, and knowledge of exercise. Additionally, perceived adult encouragement was shown to mediate the perception of sport confidence, which directly effects physical activity. Therefore, adult encouragement had both a direct and a mediating effect on physical activity.

Utilizing questionnaires, Zakarian, Hovell, Hofstter, Sallis, and Keating (1994) examined the amount of vigorous physical activity performed outside of school physical education classes for 9th and 11th grade high school students. They examined SCT constructs of outcome expectancy value, environment, strength of self-efficacy and social situation. The results suggested that significant associations were found for strength of self-efficacy, friend support, and expectations for benefits of physical activity for males.

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For the females, the results indicated significant associations for strength of self-efficacy, family support, and barriers to exercise. The results were similar for both groups.

The literature has shown that there is a consistent and constant relationship between the constructs of social situation, self-efficacy and outcome expectancies (Biddle & Goudas, 1996; Garcia et al., 1998; Reynolds et al., 1990; Zakarian et al., 1994). According to Bandura (1998), the focus of SCT’s approach to health promotion and disease prevention are these sociostructural determinants of health as well as individual personal determinants. The following section will discuss SCT as it pertains to the behavioral, environmental, and personal influences that affect overweight and obese adolescents health.

**Social Cognitive Theory and Health**

Within SCT, self-efficacy beliefs operate in connection with cognitive goals, outcome expectations, and perceived environmental barriers and facilitators in the regulation of human motivation, action, and well-being. If people believe that they can manage and perform the courses of action required to attain certain outcomes and goals then people will become resilient to obstacles, failed experiences and adversity.

There are four main sources of influence in a person’s self-efficacy. Individual mastery experiences as well as the vicarious experiences of social models create a strong sense of personal efficacy. Changes in self-efficacy expectancies can occur through watching models and receiving guidance in performing the modeled behavior. Modeling influences do not solely provide a social standard of measurement for one’s own capabilities rather they may transmit knowledge and teach observers effective skills and strategies for the management of environmental demands. Social persuasion is the act of
strengthening beliefs in oneself to increase personal self-efficacy. Lastly, the reduction of stress reactions and the alterations of natural negative emotional as well as the self-management of their physical states influence personal self-efficacy.

Human motivation and actions are regulated by forethought (Bandura, 1997). Efficacy belief is a prime factor for influencing behavior; people believe in their capabilities to perform a certain action required to attain a desired outcome. According to Bandura and Mischel (2005), one’s perceived self-efficacy influences how one behaves in a particular situation. With regard to physical activity and SCT, highly efficacious individuals should experience greater activity enjoyment than those with low self-efficacy (Robbins, Pis, Pender & Kazanis, 2004). Briggs (1994) found significant positive relationships between self-efficacy and enjoyment of physical activity in numerous studies. Additionally, findings from Craig, Goldberg, and Dietz (1996) indicated that the attitudes of students significantly predicted engagement in vigorous physical activity; children who feel that physical activity is enjoyable are more likely to participate in the activity. Anticipated positive outcome expectations serve as incentives whereas negative outcomes are disincentives (Bandura, 1998).

According to Bandura (1998) there are three major forms of outcome expectations. First are the physical effects that go along with the behavior. The physical effects are either positive (pleasant sensory experiences and physical pleasures), or negative (pain and physical discomfort). Additionally, behavior is also partially controlled by the social reactions it evokes. The positive and negative social sanctions comprise the second class of outcomes whereas the third class of outcomes concerns the positive and negative self-
evaluative reactions to behavior. Self-sanctions help individuals to adopt personal standards and regulate their own behavior.

In accordance with SCT, actions are regulated through normative influences; social sanctions and self-sanctions. Norms influence behavior by the positive social reactions that occur. Consequently, behavior that fulfills social norms will earn positive social reactions. Social norms also convey behavioral standards. The adoption of these standards create a self-regulatory system operating through self-sanctions that result in the regulation of behavior by self-evaluative reactions.

SCT can be used as a theoretical basis for explanations of long term behavior change in physical activity (Bandura, 1997). This theory suggests that adherence to activity needs to be developed over time through a series of mastery experiences that promote some modification of self-regulation skills and some altered behavioral competencies. SCT suggests that the process of behavior change and maintenance is enhanced through social support and an awareness of the individual’s ecology. SCT can also be utilized as a theoretical base for measuring changes in self efficacy.

According to Bandura (1998, 2004) health habits have their roots in familial practices; however, it is now the role of schools to promote the health habits of children. Many lifelong habits that may jeopardize health are developed during childhood and adolescence; hence, it is easier to prevent harmful health habits than to change them in adulthood. Consequently, this requires creating new school-based models of health promotion, involving the family, the community, and society.

An effective health promotion program utilizes preventive measures that include four major components (Bandura, 2004). The informational component is the first
component, informing children of the health risks and the benefits of different lifestyle habits. The second component focuses on the translation of social and self-management skills into effective preventive practices. A resilient sense of efficacy that supports control in the face of difficulties and setbacks is the third component. Lastly, is the enlistment and creation of social supports for desired personal changes.

Bandera (2004) reinforces Campbell, et al.’s (2001) findings suggesting there is limited quality data on the effectiveness of obesity prevention programs and therefore, the results of the intervention programs can not be generalized. Schools are not properly equipped with resources, training, or incentives that would prevent harmful health habits of children or adolescents (Bandura, 2004). Schools only focus on the areas in which they will be evaluated, leaving little time for health promotion in schools. The health promotion efforts are generally not implemented in the manner intended, thereby doing more harm than good.

School health promotion efforts must be structured as part of a societal commitment, prioritizing health (Bandura, 1998, 2004). Programs should be in the school, not of the school (Bandura, 1998, 2004). Health promotion programs should be structured as part of a societal commitment that improves children’s health. This requires the creation of school-based health programs that provide the necessary personnel and resources needed to manage a quality program. Furthermore, the societal commitment must work in concert with the home, community and society as a whole (Bandura, 1998). Strategies to increase energy expenditure and reduce energy intake should consider these complex and broad determinants of childhood and adolescent physical activity patterns in order to establish effective prevention and intervention programs.
Social Cognitive Theory and Obesity Prevention

According to Bandura (1998), schools may be an ideal setting for health promotion and early intervention programs. School-based curriculum consisting of health promotion and disease prevention may prevent detrimental health habits that are learned in early childhood. The curriculum should adopt a health model that attends to the reciprocal interaction between personal and environmental determinants. Additionally, these programs should focus on training students to regulate their own behavior through the adoption of skills and efficacy beliefs.

The Go for Health (GFH) (Parcel, Simons-Morton, NM, Baranowski, & Wilson, 1989) program utilized SCT in an intervention program to increase physical activity levels and reinforce proper nutrition in elementary school children. The program consisted of classroom health education, a new school lunch program and an active physical education program. The health education program focused on the development of students’ health related knowledge, healthful eating habits, and physical activity both inside and outside of school. The school lunch program was restructured with the help of a dietician. Sodium, fat, and calories were reduced which in turn formulated a new student menu. The physical education aspect turned away from the traditional sport curriculum and focused on fitness; increasing the amount of time spent in moderate to vigorous activity. The results indicated behavior change in relation to dietary habits as well as diet self-efficacy. No difference was found in exercise behavior capability, however, there was an increase in exercise self-efficacy, as well as self-reported physical activity and diet self-report. These increases indicated that the intervention did have some effect on the targeted variables.
Project SPARK (Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids), a health-related school physical education program guided by SCT, was utilized to examine the effect of physical education programs taught by certified physical education teachers, classroom teachers trained in physical education, and physical education taught by untrained classroom teachers in order to determine the outcomes of 2 years of elementary physical education on physical activity and fitness during class and outside of school. Self-reports of physical activity, measures of fitness, skinfold measurements and BMI were monitored over the two year period. The study found that activity in school during class taught by physical education specialists and trained classroom teachers increased compared to the untrained classroom teacher. Additionally, the girls who attended the classes taught by the trained teachers completed more sit-ups and showed greater running endurance. However, the boys showed no fitness effects and there was not an increase in physical activity outside of school for either gender.

Efforts utilizing SCT's reciprocal determinism with individual behavior, personal factors and the environment to reduce and/or prevent obesity among adolescents have been implemented in school settings. Studies (Parcel et al., 1989; Simmons-Morton et al., 1991; Harrell, et al, 1999; Sallis et al., 1997) have shown that interventions that focus on the schools, families, communities, and the environment may help to prevent childhood obesity.

Summary

This review of literature demonstrated the prevalence of the current increase in childhood obesity. Obesity among children, as well as adults, has been shown to have a
multitude of complex causes. According to the Surgeon General (2001) the principle of energy balance suggests that when energy intake is higher than energy expended, weight gain is the result. Although energy intake depends solely on dietary consumption, energy expenditure is dependent on several components, namely physical activity. This review of literature demonstrated the cultural shift to a more sedentary lifestyle, showing a dramatic decrease in physical activity that may be influenced by cultural, environmental and lifestyle influences. Therefore, family and peer influences, personal factors such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self regulation, as well as ones environment should be taken into consideration when developing strategies to prevent obesity in children and adolescents.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The primary focus of this study was to understand the lived experiences of overweight and obese adolescent students by learning about the relationship between the students’ environment and their behaviors and personal factors. Additionally, the commonalities associated with being an obese or overweight adolescent were also examined. As previously outlined in Chapters 1 and 2, this study utilized SCT’s concept of reciprocal determinism (the reciprocal interaction between the environment, personal factors and behaviors) as a framework for this study. Reciprocal determinism suggests that the interaction between the three factors will likely not be the same for each individual however; this study is particularly interested in understanding individual participants’ behavior, and the situation(s) in which the behaviors occurred. Additionally, reciprocal determinism recognizes some sources of influence may be stronger than others and these sources of influences do not occur simultaneously; moreover, they are not the same with each individual. Therefore, this study examined sources of influence for each participant with particular focus on similarities and differences across participants.

The purpose of Chapter 3 was to outline the methods and procedures utilized in this study. Due to the nature of this study, various data collection methods were used. Data
collection included document collection, a questionnaire, observations, and structured and unstructured interviews with various sources. The data analysis methods utilized in this study were comprised of both within and cross-case analysis methods. Within case analysis included methodological triangulation followed by the utilization of the constant comparison method. The cross-case analysis examined the processes and outcomes that occurred across the four cases. The chapter was organized as follows: descriptions of the setting and participants followed by design, data collection and data analysis methods.

General Setting

The study took place at a junior high school in Southern California. This junior high school was made up of 875 seventh and eighth grade students. The students were: 80 percent Hispanic, 12 percent Caucasian, 6 percent black, and two percent other (i.e. Native American, Pacific Islander, etc.). The school had: 98 Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) students, 49 special education students (this did not include the severally handicapped students who are also on campus), 342 English Language Development (ELD) students, 10 severely emotionally disturbed children, and 352 regular education students. The staff consisted of 55 teachers who were: 85 percent Caucasian, eleven percent Hispanic, one percent Black, and one percent other.

Participant Selection

Institutional Review Board (IRB) for human subjects and the Ontario/ Montclair School District’s (OMSD) approval was sought and obtained. IRB protocol informed consent (Appendix A) was disseminated to all participants enrolled in the “Fit for Life”
physical education intervention class; 30 permission slips were distributed. The “Fit for Life” class was designed with the intent of providing a positive educational environment for 12 and 13 year old 7th and 8th grade obese and morbidly obese students who had serious physical, social, and cognitive problems. Selection for participation in this study was made from students with affirmed consent and assent forms. From this sample, BMI calculations recorded in the “Fit for Life” class were used to narrow selection for participation. Only students whose BMI measured at the 85th to 95th percentiles for age and gender were considered for participation in this study.

Design

This study was qualitative in nature and used descriptive case studies to examine the life perspectives of the participants. Case studies were utilized in order to determine the triadic reciprocal interaction of the environment, personal factors, and behavior of each individual. According to Creswell (1998), the case study occurs over time and is an exploration of a closed system or a case (or multiple cases) through an in-depth data collection. Additionally, by using case study methods, similarities and differences between individual cases (participants) were examined. In order to build an in-depth case for each participant, multiple forms of data collection such as document collection, questionnaire, participant observation and a series of interviews rich in context were utilized in order to build an in-depth case.
Data Collection

Experiences of each participant were examined utilizing document collection (gathering information from participants’ cumulative files), a questionnaire, participant observation in certain contexts, and a series of interviews in an attempt to discover the central theory for the relationship of the participants’ environment to their behaviors and personal factors. The following is a detailed description of the data collection methods utilized in this study.

Questionnaire

As a part of the regular physical education class experience, each participant completed a questionnaire (Appendix B) during the first week of class. The questionnaire consisted of open-ended questions that stimulated free thought and probed for detailed information. The questions focused on asking the participants about their perceptions in terms of attributes, beliefs, and behaviors as it related to their personal factors and behaviors. The first part of the questionnaire concentrated on the personal and demographic characteristics of each participant while the second part focused on personal beliefs and feelings (the perceptions held, the thoughts, feelings, and ways of thinking). Subsequently, the questionnaire assessed behavior (what they had done in the past, what they are doing now, and what they plan to do in the future). Lastly, the questionnaire asked general questions about health and nutrition, providing background information on the individual as well as the familial health history and nutritional habits. Following the administration of the questionnaire participant observations took place.
Observations

Observations were utilized to assess the class participation, social interaction during class and at lunch, and academic progress of each of the participants. Classes met for 55 minutes each day and lunch was 30 minutes a day, five days a week for twelve consecutive weeks. The classroom and lunchtime observations were consistent, planned deliberately, and recorded systematically. The observations occurred consistently once per week in each of the three settings: an academic class, a physical education class, and during lunchtime. Each observation was planned deliberately as each participant was observed on a pre-determined day, time, and place (i.e. Monday, 6th period English, 5th period physical education, and lunchtime). The observations were recorded systematically, utilizing notes as descriptive tools that assessed the physical setting, the participants' conversations, activities, and interactions.

During the classroom observations the researcher was a complete observer, observing without becoming a part of the classroom in any way (Spradley, 1980). The researcher remained in the back of the classroom, observing the entire culture including the physical environment, the people, the activities, the conversations—what was said, and what was not said, and even the silence. All subtleties that were embedded within the participants' environment; the symbolisms, the customs, and also what was not happening was documented.

In the physical education classroom the researcher was a moderate participant; maintaining a balance between being a participant (as the teacher), and an observer (Spradley, 1980). As a teacher, the classroom observation was experienced from an authoritative perspective and as an active participant throughout the class. The researcher
was therefore able to participate as an insider within the group while simultaneously observing the culture of the classroom.

Both the academic and physical education classroom observations focused on the interactions and relationships between the participant and the school and classroom environments, as well as between the participant and teachers, friends, and classmates. Classroom behaviors (the comfort level of the participant, the level of participation, the participant’s role in the classroom setting (leader, follower, etc.), the ability to stay on task and focus during class, and the ability to process the subject matter) was also observed. The classroom influences and role models, as well their interactions with the participants were examined.

During lunchtime observations, the focus was on the interactions and relationships between the participant and the school environment, and between the participant and their friends and classmates. The behaviors regarding food choices and eating habits were observed, including where they ate, what they ate, and how much they ate. Additionally, their comfort level around their friends and classmates was observed as well as the students’ behavior in relationship to their perceived role models and influential friends and classmates was observed.

Feelings, thoughts, and intentions are not observable behaviors; therefore, interviews with the participants as well as their teachers, and parents were imperative in order to gain the perspective of each individual. Interviews were essential as the occurrences of past events were important aspects in determining the life experiences of the participants.
Formal Interview

There were three separate formal participant interviews. According to Merriam (1998), a formal interview is usually a pre-scheduled event which takes place at a specific time and location (with structured, specific questions). The formal interviews were conducted during the school day. Each interview was approximately forty minutes. The interviews took place once a month during the course of the first and second trimester of the school year. Accordingly, teachers of the participants were notified a day in advance of the interview to request an excuse from class. On the day of the scheduled interview, the participant reported to the conference room in the front office. The conference room was located adjacent to the front office and contained a long table with multiple chairs. The interviewer sat at the head of the table, while the interviewee sat across from the interviewer. The sessions were audio recorded. In addition to the audio recordings, the researcher made and took notes during the interviews.

Appendix C provides a copy of the first formal interview with the participants. The purpose of the first formal interview was to examine the reciprocal interaction between personal factors (likes, dislikes, and hobbies) and behavior (attitudes and feelings) in order to understand how they related to the school environment. In addition, personal relationships with both classmates and friends were examined.

In order to determine the social influence that friends had on the behaviors and personal characteristics of each participant, it was vital to examine the relationships between the participants’ and friends and classmates. Reciprocal determinism suggests that an individual’s behavior is the result of a continuous interaction between the person and the environment as it involves the influences of one’s thoughts, emotions, actions and
biological properties (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1989). Children who observe others often emulate and are influenced by the modeled behaviors. Therefore, interviewing the participant and observing the interactions between the participants’ and their classmates assisted in determining the influences that their peers had on the participants’ behavior.

Information gleaned from the questionnaire and the participants’ cumulative file were cross-referenced during the first interview. Following cross-referencing, a more in-depth analysis of the beliefs and feelings of each individual transpired. Interview questions elicited descriptions of school life and behavior. Participants were asked to describe a typical day at school, including detailed descriptions of lunch time activities. Participants were also asked to specifically describe physical education class, including their favorite and least favorite part of the class, as well as their feelings and views of themselves as students within the class. Academically, the participants depicted themselves by describing how they acted in class, how they felt about their teachers, how they prepared for tests and their feelings when they did well or when they did not do well in school. They discussed their preferences and feelings related to their favorite subject(s) and teacher(s). The participants explained what they did in their leisure time. Further, they provided detailed information regarding their favorite hobby or activity, and when and where they participated in the activity. The participants described their dietary habits in detail, focusing on time and location of meals, and discussed reasons for eating (i.e., depression, sadness) during the interview. Additional questions focused responses to friendships at school as well as the participants’ relationships with their classmates.
Second Formal Student Interview

Reciprocal determinism proposes that there is an interaction between the environment and personal characteristics where human expectation, beliefs, and cognitive competencies are developed and modified by social influences (Bandura, 1977, 1986, and 1989). This interview, with the individual participant, provided insight into familial influences and the interaction between the participant and the home environment. The second formal interview may be found in Appendix D and focused on the influences from both the family and the community.

The participants began the second interview by describing their family members they lived with as well as other extended family members they deemed to be important. They discussed family activities, the influences their families had on their lives, and their daily routines. The participants discussed individual and family health by talking about family health history, personal health history, doctor visits, and an overall sense of personal and family health.

Community programs provide an effective means for the transmission of knowledge and the beneficial patterns of behavior (Bandura, 1986). Examining the participant’s involvement, feelings and perceptions of community programs assisted in providing a complete picture of how the programs influenced and contributed to individual behavior. Each participant was asked to describe their affiliation, or lack of affiliation with their church, park and recreation programs, or any other programs in which they may have been involved.

The future goals and aspirations of each participant were obtained through observations and an interview that focused on the participant’s personal desire for change.
(academically, socially, and physically) and their perspective of the possibility of attainment. Attaining challenging goals creates a sense of fulfillment and self-satisfaction. Moreover, the self-regulatory systems can motivate a person to work harder or modify his or her behavior in order to achieve a goal (Bandura, 1986). Therefore, it is imperative to study the personal desire for change and perspective of possibility of change for each participant.

Third Formal Student Interview

The third and final interview (Appendix E) focused on the personal desire for change and the perspective for making such change possible. The participants began the interview by describing the prospect for making personal change academically, socially, and physically in the near future. They discussed where they saw themselves in the future. Further, discussed their perceptions of high school, and what they perceived they needed to do to be successful in high school. They focused on the distant future and examined their personal desire to attend or not attend college. They expressed their feelings regarding familial support with current and future goals. Each individual participant described an ideal day, an ideal reward, and an ideal activity. The participants will described how success was or was not important to them and what they will do and what they are currently doing to accomplish their goals, if they had goals. They described what they wanted to be when they grew-up and looked into their future and described where they saw themselves and how they saw themselves physically in 10 years and in 20 years.

Through the formal interviews, participants discussed their behaviors, feelings and their interpretations of the world around them. Interviewing was necessary in order to
provide a more in depth analysis into the lives of the participants. Coinciding with the formal interviews, were informal interviews that took place during physical education class, at lunch, and after school.

Informal Student Interviews

The informal interview is more flexible, and exploratory, consisting mainly of open-ended questions (Merriam, 1998). These informal interviews took place in the form of conversations, teachable moments, and regular classroom interactions with the participants. The informal interviews provided the students' perspective into what they were thinking, feeling, and how they reacted in school-related situations. These interviews took place during physical education class, passing periods, lunch, or after school. The point of informal interviews was to gather information that cannot be obtained from field observations and to verify observations by getting the participants' point of view (Merriam, 1998). What was learned in an informal interview led to the formulation of questions for subsequent interviews, and was used to clarify information learned in the formal interviews.

Parent Interview

The parent(s) of the participant were interviewed in order to corroborate the information provided by the participant. The parent(s) were asked to describe family life, members of the family, activities, inspirations/influences, and family health. They were also asked about their child's participation within the community and the future goals and aspirations of their child. They were asked questions about how they perceived their beliefs and parental support regarding the status of their child's physical activity and health. The answers assisted in the further understanding of how the parent perceived the
child’s home environment and how it related to the personal factors and behaviors of the child.

There was one formal parent interview (Appendix F). The parent interviewed was the parent who was able to schedule an interview during school hours or in the early afternoon, after school. Each formal interview was approximately forty minutes. The interviews took place during the course of the first and second trimester of the school year. A mutually agreed upon time was scheduled with the parent(s), approximately one week in advance. The interview took place in the conference room of the school. In accordance with the student interviews, the interviewer will sat at the head of the long table, while the interviewee sat across from the interviewer. The sessions was audio taped, and notes were taken. The questions were asked in the same order, using the same wording, and were asked in the same manner (same intonations, etc.) for every parent.

**Teacher Interview**

The purpose of the teacher interview was to gain a deeper understanding of the life of the participant through the eyes of the teacher. The teacher provided interpretations of how the participant related to the school environment and what social influences the friends and classmates had on the behaviors and personal characteristics of the participant. The teacher also provided answers that garnered information on how the participant perceived life at school, and how behaviors and personal factors were affected by their school environment.

There was one formal teacher interview (Appendix G). The teacher interviewed was the teacher who had the most interaction with the participant. Each formal interview was approximately forty minutes. The interviews took place during the course of the first
trimester of the school year. A mutually agreed upon time was scheduled with the teacher, approximately a week in advance. The interview took place in the classroom of the teacher. The interviewer sat at a student desk, facing the teacher, who was seated at the teacher’s desk. The sessions were audio taped, and notes were taken. The questions were asked in the same order, using the same wording, and were asked in the same manner (same intonations, etc.) for every teacher.

Cumulative Files

According to Bandura (1989), within SCT perspective, cognitive competencies are acquired because different domains have different structures. SCT also asserts that social factors and maturation factors play a significant role in cognitive development. Guided instruction and modeling effectively convey the abstract rules of reasoning and promote cognitive development in children (Bandura, 1986). Consequently, learning that is socially guided also encourages self-directed learning by allowing children to develop the conceptual tools needed that allow them to garner new knowledge and to handle the varied situations that occur in everyday life. Furthermore, most valuable knowledge is imparted socially, and those who figure prominently in the lives of children have contributed to what and how children think; therefore, cumulative records were an invaluable source of historical information about student development, which provided valuable insight into the participants’ behaviors, self-motivation, and perceived self-efficacy. The participants’ health record also showed the physical history of each child. This information provided a holistic understanding of each participant.

Once participants were selected, the cumulative files were obtained from the attendance clerk at the school. Cumulative files of the participants contained pertinent
documents related to academic and other school information, from kindergarten to the present. Each record contained annual pictures, all report cards, teachers' notes on academic and social progress, and sometimes old class work. These records included school files containing enrollment dates and locations, grade-level placements, certain standardized test results, and student progress reports. Also, special education and other programs were contained within these files. Health records were also apart of a student’s cumulative record.

Multiple forms of data collection were utilized in this study: document collection, participant observation and a series of interviews rich in context. Coinciding with the data collection were the data analysis.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for the multiple case study is two fold and included within and cross-case analysis. As within case analysis, the data of the single case was treated independently as a comprehensive case. The data analysis occurred both during field work and between data collection activities. After the first observation and the first interview, the field notes were read and reread, and notes were made that commented on a particular incident or phenomena. Separate notes were made that summarized reflections, tentative themes and ideas to pursue; possibly what should have been observed next time, and what to look for during the next interview. After the second observation and interview, comparisons with the first set of data were made. Derived from these two sets of data was a single list of concepts. After the third student interview, and ensuing observations, the process was repeated. When data collection was
concluded, a set of tentative categories were developed that helped to answer the research questions.

Once data were categorized, the raw data was searched again in order to provide additional units of relevant information, thereby making the categories more robust. Each unit of information was put into a separate file folder and coded according to case. Within each case, separate file folders were kept and coded according to category. Each unit of data was not only be coded by category but also by its original origin such as observation and/or interview number.

Methodological triangulation, the convergence of data from multiple data collection sources was utilized. Again, the multiple methods of data collection included: document collection, a questionnaire, observations, and structured and unstructured interviews with various sources. These multiple methods examined the research question from various angles, allowing for a comprehensive overview of overweight and obese adolescents. Triangulation provided a scope for refining the data.

The data was indexed to generate or develop analytical categories and theoretical explanations. These categories described and explained the social phenomena's found within the data, such as behaviors and personal or environmental factors. The data that was pertinent to each category was identified and examined utilizing constant comparison. The constant comparative method was developed as the means of developing grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory is used to describe the inductive process of identifying analytic categories as they emerge from the data (Merriam, 1998). The researcher identifies an item from an interview, field notes, or document and checks, or compares the item with the rest of the data in order to establish
analytical categories. The process was systematic and inclusive, with categories reflecting as many of the nuances in the data as possible. From the categories, comparisons were made within and between the levels until the data evolved into the crux of SCT's concept of reciprocal determinism.

Once the analysis of each individual case was completed, the cross-case analysis began. The analysis examined the processes and outcomes that occurred across the cases. Additionally, the commonalities experienced by the overweight or obese adolescents were examined. Each individual case was examined carefully in order to determine the patterning of variables that transcended across cases. Categories emerged across all cases, supporting SCT, and thus ensuring an ethical, valid, reliable study.

Trustworthiness

This study provided a detailed depiction of the lives of four overweight or obese adolescents utilizing multiple methods and perspectives. The four participants provided multiple realities that allowed for the exploration and understanding of their school and home life as it related to their behaviors and personal factors. This study was rigorously conducted, providing insights and conclusions that ensured trustworthiness by establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

The data triangulation of the student observations, interviews, and document collection results were cross-checked against one another, thus increasing the reliability of the result. By combining these multiple methods, the weakness or intrinsic bias that may come from being a single-observer study was controlled. The purpose of triangulation in this study was to obtain the confirmation of findings through the
convergence of the differing perspectives of the participants. The perspectives of the four participant’s represent their reality.

The four participants were registered in a physical education intervention class entitled “Fit for Life” during the course of the first trimester (September 5-November 21) of school. They were observed daily: either in physical education class, an academic class, or at lunch. In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument (Spradley, 1980), and the result of the observation is field notes (Merriam, 1998) which provides a detailed account of the activities as well as a preliminary data analysis; raising questions about what was observed or speculating as to what it all meant. The prolonged and persistent observations helped to confirm developing themes and provided scope and depth to the study.

In order to further control for the credibility of the study, external input on the working progress of the study was conducted via peer review. Teachers and professors who did not have any formal relationship with the subjects or the researcher read the material in order to provide feedback on the content. Furthermore, in order to address the concern of credibility, the preliminary findings were checked against the raw data. The inspection and comparison of all of the data of a single case was followed by the constant comparative method across all four cases.

The participants, parents, and teachers were encouraged to read, correct, and make comments on working field notes, interpretations, and all data collected during the study. Conducting member checks by maintaining an active substantiation of the interpretation of the data between the researcher and the participants helped to maintain the credibility of the study.
Transferability

The thick, rich description of the life experiences shared by the four overweight or obese children will allow for certain aspects of their experiences to be applied to other contexts and situations. The findings suggested possible causes for the students' weight-related issues, how the participants managed these issues, or even if they perceived their weight as a problem. With the discussion of these issues, the commonalities were determined, which may have implications for intervention approaches.

Dependability

The dependability of this study was shown through methodological triangulation, which involved the convergence of data from multiple data collection sources, peer review, and a dense description of this study's research methodologies. The purpose of triangulation was to ensure that the research findings accurately reflected the perceptions of the participants and that the findings were credible or worthy. Peer examination of the data provided for an external check on the inquiry processes, whereas a dense description of the life experiences of the participants showed consistency, determining that the study could be replicated with similar subjects in a similar context.

Confirmability

The raw data (observational field notes, interview audio tapes, documents, and questionnaire results) were condensed and reconstructed in order to perform a confirmability audit to establish the neutrality of the study. The methodological triangulation of the data also helped to establish that the findings of the study were determined by the subjects and conditions of the study and not by researcher bias.
CHAPTER 4

GENERAL RESULTS

IRB protocol informed consent (Appendix A) forms were disseminated to all participants enrolled in the “Fit for Life” physical education class; 30 permission slips were distributed and from the 30 students enrolled in the class, seven students returned the forms. Of the seven students returning the forms, three were male and four were female. When the BMI calculations were taken and recorded in the “Fit for Life” class, the three male students did not have BMI measurements at the 85th to 95th percentiles for age and gender, which was a prerequisite for participation in this study. However, the BMI of the four females were in the 99th percentile for their age and gender. The four females yielded the sample for the study.

While conducting the first questionnaire it was learned that all four of the participants were Hispanic. The sample of four female Hispanics was not an intentional design of the study, rather it was the sample that resulted from the students that were enrolled in the class and who returned the IRB protocol informed consent forms. Once the sample was obtained, the focus of the study was narrowed to four Hispanic females.

In order to establish the trustworthiness of the study with the four Hispanic females, the triangulation of the data was repeatedly performed throughout the study. There were
three separate formal interviews that occurred with each participant, an interview with the participant’s parent, and an interview with a teacher of the participant. At the conclusion of each interview, each interviewee was asked to read and correct the notes that were taken during the interview. At times this led to more discussion over key concepts and central issues between the researcher and the participant. After the interviews were conducted, the researcher reviewed the notes and often followed up with an informal interview with the participants in order to expand upon certain topics or to clarify information.

The first participant interview and the teacher interview focused on the school environment. At the conclusion of the participant as well as the teacher interview, the data was reviewed and notes were taken establishing tentative analytical categories within the school environment. In addition to the interviews within the school environment, observations were conducted. At the conclusion of the observations, informal interviews occasionally took place in order to provide the researcher with a complete understanding of a situation or event that had occurred. The data from the school environment observations were compared with the interview data and the categories that the interviews generated. These constant comparisons led to theoretical explanations that supported SCT.

The second participant and the parent interview focused on the home and community environment. The data from the two interviews was reviewed and notes were taken establishing analytical categories within the home environment. Informal interviews with the participants followed the parent interviews in order to clarify information and compare some of the themes that were developing. From the interviews, the researcher
compared the items and established analytical categories. The comparison between the two interviews led to theoretical explanations that supported SCT.

The third student interview and the latter part of the parent interview focused on the participant's personal desire for change and the perspective for making such change possible. The data from the interviews were reviewed and analytical categories were established. These categories led to theoretical explanations that supported SCT.

The cumulative files of each participant were examined and reviewed by the researcher. The information contained within the files provided a history of each participant throughout their school years. The information contained within the cumulative files was reviewed and clarified with the parents of the participants. Some of the data was placed into analytical categories and compared with current student work, and with the theoretical explanations that were previously established through the data triangulation of teacher and participant interviews and observations.

In order to further control for the credibility of the study, external input on the working progress of the study was conducted via peer review. Two teachers at the school site, a male physical educator and a language arts/social studies teacher who did not have any formal relationship with the subjects or the researcher read the material in order to provide feedback on the content. If a question arose regarding the preliminary findings, these findings were checked against the raw data. The raw data was condensed and reconstructed several times over the course of the data collection in order to perform a confirmability audit, which established the neutrality of the study.
Due to the triangulation of the data and the peer review, this study took appropriate measures to ensure that the data presented accurately reflected the perceptions of the life of each participant and thereby demonstrates dependability. The dense descriptions of the cases that follow showed consistency throughout the study. Trustworthiness was established by the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study.

The accumulated data were presented in four separate case studies, which examined the life perspectives of each participant. A componential analysis, a methodical search for attributes associated with cultural categories (Spradley, 1980) was used to interpret the data. The domain of the componential analysis was the environment whereas the personal factors and behaviors of each individual were the attributes associated with the environment.

Within the analysis, the environment was held constant while the personal factors and the behaviors of each individual were examined across all areas. The environment was threefold: physical, situational and social. The physical environment included the actual location, whereas the situation generally referred to the existing conditions or circumstances of that particular moment or place, and the social aspect of the environment referred to the relating society, its organization, community, and the interaction of its people. Behavior was viewed as the way in which a person responded or reacted to a certain set of conditions including social behavior, family, health related behaviors and task related behaviors. Personal factors referred to the cognitive, affective and biological events of each individual and included perceived self-efficacy, general attitude, personal responsibility, knowledge, and personal expectations.
The interpretation of the componential analysis explained individual characteristics across each of the case studies, treating the data of each case independently as a comprehensive case. Each individual case was examined carefully in order to determine the pattern of variables that transcended the cases. The similarities found were examined in the cross-case analysis. In addition, the differences that were found in the cases were also studied in the cross-case analysis.

Figure (4.1) represents a sample of the componential analysis figures that were utilized throughout the study. The following acronyms are representative of the data source(s) utilized to determine the personal factors and behaviors of the participants in relation to the environment. CF=Cumulative Files, Q=Questionnaire, OC=Observation Classroom, OPE=Observation Physical Education, OLT=Observation Lunch Time, I1=First Participant Interview, I2=Second Participant Interview, I3=Third Participant Interview, IP=Parent Interview, IT=Teacher Interview and II=Informal Interview with the Participant Figure 4.3: Jeannette’s Personal Factors Home, Community and Church Environment.
Figure 4.1: Sample of the Componential Analysis Figures

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<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
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<td>(Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</td>
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<td>House, yard, neighborhood</td>
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<td>Social:</td>
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<td>Mass and Church Activities</td>
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CHAPTER 5

JEANNETTE CASE STUDY

Jeannette was born in Los Angeles, California on July 7, 1993, the fifth child of six. Jeannette had three older sisters and an older brother. At the time of Jeannette’s birth, her mother was twenty-nine and her father was thirty-six. Fifteen months after the birth of Jeannette, another girl was born; the last of the six children. For Jeannette’s mother, family was everything. Janette’s mother stated that all of her children were close. She said that Jeannette was affectionate with all of the family; that she was very loving, and caring. Jeannette acknowledged that her family was fun and happy, but was sometimes annoying. Aside from being annoying, Jeannette admitted that her family was extremely important to her by declaring that they were “half of her life” as they did most everything together.

Jeannette has lived in Southern California for her entire life. Spanish was the primary language spoken in Jeannette’s home, and it was her first language. Jeanette’s mother used only Spanish when speaking with her children. The adults in the family also used Spanish as the primary language. Jeannette stated that her father’s rule was at home his children spoke Spanish, and that at school, they were to speak English. When Jeannette entered school she felt that she was more adept at Spanish, and further, was
intimidated when she spoke English. She, as well as her parents, wanted her to be taught her school lessons in Spanish.

When Jeannette was in Kindergarten, she was tested for English language proficiency utilizing the Woodcock-Munoz test. Students who entered school in California and whose primary language was other than English were required to test for English language proficiency. Her scores were between a two and a three, which indicated that she was an English Language Learner; a limited English speaking student. According to Jeannette’s cumulative file, she was placed in an English only Kindergarten classroom, which was appropriate for her language ability. However, Jeannette stated that at her school there were two Kindergarten classes: one English and one Spanish and that she attended the Spanish class. Further, she really liked the Spanish class because it was easier for her to learn and she intimidated by the English class.

Jeannette’s Kindergarten records contain report cards from an English only classroom teacher. Her Kindergarten report card was written in English. Jeanette’s Kindergarten teacher was concerned about her progress. Her comments for the second grading period showed that Jeannette was having academic problems. “Jeannette tries hard but the work is often difficult for her. I am concerned as to whether her achievement will be high enough at the end of the year to go to grade 1. It is possible that it may take her more than one year to complete the kindergarten skills. She needs consistent help every night on letter identification, number recognition, one to one correspondence.” For the final kindergarten report the teacher again expressed her concerns over Jeannette’s academic progress. “Jeanette is a cooperative student who works hard on all her assignments. At this time of year she has not yet mastered all the kindergarten skills. She will continue to
need extra help and practice with the letters of the alphabet and sounds associated with each if she is to feel successful in grade 1. Daily drill is a must.” In physical education, Jeannette had no trouble whatsoever. She was able to run; gallop, hop on her right foot as well as hop on her left foot, skip, throw, catch, and both kick and bounce a ball.

As kindergarten came to a close, Jeannette’s teacher indicated that glasses were ordered for Jeanette. However, neither Jeannette nor her mother recalled Jeannette getting glasses at that early of an age. Another concern expressed at the end of Jeanette’s kindergarten year was the fact that she had a total of sixteen absences. When asked about her high absentee rate in Kindergarten, neither Jeannette nor her mother remembered why she missed so much school.

Jeannette entered first grade as a chubby little girl, with shoulder length brown curly hair that she often wore long, with a pony tail tied at the top of her head. She was always happy, and tried hard to please others both in school and at home. During the school year Jeannette received assistance with clothing from an organization associated with the school district. The organization assisted low-income families, and provided Jeannette’s family with clothing for the children, which included underwear, shoes, and outer wear.

Upon entering the first grade, Jeannette was once again tested for English language proficiency. This test occurred annually so that documented improvement in English language acquisition was recorded. Jeannette’s scores were between a 3 and 4, and it was recommended that she continue her education in English. However, she still struggled in school. Her first grade teacher indicated that by the end of the school year she was almost at grade level in reading but her math was still low. Once again, however, the teacher
indicated that she needed to work at home. Jeannette missed six days of school during her first grade year.

During the first trimester of Jeannette’s second grade year, Jeannette was receiving additional support for reading in the mornings before school, and was pulled out during school for tutoring as well. Despite these efforts, Jeannette’s academic performance did not improve. At the close of the second trimester, her teacher was fearful that Jeannette would fail the second grade. In January of that year, Jeannette’s family moved which led to a change in schools. She started a new school at the end of the second trimester. The new teacher expressed the same concerns regarding Jeannette’s struggles with reading and writing. And, once again, the teacher recommended that she continue to work at home. Jeannette was placed in an intervention program through the school, with the target concerns being reading and independent seat work. The outcomes of the intervention resulted in a steady increase in reading through placement in an intense reading group and a meeting with the teacher everyday. Also, Jeannette was seated with a “buddy” to help with work that was too difficult. This led to an increase in math performance.

Different in the second grade was the mandated state testing. Jeannette took the Stanford test, and was found to be in the lower percentiles for reading, math, and language. Percentile ranks were as follows: 99 were the highest while 1 was the lowest. In Jeannette’s case, for reading she was at the thirteenth percentile, which meant that she scored as well as or better than only 13% of the students tested. Her Language percentile was 10 while Math was 5. The school seriously considered retention. However, she was promoted with stipulations, and identified as “at risk”. The stipulations were that she
must attend a specialized summer or intersession program as well as intervention programs during the next school year.

Despite the academic troubles Jeannette appeared to be having in school, Jeannette’s mother stated that Jeannette maintained a positive attitude about school. She said that Jeannette liked to help her teachers, and that she never had to be told or reminded to do her homework. She received the following comments from her second grade teacher “Jeannette is a very sweet girl and a pleasure to have in class.” Her teacher further stated that she was a hard worker. Jeannette also demonstrated exemplary behavior on the playground. Additionally, she received a Satisfactory plus (S+) in physical education. In elementary school, a child’s physical education grade is based on effort and attitude, and Jeannette once again demonstrated a positive attitude.

While Jeannette struggled with school, her family tried to assist her, by helping her study for tests, or memorizing her multiplication tables. According to both Jeannette and her mother, Jeannette’s older brother influenced her to do her school work. Jeannette said that he helped her with “stuff” that she needed help with and that he encouraged her. She said that he helped with every decision she made and the he was always there when she needed him. Her mother said that sometimes he could make her feel bad, but that he helped her tremendously. She stated that Jeannette didn’t like him to know that she was not capable of doing work. If he caught her doing something wrong, then Jeannette would get mad. Jeannette and her brother were only eleven months apart, and the mother said that she had to divide her attention between the two kids and that Jeannette may have been resentful at times. However, her mother felt that this may have contributed to how Jeannette is as a person today.
At the beginning of the third grade, Jeannette’s teacher said that she was a good student, one who was helpful to everyone. However, she had the same concerns with Jeannette being below grade level, and remarked that she needed extra help. By the second trimester Jeannette’s third grade teacher recognized that Jeannette was easily distracted, and “when she doesn’t understand, she will do anything to avoid doing her work.” Jeannette was once again tested for English Language Proficiency, utilizing the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Her results indicated that she was intermediate to early advanced with the English language. Her third grade state mandated tests (Stanford and STAR) showed that she was far below basic in both English/Language Arts as well as Math. Additionally, her writing prompt was given the lowest possible scoring a “1” out of a possible “5”. Despite her academic problems, Jeannette was passed to the fourth grade with no stipulations.

By the fourth grade, Jeannette looked much the same as she did in the first grade, she was chubby, and still wore shoulder-length brown hair pulled back into a series of small pony tails on the top of her head. She was always neatly dressed and well groomed. Her behavior was still excellent, and she received an “S” in physical education. However, her academics were still a concern. Jeannette was placed on a promotion/retention intervention plan for the fourth grade. The areas of concern were: reading, writing, and math. The intervention recommendation was an in class intervention with small groups and a math tutor, an after school program, intersession/summer school and home based interventions and support. Also written in the plan was that Janette was to receive homework help from her older siblings—specifically with multiplication facts. She was also supposed to read for thirty minutes each evening. The plan was signed by her father.
in October. Additionally, Jeannette’s annual CELDT test for language placement resulted in a placement in structured immersion for her fourth grade year.

At the conclusion of the first trimester, her teacher had concerns. She stated that “Jeannette, at times, does make conscientious efforts to improve her work. However, her progress is very slow and it is very difficult for her to keep up with the rest of the class. She also often times does not listen to instructions and needs extra assistance.” By the end of the school year, with test scores for the STAR test being far below basic in both English/Language Arts and Math, writing prompts for both fall and winter scoring a “1,” and continually struggling unsuccessfully to be at grade level, the teacher determined that perhaps a Resource Specialist Program (RSP) might help Jeanette in the fifth grade. An RSP program would provide Jeannette with special education instruction for a portion of her day. RSP instruction, in Jeannette’s particular district, occurred in a special education classroom. However, she was not tested for RSP at the beginning of her fifth grade year. Her test for special education services did not occur until the beginning of March of her fifth grade year—in the last trimester of the school year. Consequently, Jeannette started her fifth grade year in a regular education classroom.

As Jeannette began the fifth grade, her hair was slightly shorter than it was in the fourth grade. She wore her hair pulled back, but instead of mini pony tails, now she wore a head band in order to keep her curly hair out of her face. Jeanette was still chubby. Her teacher described her as a sweet girl who respected others, and as a considerate and helpful girl with a good heart. However, it was during this time, her mother explained, that a boy relentlessly teased her about being fat. He picked on her daily. Jeannette had gone to the office to complain about him, but he still wouldn’t stop. One day the boy was
teasing Jeannette and she couldn’t take it anymore, so she punched him in the face. She made the boy bleed. Consequently, they were both taken to the principal’s office. The boy was suspended. However, the principal met with Jeanette’s mother, and due to the circumstances and Jeannette’s character, he did not suspend Jeanette. However, he asked the mother to keep Jeannette home the next day. She did. However, Jeannette believed that she was suspended because she hit the boy.

For the fifth grade English Language Development test, Jeannette was again at the Intermediate/Early Advanced level. She was slightly improving in the development of the English Language. It was at this time that Jeannette’s teachers realized that her academic problems were not necessarily due to a language barrier thus they held a Student Study Team (SST) meeting. The purpose of SST was to determine an individual intervention program that would assist Jeannette with learning. The SST team members consisted of teachers, parents, the school psychologist, and the principal. As a result of the SST meeting, Jeannette was recommended for special education testing.

In March of her fifth grade year, Jeannette was tested for Special Education. The testing included a variety of exams such as psychological assessments, academic and intelligence exams. After a complete evaluation, the school psychologist concluded that Jeannette’s academic delays may have been influenced at least in part, by a social, cultural economic disadvantage. However, she indicated that since the schools exhausted all other resources to assist Jeannette academically, the only alternative appeared to be the possibility of a learning disability rather than a language barrier.

The battery of tests found that Jeannette had a processing deficit in visual, auditory, sensory-motor skills and cognitive abilities. These results further indicated that Jeannette
had a specific learning disability that warranted specialized instruction not available in the regular education setting. The evidence of her specific learning disability was verified through standardized assessment, information provided by teachers, her parents, observations of Jeannette, and by her work samples. At the fifth grade, Jeannette was able to read sight words at a third grade level. She was able to write sentences at a beginning third grade level and knew beginning and ending consonant sounds. Her speech and language skills were deemed adequate and Jeannette was able to communicate her needs and ideas in an adequate manner in both Spanish and English. Additionally, Jeannette’s psychomotor development exam indicated that she may need more time to complete written work. However, it was also noted that she was enrolled in regular physical education suggesting adequate gross motor skills.

Psychological tests, such as the Bender Visual-Motor Gestalt Test (BVMG) and the House-Tree-Person test, used to test for emotional problems, were given and assessed. It was determined through these tests that Jeannette showed no indication of emotional disturbance and warranted no further evaluation. In regard to pre-vocational skills, it was determined that Jeannette had not thought about what she would like to be when she got older, and that perhaps she needed some assistance in thinking about a future vocation. At the conclusion of the testing, Jeannette was scheduled for an Individualized Educational Program (IEP), which would determine her placement in RSP.

While completing her initial IEP, she expressed to her teacher, the counselor, and to her mother that she wanted to become a veterinarian when she grew up, indicating that she had chosen a vocation within three months. Further, her fifth grade IEP showed that Jeannette was to continue to work on reading comprehension skills, phonics skills,
spelling, and writing a paragraph. Her math skills also needed to be addressed. She was able to add numbers with regrouping. She knew her place values to the hundreds, could tell time to the hour, and recognized all coins except the nickel. Her IEP was to learn how to subtract numbers less than 10, add and subtract numbers with regrouping, memorize the times tables to the 9’s, multiply up to 4 digits by one digit, and divide up to 4 digits by a one digit number. She was placed in an RSP pull-out program for 90 minutes a day, four times a week. Additionally, in order to help met the IEP goals, her regular education classes also adjusted her assignments by shortening them, providing peer help and one on one with either the teacher or instructional aide. Her IEP goals were reasonable and obtainable due to her recent placement in an RSP program.

Jeannette continued with good classroom behavior and excellent playground behavior during her fifth grade year. Her physical education grades improved to “Good” (“G”). Her teacher also wrote “Jeannette has a good heart—she is considerate and helpful.” By the end of the school year, Jeannette’s teacher and her parents were happy with Jeannette’s placement in an RSP class that would allow her to get remedial work and help.

Jeannette’s mother was always concerned about her daughter and school. She stated that the family tried to help her, and that Jeannette worked very hard, but they just didn’t know what was wrong. She was very thankful that they found a solution, and was delighted that Jeannette experienced success in special education classes. She believed that Jeannette did more than expected because she was in special education.

As Jeannette was promoted to the 6th grade, she received a “Promotion with referral”. This meant that she was still identified as “at risk”. She had demonstrated limited growth
in the 5th grade. The SST reviewed her file in the 6th grade and strongly recommended that she participate in a specialized summer or intervention program and in extended learning programs during her 6th grade year. The impact of her disability affected her ability to learn in the general education classroom. For that reason, small group instruction and the support of the RSP program was warranted. Jeannette was deemed a cooperative student, who tried hard. The teacher stated that she was well liked by both her teachers and her peers.

Once again, on the standardized tests she scored below basic in English/Language Arts and Science and Far below basic in Math. Her IEP review for the year said that she was able to add and subtract numbers, knew her multiplication facts, but she could not solve long division problems, word problems or fractions. For language arts, Jeannette was able to perform some skills at the fifth grade level, but, was just learning to write a paragraph with a topic sentence and supporting sentences. Her reading level was still at the third grade. It was recommended that Jeannette continue placement in the RSP program for Language Arts and Math for the 7th grade.

For the 7th grade, Jeannette attended a new school—a junior high school. The junior high school was approximately a mile from her former elementary school, so many of her friends from would also be in attendance at the new school. Jeannette expressed apprehension about changing schools, but she thought that since her friends would be attending everything would be okay. She was not worried about her classes or her teachers.

Academically, Jeannette struggled upon her arrival to junior high school. She stated that she didn’t know why she received bad grades, but she knew that she did. By
progress report time, in October, Jeannette was in danger of failing both RSP classes: Language Arts and Math, as well as her mainstreamed classes of Social Science, and her elective class. Jeannette was struggling with completing homework assignments and work quality. At the close of the first trimester she did fail Social Science, earned a “D minus” in her elective, and “C”s in Language Arts (a double period for her due to her IEP goals), Math, and Physical Education.

Jeannette explained her “C” in physical education as a result of her feet being in constant pain during the first part of the school year. At the conclusion of the first trimester, she visited the doctor. The doctor determined that she had flat feet and weak ankles. He removed her from all activity for the rest of the school year. She could not participate in either a modified or an adaptive physical education class. Jeannette was overweight, and both the school health aide and her physical education teacher at the time speculated that her feet problems may have been due to the fact that Jeannette was overweight.

With Jeannette out of physical education, and with little or no physical activity at home, Jeannette was gaining weight rapidly. She still was struggling academically in the second trimester, but with the added opening in her schedule, she was enrolled in two math classes. The one math class was RSP while the other was a basic math skills class, geared toward remedial math skills. She also added a reading class and continued with her mainstreamed social science class. Jeannette’s grades improved, and she earned a 2.33 grade point average (GPA). Her grades were higher in the RSP classes, but she barely passed the basic math skills class. Jeannette still had problems with turning in assignments and with completing homework.
At the beginning of the third trimester, Jeannette was still not able to participate in physical education. Jeannette had little play time at home, and could be found in the front of the house riding bikes with her neighborhood friends. Her mother said that she liked to keep her children right outside, where she kept an eye on them. Jeannette also had friends on her street and would often walk around the block. During this time in her seventh grade year, Jeannette saw that her neighbor’s dog was outside. As she approached the dog he bit her. Jeannette ran all the way home. She had to have stitches on her leg, and the mother reported the dog to the police. Jeannette described this as the worst experience of her life. Jeannette worried that they might try to harm the dog, or worse, kill him. She was very much an advocate for animal rights, and did not want to see that happen to the dog. She still had aspirations of becoming a veterinarian. In the end, the dog was not harmed, but Jeannette still worried about him.

During the third trimester of her 7th grade year, Jeannette once again received a failing notice in Social Science. She also received a failing notice in Art for an “F” grade, with comments about class work not being brought to class, and homework not being completed. At the close of the trimester, however, she earned a “D” in Art and a “C minus” in Social Studies. She earned three “B”s in her RSP classes. She also earned an “A” in Home Economics—her favorite class. Again, she improved her grades and earned a 2.66 GPA.

At the conclusion of her seventh grade year, Jeannette had her annual IEP review. Her parents were not in attendance. It was found that Jeannette’s ability was in the low-average range. Her visual and auditory memories were average but her innovative thinking skills were low. It was also noted that her academic skills improved and that
many areas were at a seventh grade level. However, her math reasoning was still very low. The IEP team recommended continued RSP placement. The parents were sent home a copy of the IEP, in Spanish, and consented for Jeannette’s placement in RSP for her 8th grade year.

As Jeannette entered the eighth grade, the doctor determined that she was cleared to participate in a modified Physical Education class. Consequently, based on the doctor’s recommendation, Jeannette was placed in a modified class by the school health aide. Jeannette was thirteen years old and two months when she entered the eighth grade, and thirteen years old and three months at the time of this study. She entered this class at 5’0” tall, weighing 204 pounds. Her BMI was 39.8, which placed her at the 99th percentile for girls her age.

As a part of the regular physical education class experience, Jeannette completed a questionnaire (Appendix B) during the first week of class. From the questionnaire, it was learned that Jeannette lived with her mother, age 42, her father, age 49, and four sisters, ranging from 20 years old to 12 years old, and her older brother who was 15. Her younger sister was a seventh grade student at the same middle school as Jeannette. She was also careful to mention that she lived with her two dogs that she loved very much. She described her best experience being when she acquired her first dog.

Jeannette described herself as lonely and shameful, but also as a nice and giving person. However, when asked why she perceived herself as lonely and shameful she stated it was because she got in trouble a lot at home and she always was the one to get blamed if something happened. However, after a follow-up interview, two months after the initial question was asked, Jeannette said that everything was fine, it was just a bad
day the day she filled out the questionnaire, and she didn’t feel that way anymore. Jeannette stated that she was a lot happier and that there were no problems.

Jeannette stated that other people saw her as a nice and trusting person. During the lunch time observations, it was evident that Jeannette had many friends as she talked and ate with many people during lunch. It did not appear, however, that she had close friends, whom she confided in or who confided with her. It was evident by the number of people she interacted with at lunch that many found her to be a nice person. It was never observed that a friend pulled Jeannette aside to talk to her one-on-one or confided in Jeannette; consequently, trustworthiness was never observed during Jeannette’s free time at lunch with her friends. However, during an early classroom observation, the boy that sat behind Jeannette did not understand an assignment and because he did not understand, he was constantly asking Jeannette what to do, and how to do it. He seemed to trust her as a student leader. Jeannette’s RSP teacher remarked that Jeannette was always trying to help others and other students would ask her for help frequently. She further stated that Jeannette took a leadership role in a group setting.

In her free time, Jeannette said that she liked to go outside and talk to her friends. She also liked to play Volleyball. She tried out for the eighth grade team at her school this year, but did not make the team. She also tried out for the 8th grade basketball team and did not make that team either. She also liked to watch Novelas (Novelas are Spanish-spoken soap operas). However, her favorite thing to do was to pet her family dog. Petting her dog relaxed Jeannette and made her think of the future when she would become a veterinarian.
Jeannette described the thing that she did best was sing and the thing that she did the worst was her chores. However, she could not pet her dog or sing until she finished her chores and her homework. Her mother stated that Jeannette’s responsibilities at home were to clean her side of her bedroom, make her bed, put the laundry in the basket, and if the laundry was clean, to put it away. She said that Jeannette had no set chores, but that she would ask her to help with cooking, cleaning, or putting things away. Jeannette was the only one in the house that took care of the dogs. Both Jeannette and her mother agreed on this issue. However, Jeannette could not understand why no one would water the dogs, especially if they could see they were out of water.

Jeannette lived approximately one and a half miles from the school. Her mother or father drove her to and from school everyday. However, sometimes she walked home from school. Based on Jeannette’s observed performance on a mile run/walk in class, it would have taken her longer than twenty minutes to get home if she walked. During the mile run in class, Jeannette typically walked alone. She didn’t talk to anyone nor did she bother anyone. She simply walked—slowly, with each lap progressively getting longer. Typically, she was the last person in class to complete her mile. Jeannette hated to walk, and would never attempt to run. She never used the excuse that her hurt feet it was just that she never tried very hard with the walking/running assignments in class. She also never achieved her target heart rate during physical education class on the mile run/walk or on a timed run. She earned a “B” in the class overall.

Jeannette’s favorite subject in school was Home Economics because she loved to cook. Her RSP teacher said that Jeannette talked about Home Economics a lot, so, she perceived it to be her favorite subject in school. Jeannette did cook at home, if her mother
needed help. Also, her home economics teacher was her favorite teacher because she was funny and she informed the class how to cook, sew, or complete a project step by step. Jeannette felt very comfortable in her class.

Jeannette described nutritional foods as “good and healthy” but she said that her favorite food was Mexican food, which she knew wasn’t too healthy. Jeannette expressed concern over her weight, and said that she would be interested in learning about nutrition. However, while observing Jeannette at lunch, it was noted that Jeannette ate the cafeteria hot lunch on a daily basis. This lunch was free for Jeannette due to her parents’ financial situation. The lunches that Jeannette ate were far from healthy, and it did not appear that Jeannette was too concerned with eating healthy, even though her new physical education class focused on healthy eating. On the days that she was observed Jeannette ate pizza, a sandwich, and two hamburgers which were served as the main hot lunch courses. Each day the main course was served with tater tots. In addition, Jeannette always purchased Hot Cheetos. The Hot Cheetos she would share with her friends. Jeannette ate everything, wasted nothing, and always threw away her trash. She ate with many friends, and was never alone at lunch. She ate quickly, devoured everything, washed her food down with two milks, and continually wiped her hands on her pants—never using a napkin. When she finished lunch, she would leave her lunch table, and quickly go find other friends.

The first formal interview (Appendix C) examined the reciprocal interaction between Jeannette’s personal factors (likes, dislikes, and hobbies) and behavior (attitudes and feelings) in order to understand how they relate to the school environment. In addition, Jeannette’s personal relationships with both classmates and friends were examined in
order to understand the social influence on the behaviors and personal characteristics of Jeannette.

Jeannette described her school as fun, but sometimes boring. A typical day for Jeannette was to arrive at school and stay with her friends in the quad area until the bell rang, then, she would go to first period. On Monday's she would get a new packet (in her Language Arts RSP class, which is the first two periods of her day). The packet was due on Friday, and they would work on it for two periods everyday. Third period she would go to physical education class and fourth period she would go to Math class. Math was also an RSP class, so she would return to the same classroom after Physical Education. After fourth period was lunch, which she described as eating and talking with her friends. After lunch, she would go to fifth period where she was a Teacher's Aide. She would help people on computers. This year this was her favorite class. She didn't really do much in the class she said, so it was easy and she liked it. Sixth period was social science where she would talk and work. After sixth period she went directly home.

Jeannette learned how to study since she has been in RSP. She learned to prepare for tests with her sister. Her sister gave her the questions to study. If she got an answer wrong, her sister gave her the same question ten more times until she was sure that Jeannette knew the answer. Jeannette felt happy when she would get a good grade because her family didn’t have to tell her to work harder. Her report card was better last year and she hoped to make the honor society this year.

Jeannette said that she liked her classmates and that they treated her well. She said that she treated her classmates nicely as well. She liked the fact that her classmates were funny and that they made her laugh. She said that they made her feel smart because they
would ask her what they need to do; then look to her for help and assistance during class. She couldn’t think of anything that she disliked about her classmates. However, outside of the class, she said that they didn’t talk or interact at all except after school when she was waiting for her parents to pick her up or when she was getting ready to walk home.

Jeannette always liked to talk to people. She was very comfortable around a group of people and felt comfortable in her classes. She liked to talk in class with her classmates and outlined each class based on how much she was able to talk. She said that in her third period physical education and her sixth period social science classes that everyone got to talk a lot with one another. Also, in fifth period, her Aide class, she was supposed to be taking care of others, so she had to talk. But, in her RSP classes they didn’t talk because the teacher would get mad. Generally she felt comfortable with her classmates, but if they teased her it made her sad sometimes, like she was not trying hard enough. She did admit to teasing her classmates, but, “just to play around”.

Jeannette’s RSP teacher described Jeannette as being the “mother hen” of the class because, on a typical day, Jeannette came to class and helped out her classmates, especially if they didn’t understand a particular concept. Further, she thought that they perceived her well and believed her to be the smart kid because she appeared to know what was going on in class. In group settings as well as one on one situations with her peers, Jeannette always took the leadership role. She thought that Jeannette liked the way her classmates looked up to her but that Jeannette didn’t like when the class was disruptive or not paying attention; and she especially didn’t like when they asked stupid questions. She thought that for the most part Jeannette’s classmates made her feel good because they came to her a lot but sometimes that would get frustrating for Jeannette
because they came to her too much, but overall, Jeannette was comfortable with her classmates. She said that Jeannette never had said anything negative about her classmates, and that she never teased them, and they didn’t tease her. Her classmates treated her well.

In the physical education class, Jeannette was much the same way, trying to take a leadership role. However, in this particular class, she was not viewed as a leader by everyone the class. During a weight lifting class, Jeannette approached another group, and attempted to explain the exercise to them for approximately twenty seconds before returning to her own group. However, an argument ensued between her and the other group regarding the shoulder technique needed for a particular exercise. She quickly reverted back to her group and worked diligently with them, leading and counting all of the repetitions and instructing her group on what they would do next. Her group consisted of two girls, including Jeannette, and a boy. When they completed their second weight training station, they moved to the bicep station where there was a twenty second discussion on how to perform a concentration curl. However, as the class progressed, Jeannette slowed down and wasted a lot of time watching and talking with other groups rather than moving from station to station and getting a workout. Therefore, Jeannette tried to exert her leadership abilities, but within a physical education environment, and with other strong personalities, she backed down from her role, and basically became a participant in the class.

Jeannette described her role in physical education class as simply a participant. She did not perceive herself as a leader, but she felt good about her role as a participant. She said that her favorite part of physical education was that she got to exercise and she liked
to exercise. However, she described her ideal day at school as having no physical education, and after several observations, perhaps Jeannette was attempting to make her day physical education free as she rarely participated in class. Jeannette’s time in a physical education class consisted of as much socializing as she could in order to exercise as little as possible. She would often engage others in conversation, and fail to perform the activity required in the class. In the middle of a run/walk on one occasion, she stopped in the middle of the field and engaged two girls in a game of “patty cake”. She often gave excuses to the teacher as to why she couldn’t exercise: it’s too cold, too hot, too wet, and even “I don’t have any socks today.” However, she was always respectful, and always performed stretching exercises with no problems, and eventually would participate in the class activities. Although she could be disruptive, she was never a discipline problem, as she would smile, and return to her activity as soon as she was prompted.

Jeannette said that she felt good when she was around her teachers and that she acted nicely around her them, because that is the way that she usually was. Her RSP teacher stated that Jeannette got along with her very well. She thought she was a helpful student who always wanted to help and to please. She described her in much the same manner as her previous elementary school teachers did, as a helpful, caring student. However, although Jeannette was improving academically, her skills were still low. According to her RSP teacher, she was still three years below grade level. Nevertheless, she did mention that what she did do, she did well. She was behind, but, she did well academically. Jeannette was becoming a successful student.
Jeannette’s idea of a successful student was one who was smart, achieved “A”s and was nice. Jeannette named a specific student, and said she looked up to her. Jeannette’s RSP teacher thought that Jeannette would have described a successful student as being one who tried hard, paid attention and listened to the teachers. She thought that Jeanette would definitely look up to a successful student because Jeannette wanted to be successful too. Even though her RSP teacher did not see Jeannette outside of her classroom, she thought that Jeannette looked up to her mother, and not to other students.

When Jeannette was asked who the most popular student in school was, she said that she really didn’t know, that each person had their different groups that they went to, but, she did mention one girl, Justine. But, she didn’t know why she was popular because Jeannette felt that she wasn’t nice to people. She also said that she didn’t look up to her at all. Although Jeannette traveled to many different groups at lunch time, she never ventured out to the field, where Justine and her friends hung out. Jeannette stayed in the quad area and never spent time with Justine.

According to Jeannette, lunch time began with getting lunch. After she got her lunch, she would share it with her friends and talk the whole time. Her friends included many girls that were also enrolled in the modified physical education class and other eighth grade students as well. Jeannette would spend the first half of her thirty-five minute lunch standing in line and getting her lunch. Once she got her lunch, she would find a place to sit with many of her friends. She would always eat rapidly, and listen to others. She usually would not talk as she ate rather she listened to her friends talk. She did not eat neatly, and would often spill food. She would use her pants as a napkin. She did not wash her hands prior to eating and she did not wash them after she ate. When she was
done eating, she would raise her hand to leave the lunch tables, pick up her trash, throw it away, and venture out into the quad where she usually met more friends, and she talked to them. Most of the time, she would leave the lunch area with Hot Cheetos, stuffed into a pocket, and bring them to share with her friends.

Jeannette was asked if she ate with her friends, and she answered that at school she did but outside of school, she didn’t. She said that she usually ate chips with her friends, but they really didn’t eat, they just talked; she did not equate eating with socializing with her friends. Jeannette and her friends rarely discussed diet and exercise.

At home, when her friends or neighbors would come over they would talk, but not eat. She stated that she ate all three meals, breakfast, lunch and dinner, but only sometimes ate snacks. Breakfast and lunch were provided by the school, and Jeannette ate both meals at the lunch tables at school. Dinner was generally eaten with family, around the family dinner table. She said that she ate when she was sad and sometimes when she was happy and that her moods did affect her appetite.

When asked if her and her friends participated in physical activities, Jeanette said that she was in the dance club and that she also had friends in chorus. Her mother stated that Jeannette liked to go outside and ride her bike with her friends. She also liked to paint. But, the thing that Jeannette liked to do the most was chat with her friends. In fact, a typical activity for Jeannette and her friends was to go on to the internet site “My Space” and talk. However, sometimes they would go to the movies. She perceived her relationships with her friends as good and considered herself to be a good friend. She liked to have fun with her friends, talk a lot; and talk about movies. They also liked to plan days to go somewhere. Her friends made her feel comfortable around them and
other people. She was able to tell them when she felt bad. She trusted them. She thought they were good friends. She didn't have a single best friend; she considered all of her friends to be her best friends. Mrs. Rodriguez thought that Jeannette had a lot of friends. She also said that Jeannette spent a lot of time with the family.

Jeannette's second formal interview provided insight into familial influences and the interaction between Jeannette and her home environment and also her community (Appendix D). Both Jeannette and her mother were interviewed, and were asked relatively the same questions regarding their family and their community.

Jeannette described her family that she lived with as fun, happy, and sometimes annoying. She lived with one younger sister, who was a seventh grader at Jeannette's school, an older brother who was a high school freshman, an older sister who was a high school senior, and two older sisters who were in their early twenties, and who worked outside the home. She also lived with both her mother and her father. Her mother was a homemaker and her father was a truck driver. Jeannette's mother, Mrs. Rodriguez, described her husband as everything; he was a good worker with no bad habits. The family also had two dogs and three fish. For Mrs. Rodriguez, family was everything.

Mrs. Rodriguez said that all of her children were close. She believed them to have strong character. She felt that Jeannette was very affectionate with all of her family, that she was very loving. She also felt that Jeannette was very hospitable to other family members when they would come to visit. They had a large extended family. Jeannette's great grandmother, who was 94 years old, was still alive and healthy. Mrs. Rodriguez had one sister and four brothers whom she considered to be close family members even though they did not see one another that often. Her parents were still alive also, but she
did not feel as close to her father as she did to her mother because they did not live together when they were younger.

Jeannette described her Sunday's as being a type of continual family gathering, what her family deemed as a "recalentada", a renewing of the party. They would generally go to the same person's home, usually on her father's side of the family, and have family gatherings where they would eat, talk, and play after church on Sunday's. Mrs. Rodriguez said that it was her husband's frame of mind to spend as much time together as possible, especially since he was a truck driver and would often not be at home during the weekdays. Jeannette liked spending time with her Godparents, who were also her aunt and uncle (her dad's brother and mom's cousin). She also liked to be around her God brother who was also her cousin. Her grandmother, whom she described as being nice and loving, was fun to hang around with also. Overall, Jeannette, her family, and their extended family were very close, loving and affectionate.

Mrs. Rodriguez remarked that during the week there was not much family activity taking place as home. If the girls wanted to go outside, she would go with them because she liked to keep a close eye on them. They would ride their bikes or play with the neighbors. If their father did not arrive home on Thursday from his truck route, she would take to the two younger girls to the movies. Generally he would arrive home by Friday, so, on the weekends, they would try to go where the kids wanted to go. If they went to the mall, their dad would go with them. Mrs. Rodriguez had a bad leg, so it was difficult for her to walk. However, if she did go with them to the mall, she would sit at the food court and wait for them. Jeannette described the family activities as occurring mainly on the weekends and sometimes after school.
Jeannette believed that her family had influenced her decisions with school as they always helped and encouraged her. Jeannette’s mother commented that her older brother would help her pick her classes, and tell her what the good classes were. However, she was careful to note that sometimes he would make her feel bad because he expected a lot from her. Jeannette thought that her family was always nice to her friends, that they always welcomed them. She felt that her family influenced her life in that they helped with every decision she made. She felt that they were always there for her.

At home Jeannette had a set daily routine. Her mother stated that when Jeannette arrived home she would ask her if she was hungry, and make her eat a snack. She would also make her take off her school uniform. Jeannette made no mention of the snack or the uniform, and simply stated that when she first arrived home she would do her chores and then her homework. When the work was done, she would watch about an hour or two of television. She said that they usually ate at dinner at 5:00PM and that she would eat with her brothers and her sisters in the kitchen. They usually ate Mexican food. She said that they would eat slow and talk. However, Mrs. Rodriguez acknowledged that dinner time was early, at 3:30PM or 4:00PM, and stated that the family would eat in the dining room. Often times she would let them eat in the living room and watch T.V. if they asked permission. Further, she acknowledged that the family ate a variety of foods such as chicken, tostadas, and salads. The family would usually eat two different meat entrees, as well as vegetables, fruit, beans and rice for every dinner. Jeannette said that when her father was home they would talk about what to do and where they would go on the weekend. After dinner she would play outside and at 7:00PM take a shower and be to
bed by 8:00-8:30PM. Her mother added that she would have to get her clothes ready for the next day.

Jeannette’s responsibilities at home included cleaning her side of the room, making the bed, and placing her dirty laundry in the basket and the putting the clean laundry away. Both Jeannette and her mother agreed that the dogs were Jeannette’s responsibility to feed, water and maintain. Mrs. Rodriguez exclaimed that if Jeannette went to the back to feed and water them, and discovered no food or water that she “threw a fit!”

Mrs. Rodriguez did all of the grocery shopping for the family. Jeannette said that her mother usually went shopping when her dad was home or when she needed to. She said that sometimes her and her sisters and brother would get the food that they wanted. Jeannette claimed that half of the refrigerator was full of fruit and vegetables and that they ate them at every meal. Before going shopping, Mrs. Rodriguez would ask the kids what they wanted, but she always bought lots of fruit. Mrs. Rodriguez claimed that both Jeannette and her brother were overweight so sometimes they didn’t want to eat anything; therefore, she had them eat fruit. She tried to monitor what they ate and made sure that they ate cereal before they went to bed because they ate dinner so early.

If Jeannette were in charge of the family grocery shopping, she stated that she would purchase the same food that her mother did—fruit, vegetables, and dinner “stuff” for today and tomorrow if. She would buy food “we’re supposed to eat.” When Jeannette’s mother went shopping, she made the children write the grocery list in Spanish as it is her way of making them practice their Spanish.

Jeannette was aware of how to read the nutritional information contained on the food items. Her brother has had classes on nutrition. Now, Jeannette and her brother measure
their cereal and milk and have learned portion control. Jeannette liked to eat a lot, especially a lot of bread—sandwiches (cheese and also peanut butter and jelly) and also sweetbread, so she began purchasing wheat bread for her to eat instead, because she felt it was much healthier.

Jeannette perceived herself to be healthy—she didn’t have any diseases, so she guessed she was healthy. Mrs. Rodriguez said that Jeannette has always had good health. She always has had her physicals and she was consistent with her doctor visits. Her older daughter had a thyroid problem and there was diabetes on the paternal side, but, Jeannette was not a sickly child. The family visited the doctor regularly. Mrs. Rodriguez’ health was good but she had high blood pressure and bad legs, especially the right leg. She had a wrenched sciatic nerve in her right leg and she was going to visit the doctor soon. Jeannette was aware of her family’s health history.

A typical day at home for Jeannette on a weekend would find her playing with her dog and playing outside with her friends. She liked to watch her novela at 3:00PM, and generally spent the rest of the day doing chores. Sunday was a big day for family and often they spent the entire day together. They liked to go to church as a family, and often attended the Spanish services at St. George, which was a large Catholic church in their neighborhood. However, they did not go every Sunday because sometimes Mr. Rodriguez was tired from driving a truck all week. Mrs. Rodriguez said that her family was involved in the church, her son was an alter boy, and the oldest daughter helped out at church. Jeannette described her role as a basic parishioner, and basically she followed what her mom did. She liked to sit and listen to the priest. She would pray for her loved ones, and if they wanted the mass to be dedicated to someone, then they told
the priest. She knew that they had dedicated a mass to her grandfather, and it meant more to her because it was her family, and she actually listened to everything. She felt good about her role in the church. She also really liked the priest because she felt he was funny and he made them laugh.

Mrs. Rodriguez said that Jeannette would listen to the mass during services and that she would take communion and wine. She would also go to confession. In the Catholic Church, first communion is typically done when a child is about 7 or 8 years old, and first confession is done at age 13, when the child becomes an adult within the church. Normally, all babies are baptized as close to birth as possible as the religion believes that no one may enter heaven unless he/she is baptized in the name of God. However, in Jeannette’s case, when she was 7 years old, she received all three sacraments: communion, confession, and baptism on the same day. This took place in a very special ceremony at the Day of Glory mass. Mass began at 7:00, and the people, including Jeannette, received sacraments until 10:00. This was during Easter and it was very special. A Bishop performed the ceremonies.

Because of this special ceremony, Mrs. Rodriguez believed that Jeannette had much faith in Guadalupe—the Virgin Mary. When Jeannette was baptized, she went up to the Virgin Mary and asked to be baptized, and received all three sacraments. This led Mrs. Rodriguez to believe that the Virgin Mary had an enormous impact on her child’s life. When Jeannette was asked if there was anyone at church that had an impact on her life she stated that it was the entire service, and how the congregation read from the missile. She was moved by the service. Mrs. Rodriguez remarked that Jeannette is content with her role in the church, and that she liked to participate in all of the activities. Further, she
stated that next year Jeannette will begin to take catechism classes that will explain the meaning of the sacraments. The classes are for two years. Jeannette’s two older sisters have already taken the catechism classes.

Aside from being a parishioner at St. George’s church, Jeannette was not involved in any other community activities. However, she was involved with the Dance Club at her school. She became interested in dance because her sister was in dance club. At dance rehearsals she was usually the leader. She taught other what they were supposed to be doing. Her mother said that she would come home and teach the neighborhood children what they did at school. She remarked that Jeannette liked to practice being a leader. Jeannette liked her leadership role within the club because it made her feel good. Her favorite part about participating in dance club was that it was fun and it was a great way to do exercise. She also liked to perform for the school and at fairs.

The third and final interview (Appendix E) focused on the personal desire for change and the perspective for making such change possible. Jeannette saw her self making personal changes with the way that she acted, because she felt that sometimes she was mean to people—mostly her sisters. However, within the past year, she already changed academically, where she used to get “F’s” she was now getting “A’s”. She also changed physically because now she dressed differently—she changed her style. She now felt as if she had a style her own, one that was different from her sisters.

In the future Jeannette saw herself becoming a veterinarian and helping animals. Her teacher said that if Jeannette stayed focused that she had potential to graduate high school and college. She felt that Jeannette had the drive and perseverance to be successful. However, she thought that high school would be academically challenging for Jeannette.
but she thought that she would be involved which would motivate her to do well. Jeannette perceived high school as different and harder. She thought that she would meet new people in high school, because she was going to a high school different than the one her friends were going to attend.

Jeannette thought that she would have to work harder and be more active in high school in order to be successful. Her teacher believed that she had to keep her drive if she wanted to do well and that she would need tutoring in order to pass the high school exit exam. She thought that perhaps Jeannette would go on to college, and that if she did, it would probably be to a junior college. Jeannette also saw herself attending college, and she mentioned two local junior colleges as potential schools.

Both Jeannette and her teacher felt that Jeannette’s family would be supportive of her goals. Her teacher stated that Mrs. Rodriguez attended every IEP meeting and that she was supportive of her daughter’s activities. Mrs. Rodriguez felt that the family could help Jeannette become a successful adult by stressing the value of education. She felt that doors would open for Jeannette in the future if she had an education. Additionally, her mother felt that the family should have open lines of communication, and that Jeannette should always feel that she could and should talk to her mother and father. Communication with her siblings should be a must also.

Jeannette’s teacher believed that Jeannette was motivated by success and that she had a chance of becoming a successful adult with a career. Jeannette had stated that the career that she wanted to pursue was to become a veterinarian, but during her interview she expressed the desire to perhaps become a teacher too. In order to accomplish her goals Jeannette has tried to help people be good to their pets. She has told them to be
nice to them. She has also helped her neighbors with their dogs. Her teacher felt that doing if Jeannette did her homework, completed her assignments and stayed on the path that she is on now that she would accomplish her goals. Jeannette felt that if she were better at school, and other things, like activities, that she would be able to learn more in college and be able to accomplish her goals.

An ideal day for Jeannette would be to come home from school and watch T.V. then go to her Uncle's house. An ideal reward for her would be to get all of the Harry Potter movies. And, an ideal activity would be for her to play volleyball on a team or with friends. Jeannette's teacher thought that an ideal day for Jeannette would be to be a teacher for a day. In observing Jeannette in her classes, her being a teacher for a day would probably make for an outstanding reward for Jeannette. She would love to have everyone listen to her all day. According to her teacher, verbal praise and people knowing she did well is an ideal reward for Jeannette. Jeannette is very confident since she has discovered success academically; therefore, she has begun thinking about her future more seriously, and is definitely planning on attending college.

Jeannette sees herself going to college in the next ten years, as does her RSP teacher. In twenty years, she sees herself married, working, and perhaps with a family. Her teacher believed that she would by married but that she would also be taking care of her mother and grandmother. Jeannette thought that she would look like her sister in ten years because she looks like her now and she looked like her when she was young. Her sister was chunky, which Jeannette thought she would be in the future, and she had brown hair that was streaked. Her teacher thought she would look like her mom who was 5'3", with brown hair and a medium build. In twenty years, Jeannette thought that she
would look like her aunts because she felt that she looks like them—more like her dad's side of the family as they all look alike with brown hair, that is dyed and they are all the same height. Her teacher felt that if she continued on the pattern that she was on now that she would be obese in twenty years.

Case Analysis

The purpose of this study was to determine the behavioral, environmental, and personal influences on the health status of four overweight and/or obese Hispanic female adolescents utilizing Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. Bandura (1977, 1986, & 1989) defined the Social Cognitive Theory as a reciprocal interaction of personal factors, behavior, and the environment. These interactions do not occur simultaneously, and some sources of influence may be stronger than others; differing with each individual, behavior and situation in which the behavior occurs (Bandura, 1989).

According to Bandura (1986), the environment is not a fixed property; rather it is inoperative until it is actualized by an action or actions. Behavior determines what part of the potential environment will become the actual environment. Further describing the reciprocal interaction between the environment and behavior, Bandura (1986) explained that the environmental influences partially determine how behavior will be shaped and activated. Environmental influences may affect individuals apart from their behavior, as when thoughts and feelings are modified through modeling, teaching and social influences. Additionally, by observable characteristics, people may affect their social situation due to preconceived notions of their social status, thereby demonstrating the reciprocal interaction between personal characteristics and environmental influences.
Additionally, one's personal factors: cognitive, what people think; the affective, what people believe and feel; as well as the biological events of individuals may shape and direct behavior. Expectations, beliefs, self-perceptions, goals and intentions also shape and direct behavior.

In this study, the environment was held constant while the personal factors and the behaviors of each individual were examined across all areas. The environment was threefold: physical, situational and social. The physical environment included the actual location, whereas the situation generally referred to the existing conditions or circumstances of that particular moment or place, and the social aspect of the environment referred to the relating society, its organization, community, and the interaction of its people. Behavior was viewed as the way in which a person responded or reacted to a certain set of conditions including social behavior, family, health related behaviors and task related behaviors. Personal factors referred to the cognitive, affective and biological events of each individual and included perceived self-efficacy, general attitude, personal responsibility, knowledge, and personal expectations. The following acronyms are representative of the data source(s) utilized to determine the personal factors and behaviors of the participants in relation to the environment. CF=Cumulative Files, Q=Questionnaire, OC=Observation Classroom, OPE=Observation Physical Education, OLT=Observation Lunch Time, I1=First Participant Interview, I2=Second Participant Interview, I3=Third Participant Interview, IP=Parent Interview, IT=Teacher Interview and II=Informal Interview with the Participant Figure 4.3: Jeannette’s Personal Factors Home, Community and Church Environment.
Figure 5.1: Jeannette’s Personal Factors General School and Physical Education Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SELF-EFFICACY (Q, II, IT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL SCHOOL</td>
<td>Positive attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: School buildings and surrounding areas on campus</td>
<td>Liked school, it was fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Actions self-perception, interactions and school events</td>
<td>Liked classmates, made her laugh and treated her well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td>Felt good about her role in dance club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GENERAL ATTITUDE (Q, II, IT, OLT, OPE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (Q, II, IT, OPE, CF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KNOWLEDGE (Q, II, IT, OPE, CF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS (IT, II,)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS</td>
<td>Like to help teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Locker room, field area, courts, MPR, and roll call numbers</td>
<td>Dance club member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, interactions and class activity.</td>
<td>RSP student in English only instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates and Physical Educators</td>
<td>Fluent English Speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Felt good about her role as a participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant, did enough to get by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flat feet, weak ankles: limited activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Followed locker room rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complained about class to teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5’ 204 lbs. 39.8 BMI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5.2: Jeannette's Personal Factors Academic Classes and Lunch Time at School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMIC CLASSES</td>
<td>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (Q, 11, IT, OPE. CF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Classrooms</td>
<td>KNOWLEDGE (11, IT, OLT, CF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, and class work</td>
<td>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS (IT, IL.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMIC CLASSES</td>
<td>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (Q, 11, IT, OPE. CF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Classrooms</td>
<td>KNOWLEDGE (11, IT, OLT, CF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, and class work</td>
<td>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS (IT, IL.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUNCH TIME AT SCHOOL</td>
<td>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS (IT, IL.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Lunch line, lunch tables, quad area, and basketball courts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, conversations, actions, interactions with others, lunch events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates, and school staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF-EFFICACY (Q, 11, IT, OLT)</th>
<th>GENERAL ATTITUDE (Q, 11, IT, OLT)</th>
<th>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (Q, 11, IT, OPE. CF)</th>
<th>KNOWLEDGE (11, IT, OLT, CF)</th>
<th>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS (IT, IL.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She felt smart because she helped others</td>
<td>Felt happy when received good grade</td>
<td>Working hard in classes, improving grades</td>
<td>Student leader, helped others</td>
<td>Make Panther Pride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Favorite class: Home Economics</td>
<td>Started to complete homework</td>
<td>Teacher’s Aide, helped others</td>
<td>Do well on tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many friends, no best friend</td>
<td>Happy, Outgoing</td>
<td>Received and ate free lunch daily</td>
<td>Grades were improving,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hung out with other girls from modified physical education class among other people</td>
<td>Didn’t look up to popular people, looked up to successful people</td>
<td></td>
<td>RSP helping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good friend to her friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

She felt smart because she helped others. Felt happy when received good grade. Working hard in classes, improving grades. Student leader, helped others. Make Panther Pride.

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She felt smart because she helped others. Felt happy when received good grade. Working hard in classes, improving grades. Student leader, helped others. Make Panther Pride.
Figure 5.3: Jeannette’s Personal Factors Home, Community and Church Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOME</td>
<td>SELF-EFFICACY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>(Q, I2, PI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House, yard,</td>
<td>Family meant a lot to her, did most everything together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neighborhood</td>
<td>Sang well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td>Affectionate with family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions and perceptions</td>
<td>Fun and happy family, at times annoying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Chores when needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family:</td>
<td>Homemork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immediate and extended, friends, and neighbors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY</td>
<td>KNOWLEDGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>(Q, I2, IT, IP, II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Church</td>
<td>Lived with immediate family of four sisters and a brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td>Spanish was spoken at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs, perceptions and opinions</td>
<td>Dad was a truck driver, and was only home on weekends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Shared a room with her younger sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass and Church Activities</td>
<td>The family was close with Jeannette’s mother’s side of the family, not her father’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(I2, IP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family active in church, brother after boy</td>
<td>Family supportive of Jeannette’s education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Figure 5.4: Jeannette’s Personal Factors Future Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (13, IP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNOWLEDGE (13, IP, II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELF-EFFICACY (13, IP, IT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL ATTITUDE (13, IP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIRONMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTURE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Beliefs, goals, and intentions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Family: immediate and extended, friends, neighbors and teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Making changes with the way she acted because she felt she was mean |
| Welcomed the future, had positive attitude |
| Involved in high school activities |
| Different high school than her friends |
| High School hard and different |

| Motivated by success |
| Look like sister in 10 years |
| Work harder and be active in high school |
| Family valued education |
| Wants to be a veterinarian |

| Look like aunt in 20 years |
| Different high school than her friends |
| Family was supportive |
| Graduate high school and college |

| Be better in school and more active |
| 20 years married with a family |

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Figure 5.5: Jeannette’s Behaviors General School, Physical Education and Academic Class Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>BEHAVIORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td><strong>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR</strong> (11, IT, OC, OPE, II, CF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: School buildings and surrounding areas on campus</td>
<td>Comfortable with teachers, classmates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Actions, self-perception, interactions and school events</td>
<td>Respectful to teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td>Loved to talk to friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teased classmates good naturedly and is not teased by her classmates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS</strong></td>
<td><strong>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Locker room, field area, courts, MPR, and roll call numbers</td>
<td>Talked to everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, interactions and class activity.</td>
<td>Was friends with classmates, interacted in a positive manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates and Physical Educators</td>
<td>Socializing affected activity level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACADEMIC CLASS</strong></td>
<td><strong>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Classrooms</td>
<td>Helpful student to classmates, teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, and class work</td>
<td>She liked her classmates and they liked her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5.6: Jeannette's Behaviors Lunch Time and Home Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (12, IP, OLT, II,)</th>
<th>FAMILY (12, IP, II, CF)</th>
<th>HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIORS (12, IP, OLT)</th>
<th>TASK RELATED BEHAVIORS (12, IP, II)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LUNCH TIME AT SCHOOL</td>
<td>Ate with many friends at lunch tables</td>
<td>Free lunch, low SES</td>
<td>Ate lunch daily, ate quickly with friends</td>
<td>Chores: clean room, make bed, put laundry in basket, put away clean laundry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Lunch line, lunch tables, quad area, and basketball courts</td>
<td>Sat and talked with many friends</td>
<td>Did not wash hands before or after eating</td>
<td>Took care of dogs</td>
<td>1-2 hours of television daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self perceptions, conversations, actions, interactions with others, lunch events</td>
<td>Had many friends, no Best friend</td>
<td>Shared food with her friends</td>
<td>Help with cooking, cleaning and putting things away</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates, and school staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOME</td>
<td>Loved to chat with friends on “My Space”</td>
<td>Brother and sister helped with homework</td>
<td>Rode bikes and walked outside with friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: House, yard, neighborhood</td>
<td>Many friends</td>
<td>Mom does all grocery shopping, but kids contribute with lists</td>
<td>Lived 1½ miles from school, driven by parents to and from school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Actions and perceptions</td>
<td>“Recalentada” every Sunday with family; eat, talk and play</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jeannette was healthy and had annual doctor visits, or went when ill.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Family: immediate and extended, friends, and neighbors</td>
<td>Mall trips on weekends with family</td>
<td></td>
<td>Healthy family, but mother has high blood pressure and sciatica</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Occasional movie with friends</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ate dinner early: 3:30-4:00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dinner was with family at the dinner table</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ate cereal before bed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5.7: Jeannette’s Behaviors Community, Church and Future Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>BEHAVIORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (I3, IP, II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHURCH</td>
<td>Parishioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>Day of Glory Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Situational: Beliefs, perceptions and opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>Ideal Day: Watch T.V. at home then go to uncle’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Ideal Reward: Get all of the Harry Potter movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td>Social: Family: immediate and extended, friends, neighbors and teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

In the general school environment, Jeannette perceived herself to be highly efficacious. She believed she was smart, and she took a leadership role in her classes. However, she was three years below her grade level and was considered to be developmentally delayed. Further, her grades as a seventh grader were not good enough to earn her a position in the school’s Panther Pride Honor Society and her test scores indicated that she was below basic in both Language Arts and Math. Even though her grades and test scores did not reflect where she should be academically as an eighth grade student, Jeannette was working hard and achieving success for the first time as a student. She was starting to learn and to achieve academically due to her RSP classes in junior high school. These classes were helping her acquire study skills and she was beginning to understand academic content matter. Jeannette had gained confidence academically since becoming a junior high school student, and her grades as well as her work ethic were improving. She had spent the first six years of her academic life being unsuccessful academically, and now she was a leader and possibly the smartest student in the class leading to her high perceived self efficacy within the general school environment as well as with her academic classes. According to Bandura (1997) efficacy beliefs play an influential role in academic attainment and are a key variable affecting self-regulated learning. Jeannette felt that she was a successful student due to her placement in RSP classes.

Jeannette’s behavior academically changed as a direct result of her sources of influence which were her RSP teacher and RSP classes. SCT states that ones sources of influence differ with each individual, behavior, and situation in which the behavior
occurred. Jeannette adopted positive behavior in the academic environment based on her positive peer interactions, and what she was beginning to think and believe about herself. These thoughts and feelings were shaping and directing her behavior, allowing her to become a leader in the classroom. Therefore, as a direct result of her connection with the social system of her classroom, her teachers and her peers, Jeannette had a positive behavior change academically.

During her interview, Jeannette’s RSP teacher remarked that Jeannette may have trouble in high school and college, but believed that if she stayed on the path that she was on now that she could perhaps achieve her goals. Jeannette stated in an interview that her immediate goal for the rest of junior high school as well as for high school was to be a successful student. Proximal goals serve as cognitive motivators, developing a sense of personal efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Jeannette improved academically by working hard in her classes, completing her homework and improving her grades, thereby becoming successful. As a result of being in RSP classes Jeannette worked with a team to achieve goals set forth in her IEP which allowed her to receive immediate positive feedback so that she was able to monitor her progress. When individuals, like Jeannette, receive feedback on progressive improvement they become efficacious (Bandura, 1991).

Even though Jeannette claimed that she liked to exercise, she never showed that she liked any activity in her physical education class, in fact her behaviors indicated that she did not like to exercise as she rarely moved in the class. Jeannette put forth a minimal effort on a daily basis. During an observation of her physical education class, Jeannette walked alone, not interacting with others as they either ran or walked past her. The class was performing a mile run/walk, and Jeannette walked the entire time. She was the last
person to complete the mile, not only in her class, but from all four of the physical education classes who were performing the same task. She had a medical excuse the previous year for her flat feet and weak ankles but did not use this as an excuse to not exercise, rather she complained for various other reasons: no socks, the weather, the activity, etc. She used the class as a type of social outlet to talk to her friends and classmates.

Jeannette claimed that her role in the class was as a participant but she did not always participate, she did just enough to get by. Based on observations of Jeannette in class, it appeared as if she was not motivated to perform the activities required in the class. According to SCT (Bandura, 1989), people function as the driving force of their own motivation. Relatively easy standards, such as being a participant in physical education, is an unchallenging standard which stimulated little interest or effort by Jeannette. Therefore, Jeannette’s aspirational standards determined the activities to be unmotivating and something she did not care to master.

Jeannette did, however, participate in the school’s dance club one day a week after school. They danced for an hour and Jeannette was a leader in the club and showed others in the club new dance moves. Other than this activity Jeannette did not participate in other physical activities. Perhaps if Jeannette exercised on a daily basis, even as little as the thirty minutes in her physical education class, she could have decreased her sedentary behavior and possibly could have decreased her weight during the course of the study. Decreased levels of physical activity may have contributed to the increase in adolescent obesity over the past two decades (Surgeon General, 2001).
During an informal interview Jeannette professed that she liked her seventh grade year better than her eighth grade year because she did not have to have physical education class. She said that she like the class solely because she got to socialize, but she hated dressing out, and do “stuff” in the class. She was not interested in performing the activities, unless it was something that she liked, like weightlifting. According to Bandura (1989), people influence their own motivation and behavior by the consequences, positive and negative, that they produce for themselves. Bandura refers to this as self regulation. Success in developing one’s self-regulation depends upon the dependability, consistency, and temporal proximity of self-monitoring. In regard to physical activity Jeannette did not set any goals for herself, she did not value the activity, and she was not self-reactive in judging her own performance (she did not set an internal standard). Because Jeannette did not pay adequate attention to her own performance, the conditions under which they occurred and the effects that they produced, she did not self-regulate herself in terms of physical activity, perhaps explaining why she was not physically active.

Jeannette’s behaviors did not change over the course of the trimester. She would often socialize to the point of inactivity. It was observed that she talked to her classmates during an entire class period that she was supposed to be performing a weight lifting routine. She rotated from station to station without performing an exercise, unless she perceived that the teacher was watching, and then she would pretend to be engaging in activity. According to Bandura (1989) behavior does not change from week to week. In the course of socialization, people develop moral standards from a variety of influences that are important to them in their lives. In Jeannette’s case, her influences were her
peers in class, her friends outside of class, and her family at home. Jeannette’s moral standards were developed from the approving and disapproving reactions to her conduct by these significant people, and the moral standards modeled by them. Therefore, Jeannette surrounded herself by friends and family members who were not physically active and did not value physical activity. Their moral standards accepted the fact that Jeannette was not physically active, reinforcing Jeannette’s behavior of being physically inactive.

Jeannette ate lunch at school everyday. The school lunch always consisted of five or six tater tots in a white, greasy bag, and a one ounce cup of lettuce, served with some type of main course: which varied on a daily basis. The main courses were mainly pizza, mini-cheeseburgers, a fried spicy chicken sandwich, or a bean and cheese burrito. She ate virtually every bite of her food and did not wash her hands before or after eating. At times she would share her lunch with her friends. Jeannette received free lunch from the school due to the economic status of her family. Research has shown that there may be a strong association between ethnicity, socioeconomic factors and obesity, with minority youth living in low socioeconomic conditions at the highest risk for becoming obese adults (Dietz, 1998; Ogden, Flegal, Carroll, & Johnson, 2002). Therefore, Jeannette, being a Hispanic female from a low socioeconomic family may be at a high risk for becoming an obese adult.

Jeannette’s parents were supportive of her activities in school. Her father’s job included traveling during the week, however, her mother did not work outside of the home and was able to prepare Jeannette’s meals, drive her to school, and take care of her home life. Her mother also attended her IEP meetings. She was extremely happy that
Jeannette had been placed in RSP and was finally getting help with her academics after struggling for so long in elementary school. Typically, Mexican parents emphasize non-cognitive, social skills as being equal or more important than cognitive skills (Okagaki & Sternberg, 1993), and this was evident with Mrs. Rodriguez and her family. During an interview with Mrs. Rodriguez, she revealed that her family was everything to her, and although she valued her daughter’s education, she felt that school was mainly about following the rules and learning respect, with academics coming after conformity.

Research has shown that Mexican-American families may prefer behaviors in their children that encourage closeness within the family, parental authority, and interpersonal relationships (Zayas & Solari, 1994). In an interview with Jeannette’s mother, she revealed many things about their family life. In speaking about her family, she cried many times during the interview, professing her love for her children and husband. Jeannette’s mother encouraged her children to be close. They did everything together as a family, including weekend trips to the mall, dinner at the family table, and a large extended family gathering every Sunday. During an interview, Jeannette also expressed her feelings regarding her family. She said that she was very close to her parents as well as her siblings. She shared a room with her younger sister who attended the same school as she. Her younger sister was taller than Jeannette, thin, and athletic and, according to Jeannette’s mother, the two girls had an amicable relationship. Her sister made both the volleyball and basketball teams whereas Jeannette did not make either team. According to both Jeannette and her mother, Jeannette was also close to her older brother, who had high expectations for Jeannette; he was a mentor to her and would help her study and advise her with her life. Jeannette said that she loved her father but would rarely see him.
during the weekdays and would look forward to the weekends when he was home with the family. Jeannette's mother said that Jeannette and her sister were the youngest in the family, so she would often make time for just the two younger girls during the week, sometimes taking them to a movie after school. In an interview, Jeannette said that her two older sisters worked outside of the home and she rarely saw them, however, they would help her study when they had time together. Jeannette had a large extended family that she would see on the weekends. She loved being around her cousins and God brother.

According to Bandura (1998), the initial efficacy experiences for a child are centered in the family, where the self-knowledge of their capabilities are developed. It is in within the development of peer interactions that the social comparisons begin, usually with siblings who are closest in age. Various family structures, size, birth order, and gender create different social references for the appraisal of comparative self-efficacy. Not only do these comparative appraisals evaluate one's own performances, but also the performances of others. The performances of others who are better than oneself provides for the most informative social criterion for comparison. Peers are a most important factor in the development and validation of self efficacy. Jeannette claimed that her older brother was influential in her life because he encouraged and helped her. However when her mother was interviewed she said that he could sometimes make her feel bad even though he helped her tremendously. Both Jeannette and her mother said that Jeannette's brother was smart and athletic in school. They appeared to be proud of him. Therefore, perhaps Jeannette compared herself to her brother, and he was, to her, the most important factor in the development and validation of her self-efficacy.
When Mrs. Rodriguez prepared dinner she had the family sit at the table and eat an early dinner at approximately 4:00PM everyday. She usually cooked Mexican food, and would have vegetables at every meal. Jeannette claimed the refrigerator at home was full of fruits and vegetables and that she knew what nutritional foods were, but she recognized the fact that she ate a lot of foods that were unhealthy. Jeannette said that her mother cooked Mexican food the majority of the time, and that was her favorite food. Additionally, her mother felt like the children needed to eat something before bed so she had them eat cereal with milk. According to Dietz and Gortmaker (2001), the food choices of the child could be affected by familial influences in regard to food choice: quantity, density, amount of fat, and food patterns, inclusive of fast foods. Since Jeannette’s mother did all of the grocery shopping and food preparation for the family, Jeannette did not have any choice in picking and choosing her foods. Even the free school lunch was prepared by the staff and again Jeannette did not have a choice in what she ate. Since Jeannette did not have a choice with the food she consumed, this may have attributed to her being an obese adolescent.

At home Jeannette had certain chores that she had to complete on a daily basis along with doing her homework. Mrs. Rodriguez claimed that Jeannette was a very affectionate, loving child who tried to help out around the house and was always trying to please those around her. She was fairly responsible at home, and did her chores and had assistance with her homework from her older sister and brother; however, she still managed to watch 1-2 hours of television everyday. Her mother allowed her children to watch television and did not monitor the amount of time they spent viewing their Novelas and other shows. Dietz & Gortmaker (2001) suggest that the family may influence the
child’s energy expenditure by various behavioral patterns, such as the allowable amount of television viewing time.

Jeannette was devoted to her Catholic religion and to God. The two were very important factors to both Jeannette and her family. They attended the Spanish Mass together every Sunday. Jeannette enjoyed going and considered herself to be very religious. She was not involved in church activities but felt a special connection to the church after the Day of Glory Mass when she was baptized, confirmed, and received her first communion. After Sunday mass the family would have a huge gathering for extended family members, and food would be served. The family referred to the event as a “Recalentada” Jeannette truly enjoyed spending time with her extended family. Hispanic familial characteristics have typically included close familial connections including extended family ties, high parental monitoring, and good parent-child communication (Caldwell, Sturges, & Silver, 2006). These traits were true of Jeannette’s family even though they were close only to Jeannette’s mother’s side of the family. Her father’s family lived primarily in Mexico and they did not see them frequently, nor were they as close to his side of the family.

Bandura (1993) asserts that within SCT, sociostructural factors function through the inherent psychological mechanisms of ones self-system to produce behavioral effects. Consequently, according to SCT, Jeannette’s family did not influence her behavior directly, rather through their impact on her aspirations, sense of efficacy, personal standards, affective states, as well as other self-regulatory influences.

Jeannette had an extremely high outlook for her future. According to Bandura (1997), the motivating power of personal goals is partially determined by how far into the future
they are projected. Short-term, or proximal, goals provide immediate incentives and
guidelines for current activities. Setting sub goals that are attainable is the best self-
motivation in achieving long-range goals. Jeannette knew what she wanted to be and do
with her life: graduate high school, followed by graduating college, eventually becoming
a veterinarian. She also knew that in twenty years she would be married with children.
Proximal goals, such as Jeannette’s, also serve as a tool for developing self-efficacy
(Bandura, 1997). Jeannette had high self efficacy with a good overall attitude both at
school and at home. She was well-liked and had a good rapport with both teachers and
students. Her family was extremely close and supportive. However, her health related
behaviors were non-existent, possibly because she received virtually no guidance from
her family, school, or the community on nutrition and exercise.

Her family was not physically active and their main activity, the “recalentada”
centered around consuming foods that were high in fat and sugar (Jeannette stated that
her mother and other family members prepared Mexican food for the weekly feast). The
approval of inactive behavior, and food intake were supported by people who were
significant in Jeannette’s life, her family. Therefore, her family reinforced Jeannette’s
behaviors. The school, through it’s free lunch program, gave Jeannette lunch that was
high in fat and sugar, and provided little nutritional value. The lunch was free, and
should have included foods that were low in fat and sugar, and provided a more balanced
diet for the children which would have provided nutritional guidance. The community
programs were non-existent to Jeannette as she was unaware of the park and recreation
programs. The programs within the community should reach out to its residents and
increase their awareness about the programs offered. Therefore, she was inactive within
the community programs because she received no guidance from the community regarding their programs.

During the course of the study Jeannette did not gain or loose weight nor did she grow. As a result she maintained her BMI of 39.8. Jeannette’s family did not recognize the fact that she was an obese adolescent. Jeannette’s peers also did not acknowledge the fact that she was obese, possibly because she spent time with other girls from her modified physical education class who were also obese. Jeannette did not have a best friend. However, Anderssen and Wold, (1992) found that the influences of a best friend were highly associated with physical activity behavior. In Jeannette’s life there were no sources of support for a change in behavior.

Jeannette’s parents and her family were the primary source of influence on her health status. Her behaviors of inactivity and consuming foods high in fat and sugar were being reinforced and perpetuated by the family. Her parents did not mention that Jeannette had a weight or food issue. They seemed to believe that she was healthy and happy. They did not recognize the fact that she had a weight problem, therefore, it was not recognized that she needed to change her behavior. Jeannette also surrounded her self with peers that were like her, and were overweight. They did not participate in any physical activities together, and they often ate together at lunch, therefore, there was no reason to change her behavior if she was socializing with people that behaved in the same manner as she did.
CHAPTER 6

JACKIE CASE STUDY

Jackie was born in Los Angeles, California on April 7, 1993, the third girl born to Mr. and Mrs. Freguso. At the time of Jackie’s birth, her mother was thirty and her father was thirty-two. Both parents were born in Mexico, and her father’s family still lived there; therefore, for Jackie, family meant those on her mother’s side. She enjoyed her family, and liked when her uncles came over, got drunk, and gave her money. Jackie described most members of her family as crazy. Jackie’s oldest sister was seven years older than her, followed by a sister who was five years older than she was. Ten years after Jackie was born, her mother gave birth to the first and only boy in the family.

Jackie has lived in Southern California for her entire life. Spanish was the primary language spoken in Jackie’s home, and it was her first language. Jackie’s mother and father used only Spanish when speaking with their children. However, as a young child, Jackie’s parents were learning English and her sisters were school age and both were being educated in Spanish as well as English. Therefore, Jackie learned both languages as a toddler.

When Jackie entered Kindergarten, she was tested for English language proficiency utilizing the Woodcock-Munoz test. Students who entered school in California and whose primary language was other than English were required to test for
English language proficiency. Her overall scores were at a level four which indicated that she was fluent in English. As a result of the Woodcock-Munoz test, it was recommended that Jackie be educated in English Language Development classes, where students received instruction in specifically designed programs that utilized appropriate instructional practices and materials with the goal of achieving English language fluency as quickly as possible.

Jackie entered kindergarten at the age of five years and five months. She was a large child, already close to 4' tall, and also overweight. She wore her long dark brown hair pulled back into a single ponytail with straight bangs that hung just above her big brown eyes and her bushy eyebrows. Her cheeks were chubby, but she always seemed to be smiling, showing off her straight, perfect teeth that looked even whiter, next to her smooth, dark skin.

As a kindergarten student, Jackie had some trouble adapting to school; she received "N" grades in group cooperation and participation, and also in her ability to express her needs. Academically, she had difficulty in identifying the main idea in reading, and in naming and copying shapes. Lastly, she earned an "N" in returning her homework completed. However, for Jackie's second and third trimester grades, Jackie earned "S" grades in all of her subjects. In physical education, Jackie had no trouble whatsoever. She was able to run; gallop, hop on her right foot as well as hop on her left foot, skip, throw, catch, and both kick and bounce a ball. Additionally, she also demonstrated proficiency with her small muscle skills as she was able to control and hold scissors correctly, cut on a line and use her pencil and crayons. She was promoted to the first grade with no stipulations.
Jackie entered the first grade as an obese child, with a double chin, chubby cheeks, and a stomach that hung over her pants. She wore her hair pulled back into a ponytail, with the same straight bangs that hung just over her eyebrows. She was always smiling and she enjoyed school. She was still placed in an English Language Development class even though her Woodcock-Munoz test scores indicated that she was an early advanced English language learner. She received all “S” grades during her first trimester, with the exceptions of homework, writing, and speech, where she received either needs more development, “ND” or needs more effort, “NE.” Her teacher remarked that Jackie was a capable student who usually listened well and followed directions. She noted that Jackie’s basic skills were at grade level, and considered her to be an “upper emergent” reader. She said that Jackie was a “beginning” writer who used inventive spelling. However, she felt that Jackie needed to practice math facts and counting as she was having difficulty with math.

During the second trimester Jackie’s teacher saw that Jackie was having speech problems and that perhaps she would benefit from a speech class. Therefore, her teacher recommended a student study team meeting in order to obtain parental approval for Jackie to attend a specialized speech class during school hours. Her mother agreed with the school, and Jackie was registered in speech class during the second trimester of school. During the meeting, Jackie’s teacher remarked that there were no academic concerns at the time. On her second trimester report card the teacher stated that Jackie was reading above the first grade level and that she was becoming a competent writer. She received a mixture of “S” and “G” grades. She was also attending an after school
tutoring session. She missed three days of school and had one tardy for the second trimester.

For the third trimester Jackie's grades were mostly "G" and "S" grades, with an "E" in Reading, and an "NE" in homework. She had four absences during the third trimester. The teacher commented that Jackie could read fluently above the first grade level and that she knew 286 instant words. She was writing at grade level, but needed to practice addition and subtraction. The teacher said that she enjoyed working with Jackie and promoted her to the second grade with no stipulations.

Jackie entered the second grade at 4'4" tall, weighing 106 pounds. She was the tallest person in her class, but she was also obese. She had 20/20 vision, perfect hearing and an increasing health issue: asthma. She spent a week in the hospital during this time due to her asthma problems. She was an extremely inactive child who spent many hours in front of the television, according to her mother. Jackie and her mother made many trips to the doctor, but nothing was mentioned about how to help Jackie battle her asthma other than with medication.

Upon entering the second grade, Jackie was once again tested for English language proficiency. Jackie's scores remained a "4," an early advanced level, and it was recommended that she continue her education in an English Language Development class. Different in the second grade for Jackie was the mandated state testing. She took the Stanford test and was found to be at the seventy-fifth percentile for English/Language Arts, and the sixty-fifth percentile for Math. She was at the basic level for second grade standards. Jackie was promoted to the third grade with no stipulations.
Jackie entered the third grade as the tallest and largest girl in her class. However, her looks changed in the third grade as her hair became longer and thicker, her face wider, her eyes somewhat smaller, and her skin slightly darker. She was still a happy child, who enjoyed school, but, she was teased a lot because of her weight. She claimed that it didn’t bother her, because she was generally happy and peppy. Her mother did not seem to think that Jackie ate a lot, only a lot of fruit. She was aware of foods that were fatty, but said that she did not really feed them to Jackie.

For the third grade, Jackie was once again tested for English language proficiency and found to be at the advanced level, a “5.” She was still in an English Language Development class. During the first trimester of her third grade year, Jackie did not miss any school, and she was tardy one time. Her grades were a mixture of “S’s” and “G’s” with the exception of work habits, where she earned a “ND.” Her teacher commented that Jackie had made steady progress during the trimester, but she needed to focus on completing all of her class work in a timely manner.

For the second trimester, Jackie demonstrated good academic growth. Her teacher also remarked that “she had improved slightly in completing her class work in a timely manner and that she could continue to progress in writing by improving her organization of ideas, grammatical usage and sentence structure.” Her grades once again were a mixture of “G’s” and “S’s,” including a “G” in health and an “S” in physical education. She had no absences or tardies.

Jackie’s third grade state mandated tests (STAR) showed that she was proficient in English/Language Arts and Basic in Math. On her third trimester report card, Jackie received the same marks that she did for the second trimester. Her teacher felt that she
had made good academic progress during the school year. He also felt that she needed to improve in completing classroom assignments and in her ability to work independently. He thought that her writing would improve if she proofread her final “writing product.” Jackie also maintained perfect attendance for her third grade year.

Jackie’s elementary school wanted Jackie to be placed in a regular English only classroom due to her continued growth and development utilizing the English language. Jackie’s mother agreed with Jackie’s redesignation as a fluent English proficient student. Therefore, Jackie would receive regular English instructional program commencing with her fourth grade year. During the first trimester of her fourth grade year, Jackie was not absent or tardy. Her grades ranged from “ND’s” to “G’s.” She received “ND” grades in homework, listening, and speaking. Her teacher wrote that “she could do much better if she would complete her homework nightly and return her work on time daily.” She also stated that “Jackie needs to develop better work habits and use her time wisely.” Further, Jackie was at grade level in math, reading, and writing.

For the second trimester, Jackie’s teacher noted that she was improving slowly in all areas, but that she still needed to work on completing all of her homework and returning it on time. Jackie received “G” and “E” grades in all categories with the exceptions of writing, where she earned an “S” and Homework where she earned a “ND.” Her health and physical education grades were both “E” grades. She was not absent or tardy during the second trimester.

Her STAR state mandated test once again showed Jackie to be proficient in English/Language Arts. However, she dropped to Below Basic in Math. Her teacher remarked that Jackie did well in all areas for the third trimester. He also said that Jackie
was a pleasure to have in class. He urged her parents to continue to support her in completing all of her homework in a timely manner. Additionally, for the second year in a row Jackie achieved perfect attendance. She was promoted to the fifth grade with no stipulations.

Even though Jackie continued at the same elementary school for both her fifth and sixth grade year, her report cards were now computerized, and were based on standardized testing rather than the more subjective grading scale of “Excellent” (“E”) through “Unsatisfactory (“U”). The grading system was numerical: “5” was advanced, “4” was proficient, “3” was basic, “2” was below basic, and a “1” was considered to be far below basic. This system matched the California Standards Test (CST) as well as the District Criterion Reference Tests (CRT) assessments. As a result of the new grading system, health and physical education were placed into a “wellness” category that included physical education and strategies for healthy living. The new report cards also included areas for teacher comments; however, the comments were much more abbreviated than Jackie’s previous report cards.

As a student entering the fifth grade, Jackie was more obese than she had ever been. Her dark hair was longer, and she often wore it tied into two small ponytails on the side of her head, with the back of her hair loose, hanging past her shoulders. Her face was round, her chin now blended with her neck, but she was still a happy, smiling child. Her grades for the first trimester included “4”’s in reading, wellness, and visual/performing, while her writing, oral language and science grades were “3’s.” Her math and social science grades were “2’s” for the first trimester. Jackie had three absences and one tardy for the first trimester. Her fall writing prompt score was a “2” out of a possible “5.”
For the second trimester Jackie was absent ten days, and was tardy twice. Her grades slipped slightly, and her teacher noted that her attendance was affecting her progress in reading, and in social science. During this time, her older sister, who was fifteen, ran away from home. Jackie said that her parents blamed themselves and began to question their parenting abilities. The family was distraught as they searched for her. Jackie simply referred to her sister’s actions as stupid and said she was crazy. They found her sister, and she remained in Los Angeles and never returned home.

In the meantime, Jackie’s grades dropped in writing and wellness, and remained the same or improved in other subjects. In reading she was deemed “at grade level” and able to “read fluently and accurately.” With writing, the teacher remarked that she needed to work neatly and use the writing process. In Math, where she received “2” grades across all three trimesters, it was determined that she could not strategize solutions and that she needed to complete work on time. During her six-month redesignation follow-up, it was determined that Jackie was successful in the regular English Program, and would continue to receive her education in English only classrooms.

For the third trimester, Jackie received “4” grades in reading and in oral language. She earned “3” grades in writing, social science, wellness, and in visual/performing arts. With math and science Jackie received “2” grades. Her winter writing prompt score was a “3.” The STAR mandated testing results showed that Jackie’s scores were Basic in both English/Language Arts as well as Math. She was Below Basic in Science. She had six more absences and 4 tardies for the third trimester. During her fifth grade year Jackie missed a total of 19 days and was tardy seven times. Despite all of these absences, Jackie was promoted to the sixth grade with no stipulations.
When Jackie began her sixth grade year, she looked much the same as she did when she was a fifth grader, with the exception that she was taller and heavier. Additionally, she had started to develop as a sixth grader. Her first trimester grades were average. She received a “1” in Math, a “2” in both Science and Wellness, a “3” in Reading and in Writing, a “4” in Social Science, and a “5” in Visual/Performing Arts. Her fall writing prompt score was a “2”. Jackie missed two days and was tardy twice during the first trimester.

Jackie still struggled with math during the second trimester, once again earning a “1,” however, she raised many of her grades, and achieved a “5” in Wellness, while achieving “3’s” and “4’s” for the rest of her grades. Her winter writing prompt score was a “3.” She was absent seven days during the second trimester. The seven days that she was absent were spent traveling to Mexico to visit relatives.

Jackie’s STAR test scores for her sixth grade year were Basic in both English/Language Arts and Math. Moreover, her last trimester of elementary school found Jackie’s grades dropping, and several comments left by the teacher that began with “Needs to…” Jackie’s reading grade dropped to a “3” and the teacher commented that she needed to apply word analysis, finish work on time, and analyze sections. Her writing grade stayed a consistent “3” but the teacher said that Jackie needed to organize her writing and finish her work on time. In Math, where her grade was a constant “1” across the three trimesters, her teacher remarked that Jackie performed poorly on tests and that she needed to improve her effort and finish her work on time. Her social science grade also dropped, and the teacher noted that Jackie needed to finish her work on time,
and that she needed to work for accuracy. Her citizenship comment was that she showed a positive attitude.

For the seventh grade, Jackie was enrolled at the junior high school two streets down from where she lived with her mother, father, and one year old brother. Jackie grew up in the neighborhood, attended the elementary school near her home, and entered the neighborhood junior high school in the fall of 2005. She said that she was slightly nervous about entering junior high school, but thought that she would be alright because all of her friends would be there, and she was looking forward to working on the school yearbook. She signed up for yearbook as her elective class.

Upon admission to the school, her mother met with the health aide regarding Jackie’s asthma. She explained, through an interpreter, that Jackie was prescribed an inhaler and occasionally needed to use it when she had difficulty breathing. The health aide, considering both Jackie’s asthma and her physical appearance (Jackie was 5’7” and weighed a little over two hundred pounds) and determined that a modified physical education class might be best for Jackie. Jackie and her mother were both content with the plan, and therefore, Jackie’s scheduled was to include modified physical education, yearbook, and the mandated seventh grade classes of Science, Math, Language Arts, and Social Science.

Almost immediately Jackie began to have problems at her new school. She was not adjusting well academically. By October of her seventh grade year, one month after she started school, she was in danger of failing life science, social science and general math. All three teachers indicated that she failed to complete her work. Her social science teacher also felt that she was working below capacity and that she had poor study habits.
In math, the teacher remarked that she had poor test performances. Jackie also had a hard time getting to school on time. By mid December Jackie had accumulated eight tardies and was placed on a school intervention plan. After five hours of combined lunch and after school detentions, Jackie was given a Saturday School for her seventh tardy and another Saturday school for her eighth tardy.

For her first trimester report card, Jackie only achieved a 1.66 G.P.A., but earned all “S” citizenship grades. She failed Science and the teacher said that she did not complete her class work or her homework regularly. Her math teacher made the same comments, and Jackie earned a “D” grade in math. In Social Science she also earned a “D” and the teacher requested that the parents contact him. Although Jackie excelled in Language Arts in elementary school, she earned a “C” in her first trimester of junior high school Language Arts. The teacher felt that Jackie was achieving below her apparent ability. Her other grades included a “C-” in Physical Education, and an “A” in yearbook. The school strongly urged Jackie’s parents to enroll her in the extended learning program where she would receive tutoring three days a week after school. She was not enrolled.

The second trimester began with an office referral for Jackie cussing in class. She received an hour after school detention for this offense. She also received failing notices once again in Science, Math, and Social Science for the second trimester progress reports. The teacher recommendations included more effort from Jackie, a conference with the parents, finishing incomplete work, and after school help. Neither Jackie nor her parents responded to these notices. Consequently, Jackie failed all three subjects for the second trimester. Her Math and Science teachers commented that Jackie did not complete her class work or homework regularly and that there was a lack of attention in class. Once
again, her social science teacher requested a parent conference, and the school offered tutoring after school. She earned “C” grades in both Language Arts and Physical Education. Her yearbook grade slipped to a “B.” Her second trimester G.P.A. was a 1.166.

During the third trimester Jackie began to have problems in Physical Education class with her uniform. She lost her uniform repeatedly, and did not dress out for class, despite the fact that the teacher gave her a brand new t-shirt. She received three detentions for the first three non-suits, and for the fourth non-suit she was referred to the office for Saturday School. In math she received a classroom suspension for refusing to work and pay attention in class. The teacher remarked that Jackie continually would talk over her even after her seat had been changed. In an elective class of Home Economics, Jackie received a failing notice where the teacher commented that she had “lied to the teacher about having projects completed. Was given time to complete assignments and didn’t.” At this time Jackie was referred to the school counselor as part of an intervention plan. The counselor was helping Jackie with organizational skills, and with turning in her completed work.

Even though Jackie failed her math class and almost failed physical education class (she earned a “D-” grade with an “N” in citizenship) her overall grades, and G.P.A. improved for the third trimester. She raised her Social Science grade to a “C”, her Language Arts grade to a “B” and she earned “A” grades in her two elective classes of Home Economics and Yearbook. Her third trimester G.P.A. was 2.333.

As a part of physical education, students take a fitness test during the month of April. In the state of California it was mandated that all seventh grade students participate in the
state fitness test. The standards for the fitness test represent a level of fitness that offers some degree of protection against diseases resulting from physical inactivity. The fitness test had three components: body composition, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility.

For body composition, skin fold measurements were taken on the back of Jackie’s upper right arm and the inside of her right calf using a device called a skin fold caliper. However, because of the thickness of Jackie’s calves, it was impossible to get an accurate skin fold measurement, as one could not pinch the skin on Jackie’s calf in order to pull the fat away from the muscle to measure. Consequently, Jackie’s calf was inaccurately measured. Her triceps were measured as accurately as possible and a formula was used to calculate the percentage of body fat using these measurements. Her fitness test results indicated that for a twelve year old female she was at the high end of body fat percentage. The measurements of her triceps showed a fat percentage of thirty-two percent. A female her age should have been between sixteen and thirty-two percent fat. In order to test for abdominal muscular strength and endurance, a maximum curl-up test was utilized. She was able to perform seventy curl-ups, meeting the California standard. Testing for upper body muscular strength and endurance a maximum push-up test was performed. She performed one push-up, and did not meet the California standard. The test for trunk extensor strength and flexibility was the trunk lift test. Jackie demonstrated a performance of a maximum trunk lift of twelve inches. The test that measured flexibility was a shoulder stretch, the touching of the fingertips together behind the back by reaching over both the right and left shoulder and under the elbow. Jackie passed on both the right and the left side, meeting the standard once again. A timed mile-run was used to
test for muscular endurance. Her mile time was 15:30, and for a female her age it should have been between 9:00-12:00. It was determined that Jackie did not meet the overall standards for all of the fitness areas set forth by the state of California, however, she did meet the standards of abdominal, upper and trunk extensor strength and flexibility.

As a seventh grader, Jackie was perhaps the largest girl in her class. She was tall and extremely overweight. She dressed nicely, but, in her white uniform shirt, her stomach extended well beyond her chest, and would hang over the sides of her pants, making her appear sloppy at times. She was taller than all of her classmates, and towered over everyone, especially the boys. She was jovial, but very forgetful, unorganized, and “scatter brained.” Her classmates teased her about her forgetfulness, and would give her a hard time because she was always searching for something she had lost. Jackie was not disliked, rather everyone who came into contact with her liked her, and would talk about how funny and sweet Jackie was.

Due to her weight issue, Jackie was kept in the modified physical education class for her eighth grade year. Her asthma had not flared up during seventh grade, but, she still had a hard time with physical activity. Jackie was thirteen years old and five months when she entered the eighth grade and thirteen years old and six months at the time of this study. She was 5’8½” tall and weighed 236 pounds. Her BMI was 35.4, which placed her at the 99th percentile for girls her age.

As a part of the regular physical education class experience, Jackie completed a questionnaire (Appendix B) during the first week of class. From the questionnaire, it was learned that Jackie lived about two blocks away from school with her mother, father, and younger brother. She would sometimes walk to and from school, but usually she would
get a ride from her mother. Jackie claimed that her mother liked to drive her because she was afraid that she would get run over if she walked.

Jackie saw herself as “a girl with hair, arms and legs.” She also said that she liked her nose. She thought that other people saw her as weird and dumb, but smart when she showed it in class. She also thought that others saw her as funny and ugly. Her history teacher, Mrs. Hall said that Jackie was always laughing and never had anything negative to say. Further, she believed that other people perceived Jackie as forgetful, but upbeat, positive, and friendly. She said that Jackie often forgot to turn in homework, and had a hard time concentrating on class work if there were any distractions around her.

Jackie was indeed a forgetful person. At the beginning of a lunchtime observation, Jackie walked by herself and sat down on the stairs of a portable classroom near the big tree adjacent to the lunch tables and the basketball courts. She placed her backpack on the stairs next to her, then got down on her hands and knees and started to look through her backpack. She hit her legs several times and said “it has to be in here!” She threw her physical education uniform out of her backpack and on to the ramp next to the stairs. A friend approached her and she yelled “I lost my phone!” She looked in the grass and looked up, almost crying. Someone standing on the ramp of the classroom suggested that she call herself. She said that she didn’t know her number. She told her friend “it has to be in Mrs. Hall’s class.”

She asked her friend to borrow his phone, and immediately began to dial after he handed it to her. A fight ensued at the lunch area and everyone around her ran, except Jackie and her friend. She had her friend’s phone to her ear and said, referring to the fight, “What’s the big deal?” She extracted a pink notebook and a black pen from her
backpack, shoved her clothes back inside, sat down on the stairs and placed the notebook on her lap. She opened it and wrote something. She tried repeatedly to make her friend’s phone work. She closed the notebook, got up and walked towards Mrs. Hall’s classroom—an area restricted to students during lunch. She had three boys following her. She towered over the three boys as she walked toward the classroom. Two of the boys peered in the window while Jackie and the owner of the phone stood at the bottom of the ramp leading to the classroom. She still had the phone to her ear.

Mrs. Hall, a short, chubby woman with shoulder length curly brown hair and a wide smile came from her classroom. The four students followed her, talking, and begging to search her classroom. She repeatedly emphasized that the phone was not in her classroom. The teacher ushered them back to the lunch area. Jackie walked back to where she left her belongings, and plopped on the ground next to her backpack. She was still trying to use her friend’s phone, keeping her right ear on the phone, and placing her left ear inside of her back pack; apparently waiting for it to ring.

She threw the pink notebook down and lifted her back pack upside down, emptying the contents: a green notebook, an Elmer’s glue stick, papers, two paper workbooks, and her clothes onto the grass. She picked up her clothes, shook them, rummaged through her back pack, stacked the loose papers on top of the workbooks and piled it all back inside her backpack. The principal walked by, and she hid her friend’s cell phone inside her backpack as no cell phones were allowed to be used on campus. When he left, she dug the cell phone out of her backpack and tried to use it. She continually tried to dial the phone while the owner of the phone and two other boys stood in front of Jackie talking to
one another. Other teachers patrolled the area, and she hid the phone under her notebook each time they passed.

She gave up on trying to call her phone, and began text messaging with her friends’ phone, asking whoever had it to please turn it into the office. She said that she was worried about “experiencing the wrath of her mom” because she neglected to tell her that she brought the phone to school for the day. The boy thought that he saw Jackie text messaging and began yelling that he didn’t have any minutes left, and asked her if she was really texting someone. He grabbed the phone from her. She was upset, wiped her eyes and left. Jackie and the three boys walked under the tree and talked to each other. She left her backpack on the stairs.

Once under the tree Jackie had her friends’ phone held tightly to her right ear once again. They walked back towards the area where she had left her backpack. She handed her friend back his phone and the bell rang to go to class. Jackie groaned loudly, stuffed her pen back into her backpack and handed her notebook to a girl. She walked away alone. A week later she still hadn’t found her phone and still hadn’t told her mother she lost it at school. Finally, after two weeks, she told her mother. She never found the phone, and she did not get a new one.

Jackie had many moments of forgetfulness that were indicative of the phone incident. She would frequently lose her homework, or even forget that she had done her homework thereby not turning it in. She lost her physical education uniform four times since being at her junior high school, twice each school year. Her mother spent over $100 replacing physical education uniforms. Her history teacher claimed that Jackie was so unorganized that she would lose everything, and would often be teased by her
classmates about her forgetfulness. However, Jackie took all the teasing in stride and was very patient with her classmates. She got along well with everyone. According to Mrs. Hall, everyone liked her and the girls in the class always requested to sit next to her.

Jackie’s favorite class was Mrs. Hall’s history class and Mrs. Hall was her favorite teacher. However, she liked all of her teachers, and even listed the librarian as one of her favorites. She stated that they were cool, funny, and made her feel smarter. She described history as awesome and a place where she was able to show off her “intellectual intelligence.” She was entertained by the past and its stories. History was a bit of a mystery to her. She thought that by learning history it would prepare her to be a good citizen because she would “be able to learn from the mistakes from the past and be prepared for when it (past mistakes) happen in the future.” She said that she was glad she lived in America because it was a country filled with liberty and democracy.

In her free time Jackie liked to watch movies with her mother, play basketball with her neighbor, talk about politics, history, and world events and go to acting school. Her favorite thing to do was act because she felt it was fun. She was able to act when her mother would drive her to her acting classes once a week.

Jackie described the thing that she did best was to explain things, and talk intelligently whereas the thing she did the worst was doing math. She said that she “couldn’t focus on math and that her brain did not catch on to it as much as other subjects.” Jackie had serious problems with math classes. She failed all three trimesters of her seventh grade year. In the second month of school of her eight grade year she also had received a failing notice in math (as well as in science and history). During classroom observations, it appeared as if Jackie was rarely focused and attentive, especially with new teachers.
During a classroom observation Jackie walked into class with her black backpack draped across her right shoulder, her white collared uniform shirt untucked, speaking animatedly with another student. When she arrived, she immediately went to the teacher and asked where she was sitting. The teacher said, “In the corner, where you usually sit.” Jackie slowly walked to her seat, talked with other students, said she had only had three hours of sleep and was cranky and thought she was seeing things. The teacher began class with an explanation of disciplinary procedures that had taken place the day before. He was a long term substitute in science class who was filling the position until they found a new, permanent teacher.

As the teacher was talking, Jackie raised her hand and asked him how much he got paid. The teacher ignored her, and continued his discipline explanation. Jackie applauded him. She listened to him, or appeared to be listening to him, then began playing with her hands over her backpack which was on her desk. The students were quiet. Jackie turned to the student next to her and began talking to her. Soon she raised her hand again, asking if they got two semesters of science or just one because it was an elective. The substitute teacher did not know. However, this sparked a discussion on elective classes. Jackie told the class about Home Economics and how much she liked to cook but elaborated that her mother wouldn’t let her in the kitchen. The teacher laughed and the home economics lecture continued.

Jackie bit her backpack and snapped her fingers while the teacher talked. She raised her hand again but was told to wait. She laid on her backpack, snapping her fingers in front of her. The teacher looked at her and said “what?” The class looked at her, and
Jackie laughed. She took out her science book, and the teacher began his science lesson, fifteen minutes into class. Jackie continued to flip through the pages of the science book.

The teacher began a science experiment by discussing the dangers of fire. The teacher lit a fire then snuffed the fire out with a glass jar. Jackie raised her hand and asked what a fire marshal was. The teacher ignored the fire marshal question, but Jackie continued and soon a dialogue between Jackie and the teacher ensued.

Jackie: “Isn’t the jar gonna break?”
Teacher: “It’s not hot enough to break.”
Jackie: “What happens if you pour cold water in it?”
Teacher: “The condensation will make dew.”
Jackie: “Isn’t glass hotter with fire in it? Doesn’t it burn? “

The teacher abruptly stopped the conversation and continued with his lesson: “What I want to show you is that gas is around you.” Jackie stared into space, then watched the teacher’s assistant. Jackie watched different people in the class, rubbed her nose and flipped through the science book as the teacher lectured about Thomas Edison’s inventions while performing the experiment.

The class became noisy, and they begged the teacher to do the experiment again. He did, but Jackie yelled “It smells! Ug!” and began fanning herself with a book. She laid down on her backpack again, and began rummaging through her friends backpack, removing her friend’s notebook, homework assignments, and pictures, examining everything she removed. The teacher had moved on to another experiment, this time with balloons and gas. The balloon popped, and Jackie gave the teacher a funny look. She raised her hand and said “I hate that smell” and left her hand still raised in the air while
the teacher began passing out the balloons needed for the experiment. She yelled out his name, he said “Yes, Jackie” and she began another conversation with him about a homework assignment, and extra credit.

The class was to begin their assignment, but Jackie blew up her balloon and began playing volleyball. The room turned to chaos as students popped balloons, shot air from the compressor, and let balloons fly everywhere. It the midst of this, Jackie stood up and walked to the teacher and began another conversation. Back at her desk she named her balloon “Bob” and wanted markers to draw his face. All students were walking around the classroom, while Jackie remained seated at her desk drawing a face for “Bob.” When she finished his face she walked around showing him to everyone. She began to talk to her balloon. Another student yelled at Jackie from across the classroom, wanting Jackie to join her. As they joined one another, they debated other balloon names: Chico, Matthew. Soon the discussion turned to putting “Bob” in the microwave.

Jackie asked the teacher what would happen if they put “Bob” in the microwave. The teacher in turn asked the class if they remembered “Charles Law.” No one answered; then Jackie said “It increases in temperature, and then the temperature of this lowers.” The teacher then asked what would happen. Jackie said “It would explode.” The teacher continued to talk to the two girls, but they were no longer listening, they were talking together. The bell rang, and they raced to their seats to pack up and leave.

Jackie’s citizenship grades were slowly dropping to “N” grades. Although Jackie was never a trouble maker she would talk non-stop which soon became a behavior problem for many teachers. However, Mrs. Hall said that she was able to cope okay with Jackie’s behavior problem. She said that she and Jackie got along very well and felt that Jackie
was not disruptive or anything, just not organized. For example Jackie would forget to put her name on her paper or turn in work. In a group setting she said that Jackie was very positive and cooperative and that she had a good sense of humor. However, if it was a one on one situation with a peer she would be productive as long as it was a positive situation. If she happened to be paired with a student who was lazy or unfocused than Jackie would follow that lead. Jackie could earn “A” or “B” grades if she did her assignments. For Jackie, getting bad grades did not seem to be too much of a concern. She was more concerned with the social aspect of both her school and her home life.

During lunch time observations, Jackie walked around alone, and visited various groups of people, talking, laughing, and hugging every new friend that she encountered. She was always friendly, in a good mood, and shared her laughter. Although she walked alone, she never stayed by herself for any length of time, she simply visited different groups of people. By the close of lunch, she always had a friend walk with her to her next class. Jackie was not observed eating during lunch at school or during any of her classes. However, she described her favorite foods as tuna, fillet (without the bread—it’s nasty!), apples, pears, peaches, or any fruit, and that she occasionally liked Taco Bell. Jackie described nutritional foods as salads, chicken, and broccoli. Her mother said that Jackie ate nutritional foods more so than junk foods. She repeatedly emphasized how much Jackie loved apples, and that she would buy a case of apples for Jackie.

Jackie described her best experience as spending quality time with her mother. She enjoyed talking with her mother, or watching movies with her. She felt like her mother was like her best friend. However, Jackie’s worst experience was traumatic for her; she saw her neighbor being run over by car. She was outside and she saw the person drive
the car over his back and kill him. She said that was the worst day of her life. Although
the two experiences differ drastically, she claimed that each one has had a tremendous
effect on her, and she thought about both on a daily basis. Nevertheless, Jackie always
appeared to be happy and cheerful.

The first formal interview (Appendix C) examined the reciprocal interaction between
Jackie’s personal factors (likes, dislikes, and hobbies) and behavior (attitudes and
feelings) in order to understand how they related to the school environment. In addition,
Jackie’s personal relationships with both classmates and friends were examined in order
to understand the social influence on the behaviors and personal characteristics of Jackie.

Jackie described her school as being “alright.” She thought that it was better than
other schools. She said that “you learn” and that there were “some good teachers.” A
typical day for Jackie was to arrive at school on time, go to general music, where the
music teacher gave the class fifteen minutes to practice or talk. Jackie would play the
recorder or talk to her seventh grade neighbor. She would then go to her boring second
period science class. She said that the class made her head hurt. She would sit down and
talk in science. After science she had physical education followed by United States
History, which she liked because they would “talk about things.” To Jackie, History was
interesting which made it “funner and better to learn.” After History class was lunch
where she would hang out with her “loser friends” under the big tree. They would sit
and talk to people, do jokes, and just socialize. She enjoyed being around her friends
because they were funny. Additionally, she liked hanging out with guys more than girls
because guys were less dramatic.
After lunch she would go to fifth period Language Arts, followed by sixth period Math. She thought that her Math teacher was a good teacher. She was proud of the fact that she could divide. She whispered, “They never taught me how to divide…I gave up on math in fifth grade.” After sixth period, Jackie would not always go directly home because sometimes her mother would be late picking her up from school. Consequently, Jackie would stay and hang out with her friends and classmates in the library after school, talking and waiting. Typically her mother would pick her up about a half an hour after school let out. Jackie never did homework in the library after school; rather she would do it prior to her classes, if she remembered it at all. During a lunch time observation, in the middle of a big group under the tree, Jackie sat down, pulled out her notebook and attempted to complete her homework.

Mrs. Fregoso explained that Jackie was mad because she had to attend school. Everyday Jackie didn’t want to go to school. She told her mother that the teachers didn’t like her. She complained about her teachers all of the time. The school had not hired a science teacher for Jackie’s eight grade science class, and Jackie told her mother that the substitute in the classroom didn’t do anything and it was frustrating for her. When Jackie’s mom would ask how her grades were Jackie would reply “I’m fine.” Jackie’s mother knew that she had a “D” in something, but she really didn’t know how Jackie was doing. “She did good in elementary school” Mrs. Fregoso said.

Jackie would prepare for a test by reading. She utilized a summary that she would make from the readings to study for the test. She felt that it was easier form her than it was for most people. She believed that if she read it for just five minutes she would get an “A” on the test. If she did well on the test she would “feel smart.” However, Jackie’s
G.P.A. for the first trimester of her eighth grade year was a 1.50. She earned “C” grades in all subjects except for a “D” in Science and an “F” once again in math.

Jackie declared that she had four favorite teachers, including the librarian. She liked the librarian because he made her feel funny. She would visit him after school because with him it was “funny times.” She liked this year’s history teacher, Mrs. Hall because she was fun and made her feel smart. However, she also liked last year’s social science teacher because to her, he was smarter than what people knew and she liked him because he told her that anything was possible. She said that she was smart in his class and thought that perhaps other classmates perceived her as nerdy in his class because she was smart. Lastly, she liked her physical education teacher because she made her laugh a lot and laughing was good for the self esteem.

During a physical education classroom observation that was being taught by a guest kickboxing instructor, Jackie did not show up for class on time. Another student said that Jackie had lost her shorts while she was dressing out. Ten minutes after physical education class started, with the warm-ups complete, Jackie arrived at class. She joined the class and performed jab moves, stood guard with her hands up by her face, then performed kicks. She raised her hand and asked the instructor “Do we have time to kick or are we just going through the moves?” Instead of answering, the teacher demonstrated the right-footed kicks. Jackie performed five right footed kicks, with no balance problems, but then lost her balance when she attempted left footed kicks. While helping another student, the instructor turned her back to Jackie. When Jackie saw this, she immediately began to “play kick” another student. Class continued, and once again, Jackie raised her hand, saying something to the teacher, who ignored her. Jackie didn’t
listen to the instructions that followed, and wound up just spinning in a circle. The teacher asked what she was doing, and the class laughed, then she laughed. Her balance was off, and she missed every other one of five kicks.

The class continued in this manner, with Jackie not listening, the class speeding ahead on moves, and people yelling and teasing Jackie. The class did not know left from right and consequently they continued to run into each other while performing moves. When sliding to the left or to the right for a four count, followed by a punch, Jackie could not perform the move. She could only slide three times, then perform the punch. The teacher moved from four side steps, punch, to four side steps, kick. Jackie kicked before the command, and kicked the boy in front of her in the butt. Jackie was embarrassed and received one on one instruction from the teacher of the class. After the one on one instruction she lost interest, played patty-cake with another student and then by herself. Jackie did not perform well in a kick boxing activity unit in her physical education class.

Describing physical education class, Jackie said that is was “funner than a regular class.” She declared that she was mainly a participant in the class, but thought that she might have been “5% of a trouble maker.” She enjoyed the activities, but her favorite part of class was the stretching because “It makes you think. It makes you think, ouch, this hurts.” She claimed that if she didn’t do exercises that she felt empty and she didn’t feel good. Her mother said that she and Jackie used to walk together everyday but stopped because of daylight savings time. She thought that maybe Jackie would go outside to play soccer about once a week but that she did not like many physical activities.
Jackie said that shopping with her mother was her favorite activity. She was a self-proclaimed “shop-a-holic.” She said that every week they would go shopping. They liked to rummage through the discount stores, searching for a bargain. She spent $130 on clothing the week before. In her free time, she liked spending quality time with her mother, and other than shopping, her favorite activity was to watch a movie with her. She said that everyday she had free time from the time she got out of school until the time she went to sleep.

Jackie professed that she needed to get more organized with her homework so that she could do better in school. She also proclaimed that she usually didn’t know what was going on in class. She said that her Language Arts teacher though that she was dumb, so she would just wave and stare at him. However, she acted differently around different teachers. If her teacher was a substitute she would compliment them. However, her actions depended on how her teachers acted with her. Sometimes her teachers made her feel lazy except when she was learning, then her head would start to burn, burn with knowledge because she liked to learn.

Jackie said that she treated her classmates friendly, even if they were mean. She felt that it wasn’t cool to be mean. She heard one of her classmates say “she’s probably thinking about food.” She felt that they didn’t even know her if they said things like that. She usually tried to make friends, depending on who the people were. Mrs. Hall felt that Jackie treated her classmates with respect and that she was very patient with them. She felt that the same was true for how Jackie’s classmates treated her. Jackie said that sometimes her classmates made her feel smarter in class and Mrs. Hall thought that they treated Jackie just like a regular kid. Jackie felt that during lunch her classmates were not
mean to her. She said that she socialized a lot and that she liked a lot of people and a lot of people liked her. After school, Jackie would go to the library and hang out with the librarian and other classmates and have fun.

Mrs. Hall said that Jackie teased her classmates about dumb, ordinary everyday things and that Jackie would get teased about her forgetfulness. She said that she had never heard anyone tease Jackie about her weight. However, Jackie’s mother said that Jackie did get teased about her weight in school. Jackie said that the teasing didn’t bring her down, that she was always peppy. She liked the fact that her classmates all had different personalities and she really didn’t dislike anything about them except that sometimes they “acted-up and were ignorant, like they didn’t know what was going on.” Mrs. Hall thought that Jackie disliked when they were outwardly disrespectful to her or to other students and felt that what Jackie liked about her classmates was their kindness and their humor. Mrs. Hall claimed that a typical day at school for Jackie with her classmates would be a day full of laughter and friendly teasing. Jackie claimed that a typical day at school with her classmates was to not pay attention when they acted-up in class because it would “hurt her head” and she would “feel empty” if she listened to them when they acted-up.

She felt that there was not one most popular kid in her class, but felt that in sixth period it was Geovani. She thought that he was popular because he acted-up and others really liked that. She did not look up to him, but felt he was smart all the same. Mrs. Hall felt that a popular person wouldn’t much matter to Jackie because she liked everyone. She thought, however that because Jackie was tall and overweight with really
big features, Jackie may be impressed by the type of attitude a popular person would possess.

Mrs. Hall thought that Jackie would describe a successful person as one who did all of their work and one who was organized. She felt that this would be the type of person that Jackie would look up to. Jackie concurred with Mrs. Hall and described a successful person as “someone who does their work, someone who is smart and pays attention, with a serious, good attitude.” She said that she would look up to this type of person.

When asked to describe her relationship with her friends Jackie said that “they’re dorks and they’re weird, that’s why I like them.” She said that they were not dramatic and that she was able to be herself around them. She asserted that she didn’t really have a best friend, but thought that her mother was at the “highest level” of friendship because her mother knew her, and she was her mom. She said that she spent all of her time with her mother and that she made her feel like she wanted to take care of her. She thought that her mother was funny because she made her laugh.

Activities that she did with her friends included talking and going to “bother other people” such as the school librarian. Her friends made her feel loveable. She thought that they influenced her to act crazy because she was crazy. She was very comfortable with them because they acted their own age. She thought that she was a good friend.

Jackie’s mother said that Jackie did not have many friends. She said that sometimes Jackie and one or two friends would go to the mall and take pictures. Sometimes Jackie went to the movies on Sunday’s with a couple of friends. Her mother said that Jackie didn’t really like to do many activities except for watching television and playing on the computer.
Jackie would eat with her friends if they went somewhere like to the movies or something. They typically would eat hot Cheetos, skittles or other candy, even though Jackie’s favorite foods were generally healthy. She liked fruit, tuna, fillet, pasta salad, macaroni and cheese, and occasionally Taco Bell. Jackie said that she did not eat breakfast but would eat lunch when she got home from school, like tuna with lemon in salad, or sometimes she would wait for her mother to make something. At home she ate fruit like crazy. Her mother said that Jackie ate a lot of fruit not because she was trying to diet, but because she liked to eat fruit like: apples, grapes, pears, papaya or whatever they had. She said that sometimes Jackie tried to eat only tuna or ham to diet and that Jackie did not eat a lot of pizza because they knew it was too fat. Jackie said that she got confused as to when dinner was, but said that she liked to eat cereal for dinner.

Jackie and her friends might have done “typical teenage” activities together like dancing, kareokeeing, or partying together, but they did not participate in physical activities together. They did discuss diet and exercise, and Jackie said that one day she and a friend went running in the park to get some exercise, but they kept their hood pulled up so that no one would see them.

Jackie’s second formal interview provided insight into familial influences and the interaction between Jackie and her home environment and also her community (Appendix D). Both Jackie and her mother were interviewed, and were asked relatively the same questions regarding their family and their community.

Jackie lived with her mother, father, and her two year old brother. In addition to her brother, Jackie had two older sisters that lived away from her parents’ home. She claimed that her parents were pretty old fashioned, especially her father and his view
points. She said that her father was smart but stubborn. They argued a lot about the Nazi regime because Jackie enjoyed discussing politics and historical events. Jackie claimed her little brother was just like her dad. He had just turned two, and Jackie maintained that he hated her and would scream when she touched him. Jackie described her oldest sister as a "crab—like a hermit" because she didn’t go out. She lived in Los Angeles but the immediate family never saw her and she didn’t call them. The middle girl, according to Jackie, was crazy. She ran away from home when she was fifteen, upsetting the family. She never came back home and remained in Los Angeles. When Jackie last saw her she was with a bald, older guy and the two just had a baby together.

Extended family members lived close by and they would often get together on the weekends. Mrs. Fregoso came from a large family of four brothers and four sisters. Each one of her brothers or sisters had three or four children, so, the family was quite large. Jackie’s father’s family all lived in Mexico and they did not see his side of the family very often. Jackie’s cousin used to live down the street. When she and her cousin were younger she and Jackie were very close; they were even born on the same day. However, during their sixth grade year, her cousin moved a couple of cities away from Jackie and her family. Jackie was sad that they had moved so far away from her as she really didn’t have any close friends or family members to play with near her home.

Every summer Jackie’s extended family got together for the annual camping trip. Jackie said it was like a family reunion with her mother’s side of the family. They used to always camp by a lake in southern California, but for the past few years they moved the trip up to a campground in Northern California where there were rocky hills. Jackie said that her dad liked to go places and would go wherever the family went. In addition
to the big summer trip with the extended family, sometimes they camped on the beach. However, mostly, as a family they would stay local on the weekends and shop or go to the movies. They used to go the movies a lot together but Jackie’s mother no longer went because she was claustrophobic.

Jackie felt that her family did not influence her decisions with school. She recognized that her parents had some influence, but she felt that they questioned themselves as parents because her sister ran away when she was fifteen. As a result, Jackie liked to think about herself a lot and always tried to figure out what was to her benefit. Jackie said that her parents told her that they knew it all and knew what was best for her, but she understood that they made mistakes. Her mother would tell her to get good grades, but she didn’t, and she felt her dad would never be happy with whatever she did. If she got an “A” he would expect an “A+.” She felt that she irritated her father.

Since Jackie considered her mother to be her friend, she valued her mother’s opinion greatly. She felt that her mother was always right about her friends, for example who was good or bad. As a result, she listened to her mother about her friends. Her mother said that Jackie had many friends at school, but none really at home. Further, Jackie never usually went outside once she was home from school.

Jackie usually arrived home from school at about 2:30PM because her mom was normally a half an hour late picking her up. Jackie’s school ended at 1:30 and her mother would pick her up at approximately 2:00PM. Upon her arrival home, Jackie would throw her backpack somewhere and would either go straight to her room or to the kitchen to eat tuna. Jackie said that her mother had to open the tuna for her or “she would cut herself with it.” Her mother said that Jackie was usually watching television, reading, listening
to music or playing on the computer at home. Jackie said that she would watch a movie or cartoons for about an hour, until 3:30. At 3:30 she would start on her homework. If she hadn’t finished her homework she would finish it before dinner. Her mother said that they would ask Jackie if her homework was done, but they did not check to see if it was or not. When she completed her homework she would usually read, talk to her mom and eat dinner.

There was not a “typical dinner” at Jackie’s house. Her mother said that Jackie was trying to loose weight so when she arrived home from school she would eat tuna and lettuce. Later she would have cereal and that would be all for the rest of the evening. Sometimes Jackie would take her food to her room to eat, but her parents did not like it when she did, so they normally would make her come to the table. Jackie said that her mother would make dinner and that they would have salad, maybe chicken. She explained that they would only eat meat twice a week because meat was “bad for you.” There was not a certain time to eat in the Fregoso household, just whenever the food was ready. Jackie remarked “if it is there, it is there. If it’s not, it’s not.” She said that her father would eat in the living room at the table and that she would either eat at the living room at table as well or in the kitchen at the table.

After Jackie ate dinner she would shower and then go to bed. Jackie said she had to shower before bed because if didn’t she did not feel good. Also, she had to have a water bottle to sleep with. If she didn’t have her water bottle she would throw up because she would get too overheated during the night. She did not have a set bedtime, but her mother would get mad if she was up too late and she would threaten to wake her up really early the next day unless she went to bed.
Sometimes a typical day at home during the week for Jackie would be to not go straight home, but rather to go shopping after school with her mother. If they did not go straight home, her mother would bring her tuna or something to eat before they went and Jackie would eat it in the car. Jackie said that she and her mother went shopping a lot.

The family was a part of California’s Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Supplemental Nutrition Program which was a supplemental food and nutrition program for low-income women with children under age five who had a nutritional risk. Being a part of the federally administered WIC program, Jackie’s family was provided with specific supplemental nutritious food such as milk, cereal, and baby food during the short term nutritional intervention. Unlike a general food stamp program, where individuals were able to buy food for the household, this program provided the family with items specific for the nutritional development of Jackie’s little brother. Utilizing the WIC coupons as well as cash, Jackie’s mother did the grocery shopping for the family. Jackie did not have an influence over the food that was purchased. However, sometimes Jackie would go shopping with her mother and pick things as she wandered around the store. Her mother typically purchased chicken, ham, vegetables, and assorted fruit. If Jackie were to do the family grocery shopping she would buy orange juice, papaya, all different kinds of apples, as many different types as the store had, coco crispies, strawberries and chicken.

Jackie was aware of how to read the nutritional information contained on the food items. Her mother said that they tried to follow the food triangle that was on the cereal boxes. They tried to eat fruit, vegetables, and cereal.
Jackie’s responsibilities at home were to clean her room as well as the living room when she arrived home from school. Her mother alleged that since Jackie’s chores were not on a set schedule Jackie did not want to do anything when she got home because she was lazy. However, Jackie said that she generally would do whatever there was to do, or whatever her parents told her to do. She would also work for money. She said that her father would get aggravated when she was doing something so he would tell her to go away.

Jackie’s mother said that during the day on a typical weekend Jackie could be found watching television in the morning. She loved cartoons. If her mother asked her to go somewhere, Jackie would tell her to wait, that she was watching her favorite show. She would wait until that show was over, say “let’s go” and Jackie would start to watch the next show, claiming it was her favorite. Jackie had a different perception of her weekend. She said that on a typical weekend she would take a notebook outside with her in the morning and observe people. She asked people questions. People thought that she was kind of weird and creepy, but she would observe all day. Then, she would watch scary movies in the evening. Jackie said that her mother was “into the whole supernatural thing.”

Jackie went to the doctor once a year, which neither she nor her mother deemed as visiting the doctor regularly. Her mother said that they only went when someone was sick. Jackie said that the only health problems she had were frequent colds and asthma. Jackie’s mother said that when Jackie ran sometimes it was hard for her to breath. However, no asthma attacks were ever witnessed in two years of physical education with Jackie.
Mrs. Fregoso said her health was good, and Jackie believed her mother to be healthy. Jackie was concerned with her father because she felt that he ate too much meat. Jackie’s uncle was older than her mother and he had heart disease. But he was the only family member that had any health problems. Jackie’s grandmother was 80 and she was very healthy. She lived an entire city away from Jackie but would walk over to visit the family.

Although Jackie kept asking to go to church, her parents intentionally put her off about going. Jackie said the last time she went to church she was eight years old and the Pope had just died. She thought that she should go to church. Her father joked with her and said that she should go to get the evilness out of her. Jackie said that one time an apparition of the Virgin Mary appeared on her door.

Jackie was not involved in any park and recreation activities. At the age of eleven she stopped doing karate, but she was unclear as to where the karate lessons took place. She did remember doing karaoke at the park in the third grade but other than that she did not participate in any park and recreation activities. Every now and then her mother said that Jackie would play the inside games at the park, and that sometimes she would paint there. Overall, she said that Jackie did not want to play at the park because she was fat.

Jackie was involved with acting school. However, her mother said it was very expensive and it was too far away but the school was only five miles from their home and Jackie felt that her mother complained too much. For Jackie it was fun and exciting to go to acting school. She was learning how to perform in improvisational theatre and to act in plays. Her role was that of a “newbie” because this was her first experience in acting. She was fine with her role as the “newbie” because she was not shy. She explained that
a lot of children went there because they were shy and they wanted to be more outgoing while others went there to build up their self-esteem. The program was something that she truly enjoyed and it was fun for her. Her favorite part of participating in acting class was talking to people. “They talk to me about hippie days—the 90’s” she said.

The third and final interview (Appendix E) focused on the personal desire for change and the perspective for making such change possible. Jackie saw her self making personal changes by taking responsibility for her own actions because this would “make her stronger for her own life.” Academically Jackie wanted to start earning straight “A’s” because she knew that she had slacked off a lot. Socially Jackie said that she stayed alone too much thinking and that she wanted to start making more friends. Physically she thought that she would like to run in order to try and get healthier. However, Jackie was more concerned with the size of her breasts. She believed that the “size of boobs block your view of the person” therefore, she wanted to shrink wrap her breasts to make them smaller if they grew to be too big.

Jackie had many visions of herself in the future. Firstly, she wanted to continue living with her parents until she was thirty. She also wanted to have two children. She saw herself as “really, really rich;” rich enough to have a nanny. She wanted to help people by working at the United Nations. She was very interested in helping others in different countries. Lastly, Jackie said that she wanted people to remember her when she died. In the future, her history teacher saw Jackie married with children because she perceived Jackie to be a nurturing person.

Jackie thought that high school would be “crazy” next year. She was excited about attending and had some definite ideas of what high school would be like. The first year
she thought would be crazy while she held the notion that the second year would be a party year. She considered the juniors and the seniors to be more emotionally mature. When she was in elementary school she thought that students in junior high school were grown up, but she didn’t feel grown up at all, and thought that when she was in high school she would be on her way to becoming an adult. Mrs. Hall assumed that Jackie would be alright in high school. She felt that she would ride the wave and make it through but that she would be no great success.

In order for her to be successful in high school Jackie believed that she had to stop being crazy in class. She thought that she should do her homework as well as her class work, and she felt that she should sometimes study. Mrs. Hall was of the opinion that Jackie needed to become more organized in class; she further clarified her statement with, “Jackie needs to become more organized period.”

Jackie definitely saw herself attending college. She wanted to go to Princeton, and asked how people got scholarships. Mrs. Hall said that Jackie could possibly go to college, perhaps beginning at a community college. She believed that Jackie’s lack of organization and motivation would stop her from going to a four year university. Mrs. Hall thought that Jackie’s family would be supportive of her goals. Jackie said that her family would be supportive of her goals depending on what they were. She remembered an argument that she and her father had over the fact that she wanted to be an FBI agent. Her dad told her that she would get shot and that she could be something better. According to Jackie, her father had old fashioned thinking about women.

Jackie thought that her family was supportive of her school activities, but she wasn’t sure. As long as her parents did not get any phone calls she felt that everything was
good. Mrs. Hall did not know if Jackie’s family was supportive or not of Jackie’s school activities, but she never saw Jackie lacking for anything. She perceived Jackie to be a happy kid who liked people.

An ideal day for Jackie would be to wake up at 6:00AM. Shower, eat something and get to school on time with her homework ready. She wanted to do well in class, keep quite and accomplish something by the end of the day. Ideally she wanted better grades and more friends. Her teacher believed that an ideal day for Jackie included knowing what the assignments were, writing them down and turning them in. A perfect day for Jackie would include keeping track of everything all day, not losing anything and not leaving anything behind.

Mrs. Hall thought that praise would be an ideal reward for Jackie, but Jackie’s ideal reward was to accomplish something that she sat out to accomplish. Success was important to Jackie as she felt that it “was a reflection of everything she did to achieve it.”

Jackie said that when she grew up she wanted to do something with human rights. She wanted to do something she enjoyed, something where she could help people like being a social worker or a school psychologist. In order to accomplish this goal she was currently reading a book on abnormal psychology (or she was until she lost it in the locker room at school). When asked what she could do to accomplish her goals she answered that she needed to believe in herself. She thought that it would help her to achieve her goals if she reflected back on her parents because she didn’t want them to feel bad if she wasn’t successful. She said that when she wanted to quit when things got hard she would think about all the people she could help, and continue on. She also
acknowledged that she needed to study and to know ahead of time what to study. Additionally, she needed to forget about boyfriends and parties until after she obtained her degree. She said that if she didn’t accomplish anything she could become a nun.

In ten years her history teacher saw Jackie as a high school graduate who was possibly making her way into a State college or a University. In ten years Jackie saw herself in college still studying. In twenty years she saw herself with a child, helping others, working at whatever she wanted to be feeling like she made it to the career she wanted. She thought she would be worrying about adult things like bills. Her teacher said that she saw Jackie as being happily married in twenty years.

Physically in ten years Jackie thought that she would grow taller and thinner. She thought that she would look similar to what she looked like now, but would have bigger breasts. She wanted to grow her hair long so she could donate her hair. In ten years Mrs. Hall believed that Jackie wouldn’t be much different than today, except she might be thinner, but not taller. In twenty years Jackie thought that she would look older, with only a few wrinkles but still be young looking. She though she would look like her family and have a round face and worry lines. She didn’t want wrinkles so she thought that she would have Botox injections. Mrs. Hall thought that Jackie’s looks would depend upon if Jackie had children or not. She felt that if Jackie did not have children she would pretty much look the same as she did today. However, if she did have children she felt that Jackie would have a continual weight problem.
Case Analysis

The purpose of this study was to determine the behavioral, environmental, and personal influences on the health status of four overweight and/or obese Hispanic female adolescents utilizing Albert Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory. Bandura (1977, 1986, & 1989) defined the Social Cognitive Theory as a reciprocal interaction of personal factors, behavior, and the environment. These interactions do not occur simultaneously, and some sources of influence may be stronger than others; differing with each individual, behavior and situation in which the behavior occurs (Bandura, 1989).

According to Bandura (1986), the environment is not a fixed property; rather it is inoperative until it is actualized by an action or actions. Behavior determines what part of the potential environment will become the actual environment. Further describing the reciprocal interaction between the environment and behavior, Bandura (1986) explained that the environmental influences partially determine how behavior will be shaped and activated. Environmental influences may affect individuals apart from their behavior, as when thoughts and feelings are modified through modeling, teaching and social influences. Additionally, by observable characteristics, people may affect their social situation due to preconceived notions of their social status, thereby demonstrating the reciprocal interaction between personal characteristics and environmental influences. Additionally, ones personal factors: cognitive, what people think; the affective, what people believe and feel; as well as the biological events of individuals may shape and direct behavior. Expectations, beliefs, self-perceptions, goals and intentions also shape and direct behavior.
In this study, the environment was held constant while the personal factors and the behaviors of each individual were examined across all areas. The environment was threefold: physical, situational and social. The physical environment included the actual location, whereas the situation generally referred to the existing conditions or circumstances of that particular moment or place, and the social aspect of the environment referred to the relating society, its organization, community, and the interaction of its people. Behavior was viewed as the way in which a person responded or reacted to a certain set of conditions including social behavior, family, health related behaviors and task related behaviors. Personal factors referred to the cognitive, affective and biological events of each individual and included perceived self-efficacy, general attitude, personal responsibility, knowledge, and personal expectations.

The following acronyms are representative of the data source(s) utilized to determine the personal factors and behaviors of the participants in relation to the environment. CF=Cumulative Files, Q=Questionnaire, OC=Observation Classroom, OPE=Observation Physical Education, OLT=Observation Lunch Time, I1=First Participant Interview, I2=Second Participant Interview, I3=Third Participant Interview, IP=Parent Interview, IT=Teacher Interview and II=Informal Interview with the Participant Figure 4.3: Jeannette’s Personal Factors Home, Community and Church Environment.
Figure 6.1 Jackie’s Personal Factors General School and Physical Education Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SELF-EFFICACY (Q, II, IT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL SCHOOL</td>
<td>Sees herself as smart And one who speaks intelligently Makes people laugh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: School buildings and surrounding areas on campus Situational: Actions self-perception, interactions and school events Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS</td>
<td>Able to perform activities Happy, peppy Enjoyed class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Locker room, field area, courts, MPR, and roll call numbers Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, interactions and class activity Social: Friends, classmates and Physical Educators</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6.2 Jackie's Personal Factors Academic Classes and Lunch Time at School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SELF-EFFICACY (Q, II, IT, OLT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GENERAL ATTITUDE (Q, II, IT, OC, OLT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (Q, II, IP, IT, OPE, OC)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KNOWLEDGE (II, IT, OLT, CF)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS (12, II,)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMIC CLASSES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, and class work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She felt smart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She felt like she contributed to the class discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Happy, cheerful in class</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liked to learn</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Favorite Class: History</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upset about science class</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never really knew what was going on, had a hard time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>keeping up</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rarely did homework</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Got along well with classmates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forgetful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Could get better grades if she got organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected to do well in junior high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUNCH TIME AT SCHOOL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Lunch line, lunch tables, quad area, and basketball courts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self perceptions, conversations, actions, interactions with others, lunch events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates, and school staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Was a good friend to friends at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hung out with other girls from modified physical class</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>among other people</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Used humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Happy to hang out with friends (boys) at lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She didn't look up to popular people but looked up to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>successful people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Worked on homework sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Didn't eat at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Had to pay full price for lunch</td>
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</table>
Figure 6.3 Jackie’s Personal Factors Home and Community Environment

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOME</strong></td>
<td><strong>SELF-EFFICACY (Q, 12, PI)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>Enjoyed movies with mother and talking politics with dad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House, yard, neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Actions and perceptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Enjoyed family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family:</td>
<td>Annoyed with siblings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immediate and extended, friends, and neighbors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL ATTITUDE (Q, 12, IP)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (12, IP, II)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KNOWLEDGE (Q, IT, IP, II, CF)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS (12, IP, II)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>Able to act/perform well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td>Happy, willing to work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Expecting to be a star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classmates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Enjoyed movies with mother and talking politics with dad
- Enjoyed family
- Annoyed with siblings
- Didn’t do chore because she had no set schedule
- Lived with mother, father, and little brother, two older sisters lived away from home.
- Jackie was a daughter, sister, and an aunt.
- Jackie had her own room
- Both English and Spanish spoken in the home
- The family was close with Jackie’s mother’s side of the family, not her father’s
- Mother was her best friend
- Family not influential on Jackie’s decisions
- Expecting to be a star
Figure 6.4 Jackie’s Personal Factors Church and Future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SELF-EFFICACY (I3, IP, IT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GENERAL ATTITUDE (I3, IP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (I3, IP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KNOWLEDGE (I3, IP, II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS (I2, IP, II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHURCH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTURE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td>Beliefs, goals, and intentions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Family; immediate and extended, friends, neighbors and teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bright future, working to help others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Optimistic: accomplish something with her life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Felt that she should go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wanted to be remembered when she died.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wanted to do well in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To become a social worker or school psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Make more friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Get healthier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In college still studying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In 20 years, a college graduate, working in a profession she liked, helping others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6.5 Jackie’s Behaviors General School and Physical Education Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (11, IT, OC, OPE, II)</th>
<th>FAMILY (12, IT, IP)</th>
<th>HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIORS (12, IP, OPE)</th>
<th>TASK RELATED BEHAVIORS (12, II, OLT, OPE, CF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL SCHOOL</td>
<td>Loud, boisterous</td>
<td>She told family doing well in school (was not)</td>
<td>No physical activities at school.</td>
<td>Inconsistent G.P.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: School buildings and surrounding areas on campus</td>
<td>Got along well with everyone</td>
<td></td>
<td>No physical activities with friends</td>
<td>High rate of absences and tardies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Actions self-perception, interactions and school events</td>
<td>Remained after school daily, hung out in library.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Often out of school uniform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td>Teased classmates and got teased back—did not bother her</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Failed math throughout junior high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS</td>
<td>Talked with anyone and everyone.</td>
<td>Failed California fitness test.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Off task frequently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Locker room, field area, courts, MPR, and roll call numbers</td>
<td>Used humor to avoid teasing.</td>
<td>Unable to run without physical difficulty.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unfocused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, interactions and class activity.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Has a problem balancing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Participated sporadically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates and Physical Educators</td>
<td></td>
<td>Never achieved target heart rate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6.6 Jackie’s Behaviors Academic Class and Lunch Time at School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (I2, IT, OC, OLT, IL)</th>
<th>FAMILY (I2, IP, IL)</th>
<th>HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIORS (OLT)</th>
<th>TASK RELATED BEHAVIORS (IT, II, OC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACADEMIC CLASS</strong></td>
<td>Physical: Classrooms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situational:</strong></td>
<td>Self-perceptions, actions, and class work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social:</strong></td>
<td>Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td>Talking non-stop in class.</td>
<td>Mother assumed Jackie was doing well</td>
<td>Lack of organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequently out of seat.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rarely on task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Used humor to prevent teasing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unfocused, distracted and inattentive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>She liked her classmates and they liked her</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inconsistent with assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequently interrupted classroom instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LUNCH TIME AT SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td>Physical: Lunch line, lunch tables, quad area, and basketball courts</td>
<td>Friendly, visited many groups of people</td>
<td>Did not eat lunch at school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situational:</strong></td>
<td>Self-perceptions, conversations, actions, interactions with others, lunch events</td>
<td>Hugged every person she encountered.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social:</strong></td>
<td>Friends, classmates, and school staff</td>
<td>Always with two or more people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6.7 Jackie’s Behaviors Home, Community, Church and Future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (13, IP, II)</th>
<th>FAMILY (13, IP, II)</th>
<th>HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIORS (13, IP, II)</th>
<th>TASK RELATED BEHAVIORS (13, IP, II)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOME</td>
<td>Mother was best friend</td>
<td>Mother did grocery shopping generally alone.</td>
<td>Ate fruit exclusively for snacks; dieting</td>
<td>Watched T.V. for 6 hours daily, did not do chores regularly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>Not many friends outside of school</td>
<td>Mother did cooking for family</td>
<td>Was generally driven to and from school.</td>
<td>Chores: clean room, clean living room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neighborhood</td>
<td>Annual camping trip with extended family members every summer</td>
<td>Jackie had her own bedroom to herself</td>
<td>Jackie had asthma; parents and grandparents healthy, uncle had heart disease.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Dinner was not always eaten with family, at the table, often alone in her room</td>
<td></td>
<td>She had annual doctor visits or went when sick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immediate and extended, friends, and neighbors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY</td>
<td>Family supportive.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Acted, improvisation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>Acting class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Classmates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td>Perceptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Classmates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHURCH</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTURE</td>
<td>Ideal Day: On time to school, homework ready</td>
<td>Supportive of goals, conditionally.</td>
<td>Run to be healthier.</td>
<td>Focus in class to graduate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>Ideal Reward: Accomplish something set out to accomplish</td>
<td>Jackie wanted children</td>
<td>Grow hair to donate.</td>
<td>Reading psychology book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Ideal Activity: Win at something</td>
<td></td>
<td>Believe in herself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

Jackie appeared to have many self-destructive behaviors; she seemed to be self-perpetuating her own failures. While her perceived self-efficacy was high, her personal responsibility was low; even though she expected to do well she did not. This was found to be consistent throughout Jackie’s school and home life. It seemed as if she didn’t want to make the effort to do well, or perhaps she thought that she could not do well. Upon review of the family interviews with both Jackie and her mother, it was thought that the family crisis of Jackie’s sister running away from home may have affected Jackie’s personal factors and behaviors in school. However, the events in question were determined to have occurred when Jackie was in the fifth grade, and ten years old. After the family went through the crisis, Jackie still maintained good grades for the remainder of fifth grade as well as through her sixth grade year.

Also considered was that Jackie was having academic problems due to the switch to English only classes instead of having classes as an English Language Learner. Perhaps this was the reason for her junior high school academic troubles. However, Jackie transitioned to English only instruction at the beginning of her fourth grade year and demonstrated success for the remainder of her elementary school career. The apparent changes in Jackie’s grades and test scores did not occur until the beginning of her seventh grade year.

In the general school environment, Jackie perceived herself to be highly efficacious. She believed she was smart, especially in history and that she spoke intelligently. However, her history grades indicated that she was an average student and overall her grades (eighth grade G.P.A. 1.50) and her test scores (below basic in Language Arts and
far below basic in Math) did not indicate that she was that type of a student.

Observations of Jackie in class showed her comments to be off topic, at times incoherent and often unpredictable, demonstrating that she did not speak intelligently. Jackie was well liked and made people laugh, but usually they laughed at her behavior, and not because she was distinctly funny. Not only did Jackie have her family believe that she was doing well in school, she seemed to think that she was doing okay too.

Even though Jackie liked her physical education class, liking it did not make her successful. Her behavior was inconsistent with her personal expectations as well as her personal responsibility. She expected to be a participant but she did not always participate. She claimed that she was able to do the class activities, but she often had a hard time physically performing the activities. Her general attitude was happy and peppy and she said she enjoyed the class because she was able to socialize but she was often not able to participate with the class because she was being disciplined for not having her uniform or for being tardy. There appeared to be no follow through with what she expected from herself.

In her academic classes Jackie also expected to do well, but she once again did not follow through with her personal expectations. Jackie did not pay attention in class and freely admitted to not knowing what was being taught or expected of her. Therefore, it appeared as if she gave herself an excuse to fail; if she didn’t know what to do than she couldn’t possibly do her homework or even her class work. In class Jackie became a character, known for being funny, forgetful, and odd, thereby providing herself with another possible reason for her neglecting her personal responsibility; she was attempting to entertain rather than be responsible.
Bandura (1986) stated that people construct their outcome expectations from observed provisional relations between environmental events in the world around them, and the behavior that is produced. According to her archival records, Jackie was academically successful in the past. Therefore, Jackie was perhaps constructing her outcome expectations from elementary school, and perceived that she could do well in junior high school. However, her personal responsibility did not coincide with her perceived positive self-efficacy and overall good attitude to produce behavior that was consistent with her outcome expectations.

Bandura (1986) acknowledged that self-efficacy beliefs govern the challenges an individual will undertake, how much effort will be expended, and how long to persevere if one is faced with obstacles and failures. Self-efficacy will also determine whether the failures are motivating or demoralizing. In interviews with Jackie, she was a highly efficacious individual with school, and with her life. She always thought that she could do anything academically, tests, speeches, reports, and other work required in her classes, except for math. She perceived herself to be a failure in math. According to Bandura (1986), a strong sense of coping efficacy may reduce an individual's vulnerability to stress and depression in taxing situations and strengthens resiliency to adversity. Jackie gave up on math, but still contended she was proficient in other subjects, therefore, she was not demoralized by her failures, rather it appeared as if she utilized her humor, and her inability to complete work and prepare for the school day as an effective coping efficacy for her failures.

Jackie's parents were completely unaware of what was happening with Jackie academically, personally, and overall in school. Her parents were not proactive with her
education. Perhaps if they were more proactive then Jackie would have been more successful academically. After school tutoring was offered and refused, and her mother during the interview really didn’t know how Jackie was doing in school. Instead of making Jackie take responsibility and do homework, chores or be physically active, her parents chose to enroll her in acting classes at an acting school in her city. Jackie was not forced to be responsible at home in any manner, she did not have to do her chores, and her homework was not being monitored. Consequently, she seemed to have a lot of free time that was spent accomplishing nothing. The school offered after school sports yet Jackie did not try out for any sports teams even though she was forced to remain after school for at least a half an hour everyday. Instead of being active she simply sat in the library after school socializing. When Jackie arrived home she was also inactive. She did not do her chores or anything physical at all instead she watched an excessive amount of television, approximately six hours every week day.

Jackie had an extremely high outlook for her future. She knew what she wanted to be and do with her life. She also knew when she expected her future dreams to occur, such as in twenty years she thought that she would graduate from college. She also recognized what she had to do to obtain her goals. It seemed as if Jackie always expected to do well, but fell short of her expectations. For Jackie, everything in the future seemed to be better, and what was occurring at the moment did not seem to coincide with her perceptions of how things should be. Perhaps because things were going to be better in the future she did not have to concentrate on what she was doing at the moment, thereby diffusing her responsibility for current actions. According to Bandura (2001) people are not eager to carry responsibility. Many times they surrender their responsibilities to
others in order to free themselves of the performance demands and arduous responsibilities that personal control entails. By diffusing their responsibility they may hinder the development of personal competencies. This appeared to be the case with Jackie. From the examination of her cumulative record, interviews with her teacher, and observations, Jackie appeared to be diffusing her responsibilities away from herself. In school she blamed her teachers, at home her mother, always surrendering her responsibility to others.

Jackie perceived herself to have high self efficacy with a good overall attitude both at school and at home. She was well-liked and had a good rapport with both teachers and students. However, her family situation appeared to be unique. Her mother and her father seemed to love her and provide a home for her, but they did not seem to motivate, stimulate, or encourage Jackie in any manner. Jackie was not made to perform her chores at home or do her homework. She was allowed to watch unlimited hours of television on a daily basis. According to her mother, at times Jackie would eat dinner alone in her room. She was not encouraged to be physically active or to do well in school. According to Bandura (1986) guided instruction and modeling of rules and reasoning promote cognitive development in children. Further, modeling influences are instructors, motivators, inhibitors, disinhibitors, social facilitators, and emotion arousers. Modeling influences can have diverse psychological effects on an individual as they may affect level of motivation and restraints over behavior. Jackie’s parents, as modeling influences were perhaps affecting her level of motivation as well as her behaviors because they were not modeling rules and reasoning in their home.
According to her records in physical education class, during the course of the study Jackie did not gain or lose weight nor did she grow. As a result she maintained her BMI of 34.8. However, both Jackie and her mother reported that Jackie was dieting and Jackie described her diet in an interview. Her diet included not eating breakfast, eating a late lunch consisting of tuna, eating exclusively fruit for snacks (at least 3-4 apples a day) and cereal with milk for dinner. During the interview, Jackie stated that she believed meat was bad for people to eat and claimed that she knew how to read the nutritional information on food items. The diet that Jackie explained indicated that she followed a balanced diet, and her mother said that she and Jackie tried to follow the food pyramid when eating. A balanced diet, according to the food pyramid (“The New Food Pyramid,” 2007), includes eating a variety of foods everyday. The top of the pyramid is representative of eating the least amount of food, which is oils and fats, followed by meat and protein and dairy foods, fruits and vegetables, and the bottom section of the pyramid is grains. Therefore, based on what Jackie claimed, she was eating healthy. However, if this was the case then her BMI should have changed over the course of the study. Jackie was never observed eating at school, and she said that she did not participate in any physical activities with her friends or at home. In physical education class, it was observed that Jackie did not participate consistently in the class activities.

Because Jackie did not exercise with her friends or at home, the only physical activity in which Jackie participated was her thirty minutes of daily physical education. The Surgeon General’s Call to Action Report (2001) recommended that children be physically active for more than 60 minutes each day for weight gain prevention or for weight loss and sustaining weight loss. Therefore, Jackie did not participate long enough
each day in physical activity. Additionally, upon observing Jackie, the only time that she truly did any sustained activity was when the class was required to run for twenty minutes. During the time that she ran in class, Jackie was on her own. She did not run with any of her peers, and did not socialize like she usually did during other activities. Therefore, she was able to sustain twenty minutes of activity once per week as this run occurred on a weekly basis. Even though Jackie’s physical education class was geared toward lifelong fitness activities perhaps Jackie was too social—talking, laughing and interacting with her peers to find an outside activity that she might like to participate in outside of the class.

Jackie had both negative health related behaviors and task related behaviors. Jackie appeared to continually be off task and unfocused, and rarely accomplished anything. It seemed as if the only thing that Jackie did with any consistency was watch television. However, she acknowledged that if she wanted to graduate she would have to focus in class. Jackie thought that she would have a bright future and would be working to help others.

Jackie’s parents and her family were the primary source of influence on her health status. Her inactivity behavior was being reinforced and perpetuated by the family. Jackie’s mother mentioned that Jackie was dieting but did not state in an interview if she had a weight or food issue. They did not recognize the fact that she had a weight problem, therefore, it was not recognized that she needed to change her behavior. Jackie also surrounded her self with peers that were like her, and were overweight. They did not participate in any physical activities together therefore, there was no reason to change her
behavior if she was socializing with people that behaved in the same manner as she did as her current behaviors were considered to be socially accepted.
CHAPTER 7

CARLY CASE STUDY

Carly was born on April 2, 1993 in Montclair, California, the middle child of three. At the time of Carly’s birth, her mother was twenty-nine and her father was twenty. Carly was the only girl born to Mr. and Mrs. Carmona, but she was Mrs. Carmona’s second daughter. (Carly’s mother had a daughter from a previous relationship.) In addition to her half-sister, who was twelve years older than her, Carly had two brothers, one who was older by two years, and one who was younger by eleven months. Both Carly and her mother described their immediate family as being very loud, but close and loving. They also agreed that they supported Carly and were always there for her. Further, Mrs. Carmona noted that the entire family was supportive of one another.

The family gave Carly a nickname: “Carly Bear” when she was a young girl because she used to walk around growling. The nickname eventually shortened to just “Bear” and her immediate family generally referred to Carly as “Bear.” Mrs. Carmona did not remember exactly when they started to call her “Bear”, but she felt as if they always had.

Carly lived in the same house in Southern California for her entire life, thirteen years. The grandparents and her mother spoke Spanish in the home. However, Carly
did not understand or speak Spanish. She said that her grandmother always attempted to speak to her in Spanish, but she would look at her until her grandmother would speak to her in English, or a family member would translate for her. Her mother listed the home as an English speaking home when Carly first enrolled in school; therefore, Carly was placed in regular education kindergarten and continued in regular education throughout her school years.

Carly entered Kindergarten at the age of five. She was of slightly above average height and weight. She had smooth, dark skin with long brown hair that she wore tied back in a ponytail. She had bangs and a full face. She was usually happy and smiling. As a student, she adjusted well to kindergarten and was deemed a good worker who always did her best. According to her kindergarten report card, she received all Satisfactory’s (“S”) for her grades in all areas, except for the first two trimesters she received Needs Improvement (“N”) in returning completed homework. The teacher did not indicate whether Carly demonstrated proficiency in physical education as her physical education grade was left unmarked. Her teacher stated that “in reading Carly knows most of the consonant sounds. She should continue to work on these and high frequency words. In math, she needs to work on counting and numerical recognition.” Even though Carly missed seventeen days of kindergarten, the teacher stated that she had a successful kindergarten year, and ended the year as an early emergent reader. She was promoted to the first grade with no stipulations.

Carly missed very little school in the first grade, only three days during the entire school year. Physically she changed in the first grade; she slimmed down a little, and grew taller. She no longer wore bangs, rather she wore her hair long, and usually tied
back in a ponytail, with all hair off of her face. She enjoyed physical activities and going
to school. On her report card she received “S’s” in the curriculum subjects of reading,
writing, listening, speaking, mathematics, history/social science, science,
visual/performing arts, health, and physical education all three trimesters. She met all
grade level standards for the first grade in her second and third trimester. She received
Good (“G”) in all behavior/study habits for her first grade year which included work
habits, homework, classroom behavior, and playground behavior. However, in her third
trimester she once again received an “N” in homework and was one point below grade
level in reading, therefore, she was promoted to the second grade with the stipulations
that she participate in summer school and an intervention program during her next school
year. She was deemed “at-risk.” Carly’s teacher also recommended that Carly be more
responsible with her homework during the second grade.

Carly’s mother stated that the family began a tradition of camping at Mammoth
Mountain during the first week of August while her children were younger,
approximately when Carly was in the second grade. During these trips Carly learned to
fish and became a really good “fisher girl” who could and would bait the hook. This
made her grandfather proud as he was the one who taught her to fish. Carly loved these
trips and spoke of them fondly. Her mother enjoyed the trips and joked that Carly’s
nickname of “Bear” often led to nervous apprehension by the family while camping in
the mountains because she would often shout “Bear” (when she was looking for Carly).

Carly entered the second grade with stipulations. However, by the first trimester she
was doing well in all curriculum areas, especially mathematics where she earned an
Excellent (“E”) in achievement. However, her teacher remarked that she needed to work
on her writing as her writing prompt grade was a “1” out of a possible “5”, the lowest possible mark that she could have received. She stated that Carly needed to develop her writing skills. Carly and her brothers also missed six days of school during the month of November. Carly could not remember exactly why they missed school during this time.

The second trimester began in December and Carly was at or above all levels in reading and mathematics. She also improved her writing prompt score to a “2”.

However, Carly and her brothers missed more school, three days in December and one day in February. As a result of the ten absences, the School Attendance Review Team (SART) received a referral from the school requesting a meeting with the parents and the students in order to identify the problem with attendance and to discuss a course of action to address the situation. The letter was dated February 22, and a meeting was scheduled for March 27. However, the parents did not show to the SART meeting, and the meeting was rescheduled. The parents attended the second meeting and a contract was signed stating that the children would attend school on a daily basis and if there were anymore attendance problems than the parents would be fined up to $500.

At the SART meeting Carly’s mother explained that the absences were a result of illness and further elaborated that the children’s attendance would improve. It was during this time, however, that Carly’s older brother began to have problems in school, and her mother was extremely disheartened with the school’s inability to help her son learn. The school wanted to place him in RSP as they believed that he had a learning comprehension problem. Carly’s parents strongly disagreed with the diagnosis, and did not believe their son had a comprehension problem. As a result, they pulled their eldest son from school.
and began to home school him. The younger two children, while still enrolled in school, missed school during this transition.

At the third trimester of her second grade year, Carly continued to do well in reading, but the teacher recommended that she continue to work on her writing and math. She missed three days of school during the third trimester. Her grades were: Good ("G") in reading, and "S's" in all other curriculum except for writing where she earned an "N". Her classroom and playground behavior were both "E's," her work habits a "G" and her homework an "S". New to Carly in the second grade was the mandated state testing. Carly took the Stanford test, and was found to be at the fifty-eighth percentile in Math and the fifty-fourth percentile in Language. She was at the basic level for second grade standards. Carly was promoted to the third grade with no stipulations.

When Carly entered the third grade, she was the tallest girl in the class, and also very overweight. She was on the verge of becoming obese. She had a round face that was accentuated with her hair slicked back from her face and worn into a ponytail most of the time. She had chubby checks, and broad shoulders. However, she had a sweet, likeable personality that attracted other students to her. Others wanted to be around her. She was popular, and did not get teased about her weight. Her mother stated that if Carly had something to say, she would just say it, and other students did not tease her about her weight. Further, she stated that Carly didn’t want to loose weight, but she did want her to walk everyday and to eliminate the amount of cheese she consumed, as Carly loved to eat cheese and always wanted it for a snack.

Carly’s first trimester third grade report card showed that she had good work habits and excellent homework habits and playground behavior. Her teacher wrote that Carly
was a good student that was capable of academic proficiency. By the third trimester, her teacher remarked that Carly was a hard working student that strived for academic excellence. She further stated that Carly was a student with strong mathematics skills. Carly only missed one day for the entire year, and by the third trimester most of her curriculum grades were “E’s” with the exception of writing, where she earned an “N.” Her classroom and playground behavior were “E’s” and her work habits and homework were “G’s.” She also received “E’s” in physical education and health. Her Stanford testing percentiles were average in Reading and in Math. She was promoted to the fourth grade with no stipulations.

By the fourth grade, Carly was enjoying school. Her mother said that Carly was a good student and that she never had to worry because school came easy for her and that she generally liked to be there. Physically Carly was now obese. She had gained even more weight. She was five feet tall and weighed almost 200 pounds. She had let her hair grow longer and it was full, but it did not hide her round face. Most often Carly would wear her hair in a single ponytail. She now had a protruding mid-section and she was beginning to develop. No one addressed her weight problem at this time in her life. Her mother said that “Carly would handle it” and Carly told her not to worry about her. Carly was very comfortable with herself.

Carly’s fourth grade teacher stated that she was a bright and capable student who was close to reading at grade level. She remarked that “Carly needs to work on comprehension” and by the second and third trimester her reading comprehension skills had improved. By the end of her fourth grade year, Carly was reading at a beginning 4th
grade level. The teacher felt that she could achieve grade level reading if "Carly put more effort into it."

Carly earned "G's" and "S's" for the first trimester in all of her curriculum areas, "G's" in homework and work habits, and "E's" in both classroom and playground behavior. For both Health and Physical Education Carly received "S" grades. Her California Standards test showed that she was at the Basic level in English. She was at the fifty-fifth percentile in reading, the sixty-fourth percentile in language, and the thirteenth in spelling. Her teacher also noted that she was below grade level in math and would have to work on her math facts during the summer. On her standardized test for Math, her overall results showed that she was at the basic level and at the twenty-second percentile. For her final report card the teacher encouraged her to work all summer on her math facts and to read daily. Carly was promoted to the fifth grade with no stipulations.

Even though Carly continued at the same elementary school for both her fifth and sixth grade year, her report cards were now computerized, and were based on standardized testing rather than the more subjective grading scale of "Excellent" ("E") through "Unsatisfactory ("U"). The grading system was numerical: "5" was advanced, "4" was proficient, "3" was basic, "2" was below basic, and a "1" was considered to be far below basic. This system matched the California Standards Test (CST) as well as the District Criterion Reference Tests (CRT) assessments. As a result of the new grading system, health and physical education were placed into a "wellness" category that included physical education and strategies for healthy living. The new report cards also
included areas for teacher comments; however, the comments were much more abbreviated than Carly's previous report cards.

Although Carly struggled with Mathematics problem solving (she began the year with a “1” grade) she did demonstrate progress during the course of the school year and ended with a “3”. With Mathematics procedures she began the year with a “2” and ended the year with a “3”. Even though Carly was below proficient, no comments were left in this area by the teacher. However, the teacher did note that Carly read “fluently and accurately” and that she was “at grade level”. She received “3” grades all three trimesters with her reading comprehension and by the third trimester earned a “4” in Reading-word analysis. Carly’s other academic grades were either “3’s” or “4’s”. In Wellness, the teacher noted that Carly demonstrated good sportsmanship and she received “4’s” all three trimesters. The teachers overall comments stated that “Carly follows directions, behaves responsibly, and works independently.” She had five absences in the fifth grade.

On the Fall CRT’s Carly was proficient in Language Arts and far below basic in Mathematics. Her writing prompt was also far below basic as she received a “1” out of a possible “5” for her score. For her Winter CRT’s, Carly earned a basic score for English/Language Arts, and improved to below basic for Mathematics. Additionally, she improved her writing prompt score to a “2”. Carly achieved Basic scores in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics on her CST scores, while also achieving Basic scores in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science on her STAR test. Her reading percentile ranks were: Reading 42, Language 43, Spelling 31, and Mathematics, 40. Although it was not indicated on her report card, Carly was promoted to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
It was during the fifth grade that Carly expressed to her mother that she would like to become a veterinarian. Both her mother and father encouraged Carly to follow her dreams and goals. Her mother described Carly as a “Daddy’s Girl” who usually got what she wanted from him, but he really wanted Carly to attend college. Therefore, the family was gearing up for her to go to college, as early as the fifth grade; that was the expectation even when Carly was ten years old.

During her sixth grade year, Carly was absent nine days, five in the first trimester where she received “1” grades in Reading—Word Analysis and also in Writing. She received “2” grades in both Reading Comprehension and Mathematics while receiving “3” grades in Oral Language, Social Science and Science and “5” grades in both Wellness and Visual/Performing Arts. She missed four days in her second trimester, but did improve or maintain her grades in all subjects with the exception of Reading-Word Analysis, which remained a “1”. The third trimester, Carly did not miss any school, and raised her Reading—Word Analysis grade to a “5” and her Reading Comprehension and writing grade to a “4”. She maintained her Wellness and Visual/Performing Arts grades at “5’s”, and all other grades were “3’s”. Her teacher noted that Carly showed a positive attitude and that she had strong creative abilities.

Carly’s CRT’s were proficient for English/Language Arts for both the Fall and the Winter, and for her CRT’s for Mathematics were far below basic in the Fall and improved to below basic for the Winter test. Additionally, Carly improved her Writing Prompt score from a “2” in the fall, to a “3” in the winter. Her CST scores were basic in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Her STAR tests also demonstrated significant improvement, as she was proficient in English/Language Arts and Basic
(bordering on Proficient) in Mathematics. Carly was promoted, without stipulations to the seventh grade.

For the seventh grade, Carly enrolled at the junior high school approximately ten blocks from her home. Her eldest brother returned to public school, and entered the local high school as a freshman. Carly grew up in the neighborhood, attended the elementary school near her home, and entered the neighborhood junior high school in the fall of 2005 with great anticipation—all of her friends would be there, and she was looking forward to working on the school yearbook. She signed up for yearbook as her elective class.

Carly immediately loved her junior high school, and excelled academically and socially. Her teachers described her as a “happy kid” and most commented that she was “a pleasure to have in class.” She only missed two days of school during the first trimester. Carly made honor role in her first trimester by achieving a 3.50 GPA and earning all “Outstanding’s” (“O’s”) in citizenship. She also earned a position in the “Panther Pride Society” which is the school’s honor society. This elite group of students earned prizes, field trips, and various other rewards due to their academic, citizenship, and attendance achievements. She described making the honor roll as the best experience in her life. Carly continued to excel during her second trimester, once again achieving a 3.50 GPA, with all “O’s” in citizenship. The third trimester was an even better one for Carly as she achieved a 3.66 GPA and still maintained straight “O’s” in citizenship.

Carly thoroughly enjoyed yearbook, and described the yearbook teacher as her favorite teacher because she made her feel like she could do anything. She also liked yearbook class because she could see what the book would look like, and she knew that she had a part in its construction and design. The teacher stated that Carly worked well
with the yearbook staff because the majority of the assignments were collaborative and
Carly worked well with others. Further, Carly knew a lot of people and was great as a
leader. If the teacher wanted to get a job done, she knew that she could count on Carly.
Carly was a section leader on the yearbook and was not afraid to be a leader. The
teacher’s impression was that Carly got along with everyone, and knew a lot about
everyone. Additionally, she stated that Carly would sometimes wonder why people did
what they did, but generally liked her classmates, especially in yearbook. She didn’t feel
that Carly had any enemies at school, because there was a feeling of mutual respect
between Carly and the students at the school.

The teacher described her relationship with Carly as good. She felt that Carly was
dependable and that she, as the yearbook teacher, put a lot of responsibility on her.
Although there were no official “titles” to her yearbook staff, she felt that Carly was like
an editor. Further, she felt that because she treated Carly as a leader that other students
perceived her in the same manner. She had never heard a rude or negative comment
about Carly.

Even though Carly did well in physical education during her seventh grade year, her
physical education teacher felt that a modified physical education class would be better
suited for Carly because she was obese and often had trouble participating in the
activities of a regular physical education class. Carly was thirteen years old and five
months when she entered the eighth grade and thirteen years old and six months at the
time of this study. She was 5’5” tall and weighed 280 pounds. Her BMI was 46.6, which
placed her at the 99th percentile for girls her age.
As a part of the regular physical education class experience, Carly completed a questionnaire (Appendix B) during the first week of class. From the questionnaire, it was learned that Carly lived with her mother, aged 42, her father, aged 33, an older brother, 15, and a younger 12 year old brother. In addition to her immediate family, in a six bedroom home, she lived with her uncle, a female cousin, and her maternal grandparents. She shared a room with her two brothers. Her older half-sister, 25, moved out years earlier. Her grandparents were in their late 60’s while her uncle, her mother’s brother, was in his mid thirties. Her cousin was four years older than her. The family also had a seven-year old dog that lived with them. Not too far away, within walking distance, lived her aunt and uncle with their children.

Carly saw herself as a funny person who was a little chubby with a nice looking face. She thought that others perceived her as smart and that some people thought she was sort of popular and funny. During the lunch time observations is was noted that Carly had many friends, traveled to many diverse groups and conversed with almost everyone on campus, including teachers or administrators who were on duty at lunch. Carly always seemed to the in the middle of large groups consisting of mixed genders and races, laughing and talking. Additionally, no one ever seemed to be eating in the groups that she visited. She strayed far away from the lunch tables, and simply chatted with people, usually under a large tree located adjacent to the basketball courts, near the boy’s locker room.

As Carly moved about campus she usually wore a zippered jacket that was zipped up all the way to her chin, even on extremely hot days--days that were over 90*. She wore her hair either in a single braid or in a ponytail, pulled back neatly; accentuating her dark,
smooth skinned chubby face. When she was in class, she was quiet, but always whispered to her classmates around her. Carly had a difficult time sitting in a school desk chair facing forward; it appeared that she was too big for the desk. Consequently, she sat sideways in her desk, which always gave her more accessibility to chat with her classmates at every opportunity, such as when the teacher turned his or her back.

During a classroom observation, an earthquake drill occurred. At the signal from the teacher, all of the students in the class ducked under their desks. Carly was too big to fit under her desk completely; only her head and her left arm fit. Her right arm rested on the chair of the desk. Her knees were folded on the floor while her backside stuck out from under the desk. Her shirt was too short and was pulled up which allowed her back to show. She could not move under the desk. Her head could only face forward so she whispered to a classmate who sat in front of her. Carly was clearly uncomfortable, and switched her left hand to rest under her chin.

At the signal of the bell, the students were to stand and walk single file outside and line up with their class on the field. Carly slowly got up with two hands, one on her desk, and the other on the chair. She lifted herself up. Once standing she pulled up her pants, and headed for the door, with her ponytail over her left shoulder. When she arrived outside she carried on a conversation with her friend. There was to be no talking during the drill, however, Carly walked and talked the entire way from the classroom to the field, and the entire time on the field. Her Language Arts teacher (who was also her yearbook teacher) said that Carly liked to socialize in class, as did her math teacher, who was the teacher in charge at the time of the drill. Both agreed that Carly was very comfortable with her classmates.
Carly described that the thing that she did best was read books and the thing that she
did worst was running because she was not fast like other people. Carly’s mother said
that she liked to read, as did her Language Arts teacher. Her language Arts grade
fluctuated between an “A” and a “B” during her seventh grade year, and her eighth grade
teacher thought that she was still performing well in her current Language Arts class.
Although Carly achieved either an “A” or “B” grade in physical education class, she did
not excel at running. According to her state fitness test results, reported during her
seventh grade year, Carly ran a 16:44 mile, her best mile time of the year, which was an
extremely slow time in comparison with the criterion-referenced standards of 12:00-9:00
minutes for a twelve year old girl. As an eighth grader, Carly’s best time was 18:00
minutes and she averaged over 20:00 minutes during the first trimester of class. Carly
liked to walk and talk during class on mile run days. She rarely attempted to run and
walked with two other girls every time the class ran the mile. She finished close to last
every time. She also never achieved her target heart rate during physical education class
on the mile run/walk or on a timed run. She earned a “B” in the class overall.

Carly said that her favorite subject in school was physical education because it was the
only time that they were allowed to run around and it was the only time that they were
not in a classroom. While observing Carly during physical education class, she always
appeared to be having fun, but, she never ran around anywhere. During a softball game,
she stood in the same place all game, every inning, and made sure she was standing
where no one hit the ball. During weight training, she wasn’t expected to run, but she
rarely moved quickly at all when rotating stations. And, lastly, Carly rarely ran on either
a timed run or a mile run day; generally she walked.
Although Carly stated that she lived just ten blocks away from school, her aunt drove Carly and her cousin to school every morning, and usually picked the girls up from school in the afternoon. Sometimes, the girls had to walk home, but usually only when Carly had to stay after school to work on the school yearbook. Carly didn’t mind walking home.

When asked to describe nutritional foods, Carly said that they were foods that were good for you, like fruits and vegetables. She also thought that nutritional foods had a lot of calcium. However, her favorite foods included pizza, hamburgers, lasagna and tacos. Carly said that she was “kind of” concerned about her weight or BMI and was only a little bit interested in learning about nutrition. While observing Carly at lunch, it was noted that Carly did not eat at school, even though her lunch was half priced based on her parents’ financial situation. She stated that sometimes she or her friends would purchase chips, and share them, but this was not observed. One day, Carly’s friends were passing a Gatorade around the group, sharing, but Carly did not take a drink. On another occasion, she stood in front of a friend, while he hid Hot Cheetos in his backpack after sneaking them out of the lunch area. During lunchtime she usually stayed with people who did not purchase food or eat either.

The first formal interview (Appendix C) examined the reciprocal interaction between Carly’s personal factors (likes, dislikes, and hobbies) and behavior (attitudes and feelings) in order to understand how they relate to the school environment. In addition, Carly’s personal relationships with both classmates and friends were examined in order to understand the social influence on the behaviors and personal characteristics of Carly.
Carly described her school as a good school, but the school had a lot of fights. She didn’t like to “hang out and watch the fights” as most students do. She would rather hang out with her friends. A typical day for Carly was to go to her classes and talk to her friends during passing period. First period for Carly was Social Science, followed by Math, Physical Education, and Yearbook. Lunch would follow Yearbook. At lunch, she would meet her friends at the “big tree” when the bell rang. They would either stay there or they would go on the field to talk. She would not eat. She would travel around a talk to a lot of people. She listed ten friends that she would spend lunch with, but claimed that there were a lot more people. After lunch was her Language Arts class and she ended the day with Science. After sixth period Science she went directly home.

Carly’s family believed that education was important. Her mother was half Native American, and believed that Carly would have a financial advantage when she attended college because of her heritage. Carly’s mother regretted not finishing school, as she dropped out of school during the eighth grade, and truly wanted Carly to finish high school and go on to college. She saw Carly’s biggest strength as being a student and claimed that Carly never had any problems with school, so she never had to worry about her. Carly stated that she enjoyed school and wanted to get good grades and that it made her feel good when she earned a high mark on a test or a paper because it was important to her to keep her grades up.

Carly liked her teachers and felt good around them. She said that she tried to pay attention in class, but would get caught up in talking to people around her, and not paying any attention at all. She felt a little guilty too because she felt like she talked about her teacher’s behind their backs. Carly’s yearbook teacher and Language Arts teacher (her
favorite teacher) acknowledge the fact that Carly liked to socialize in class, but believed that she always tried her best on all assignments and that she never complained, rather she just did the assignments. Carly said that her favorite teacher made her feel good about herself. She liked how she taught because she took her time to describe things to her. She thought she was nice but also demanding.

Carly stated that she liked her classmates and they treated her like she was their friend. She said that they made her feel good and that she liked talking to them because they made her laugh. On a typical day at school she would come into class before the bell rang and talk to them and they would show one another pictures. She liked the fact that they would help her if she needed help in class. During a classroom observation in Math class, Carly was observed asking a male classmate for help on how to solve a problem. After she copied the answer from him she continued to talk with him during class that day.

During lunch, when she saw her classmates she would say “Hi”, and some of her friends would say that they thought she was popular because she knew everyone. After school, on days that she would walk home, she would meet other classmates at her brother’s elementary school where they would all wait for younger siblings. She would talk to her classmates there and they would all look at their cell phones together. She felt comfortable with her classmates and didn’t have problems with any of them. She didn’t take it seriously if someone teased her. She knew that they were mostly joking around and didn’t think anything of it because when she teased her classmates she “didn’t mean it as she was just playing around.”
Her yearbook teacher never saw Carly being teased, but has seen Carly be sarcastic with her classmates, nothing mean, just joking in a fun, jovial manner. She says that Carly is comfortable with her classmates because in her class they make her feel apart of a team. She also felt that what Carly would have disliked about her classmates was the gossiping or the comments made by girls about her weight, but she was unsure. Carly’s mother said that Carly had been teased about her weight but that Carly was not embarrassed of her body, and that she has dealt with it, and has asked her mother not to worry about it. Carly’s mother knew that Carly was overweight, but explained that many of the family activities revolved around food, such as family movie night when she would make popcorn and everyone would lounge around and watch T.V.

Carly’s favorite foods included pizza, hamburgers, lasagna and tacos. She said that sometimes she would eat when she was happy, but being sad or depressed did not make her want to eat. She said that she did not eat breakfast during the week when she went to school, but would eat breakfast on the weekends. Carly ate lunch at home, after school, usually at 2:30. She claimed that the reason she did not eat at school was because the lunch lines were too long. Dinner for the family would occur every night at 6:00PM. She said that if she snacked she usually ate chips.

Carly’s mother said that Carly liked to eat. She said that Carly did not overeat and that she knew about portions, but she liked cheese and had recently discovered celery and peanut butter. She said that she would like for her to eat a lot of salads and that they are trying to cut down on cheese.

Carly did not participate in physical activities, but claimed that her favorite activity was to color and she would get to color when there was nothing to do at home or when
she was done with her homework. On a daily basis she had about three hours of free
time. During her free time she liked to talk on the phone with her cousin or to her best
friend, watch T.V. and take naps. However, her favorite thing to do was hang out with
her cousin and three friends because they were fun to hang out with. She was able to
hang out with her cousin when they came over to her house.

Carly had many friends at her junior high school, but she claimed that her best friend
was a junior in high school. They had grown up together, and Carly considered them to
be very close. She felt that they could tell each other everything. Carly perceived herself
to be a good friend because she was supportive, trustworthy, and when her friends would
talk she would listen.

Carly described her friends as a trustworthy. She felt that they were always there for
her to talk to when she needed them and that they never would say anything bad about
her. She trusted them and felt good about them. Carly felt that her friends influenced her
in a positive manner. She said that some of her friends had been through some “bad
stuff” so they would tell her not to do things because they’ve “been there.” They also
would encourage her to keep her grades up. An activity that Carly usually did with her
friends was walking around and talking, but sometimes they would run around and chase
each other, but, mostly, she said, they would just stand around and laugh.

During a lunch time observation, Carly was under the “big tree” with a group of eight
people. They formed a circle and began talking and laughing. After a short period of
time, Carly and three girls walked to another group and formed a group of about ten
people. Carly was in the middle of this large group consisting of both girls and boys who
were of various races. She was dressed in the school’s white collared uniform shirt, blue
jeans, and a blue hooded zipper sweatshirt, zipped up, to her chin. Her thumbs were tucked into her front pockets and her hair laid in a thick, single braid down her back. Carly stayed in the group talking and laughing until a friend of hers began chasing a boy. Carly watched them. When they stopped Carly walked to them. They formed a circle along the fence railing by the big tree and began to talk and laugh. They stayed there until the bell rang, then gathered their belongings and headed to class. Neither Carly nor her friends had anything to eat.

Carly said that she didn’t really eat with her friends unless someone bought chips and then they would share. She said that they never discussed diet and exercise, but they did discuss boys. She did not participate in physical activities at all with her friends, but stated that a typical activity with her friends may have been to walk to the movies and then go to Carl’s Jr. afterwards. However, Carly’s mother claimed that although Carly had friends, there was no going to the movies, or places with them. She further elaborated that Carly’s cousins were her friends and that Carly “hung out” with them. She had only dropped Carly off at a friends’ house twice and had only met two of her friends. She said that Carly liked to have fun and the types of activities she liked to do were: swimming, reading, watching T.V., fishing and camping. But, her mother also claimed that they had to motivate Carly to participate in any physical activity.

Carly’s favorite class was physical education. She thought that it was pretty easy because she was able to work at her own pace. She liked it that way. Carly always came into her favorite class clean, dressed in physical education uniform and chatting away with the students and the teacher. Her XXL smoke gray physical education shirt stretched across her broad shoulders and protruding stomach. Her shirt had a name bar
on her stomach, with “Carmona” neatly written across the front and her name drooped over her dark blue physical education shorts. Her shorts hung just below her knees, above her immense calves. She usually wore short socks that showed just above her white tennis shoes. Her feet were very small and usually stuck out to the side when she walked or ran.

Carly perceived herself as a leader in the class because she usually told people what and how to do something. She felt that her role as a leader didn’t bother her, but it sometimes got annoying because the same people would come to her and ask her the same questions on a daily basis. As a leader in class, Carly was never observed actually leading any of her classmates; rather, she was more of an enthusiastic follower as she could successfully cheerlead others to do an activity. During weight lifting, if her group was caught talking, and not working, she was the first to lead them to the next station. If she was engaged in a team sport or game, she would stand in the middle of the field and clap for her teammates. She depicted physical education as fun and as a good time to talk and interact with her friends.

Several times during Carly’s lunchtime, a certain boy, Geovanni, who was considered by many students to have been handsome and funny would “hang out” with Carly. Carly expressed that perhaps Geovanni was the most popular kid at her school. She thought he might be the most popular because he thought he was cute and that people wanted to get to know him. She also felt that he knew a lot of people. However, Carly did not look-up to him. Her yearbook teacher felt that perhaps a different boy, Johnny, who was considered a “bad ass” at school was the most popular student. She thought that Carly liked him because she would defend his behavior. She didn’t feel that Carly looked up to
him, but admired something about him. She thought that perhaps Carly had a crush on him. Carly never mentioned him. Carly did, however, look up to successful students at school. She described a successful student at her school as one who got good grades and knew what they wanted in life. Carly’s yearbook teacher thought that Carly would describe a successful student as a Panther Pride Honor Society member, one who go “A’s” and “B’s”. Either description seemed to be apropos for Carly.

Carly’s second formal interview provided insight into familial influences and the interaction between Carly and her home environment and also her community (Appendix D). Both Carly and her mother were interviewed, and were asked relatively the same questions regarding their family and their community.

Carly and her mother described her family as very loud. Her mother said that they were not dysfunctional at all rather they were grounded. Carly claimed that everyone yelled when they would talk. She further elaborated that they all got along well together. They lived with Carly’s maternal grandparents and they helped to take care of her grandfather who was diabetic. The household also included Carly’s parents, her two brothers, her uncle, and her older female cousin.

Carly’s mother described her extended family as extremely large. She was her mother’s fourth daughter in a family of four girls and one boy. She said that she had tons of nieces and nephews as well as aunts and uncles and their home always consisted of extended family members because they resided in the home of the matriarch of the family. She felt that they were a close, loving, connected family. Carly also thought that her extended family was loud as well. She also felt that her cousins that didn’t live with her were all hyperactive, then realized it was probably due to the fact that they were

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much younger than she was. She said that she only had one other cousin her age. She felt that her family meant a lot to her and that were always there for her. Her mother agreed stating that the family supported Carly, and Carly in turn supported her family. She said that Carly’s father had brought up his children to be close, and to back each other up, so she believed Carly, as well as her other children followed this philosophy.

Carly and her mother both described the annual family camping trip as an activity that they both enjoyed. This trip generally took place in August, depending on the family’s schedule. They went to June Lake, located in Mammoth Mountain for anywhere between one week to two months. They would spend everyday in the mountains and fish, hike, sit around the campfire, and spend time with one another. Carly’s mother said that Carly could camp as long as she was in a cabin, and not outside with all of the “critters”

On a typical day at home, however, Carly’s favorite family activity was to go outside and listen to her Grandmother tell stories from when she was little. Her mother thought that Carly truly enjoyed spending time with her grandparents. In addition to spending time with her grandparents, Carly like to spend time with her cousin that was her age. Since her cousin lived so close, she liked to take walks with her during the late afternoon. Carly’s mother said that she and her husband liked to take their children everywhere with them: to the beach, camping, or wherever. They also enjoyed car rides. Family was important to both Carly and her parents.

Carly believed that her family had influenced her decisions with school as they always helped and encouraged her. They would tell her to stay in school and keep her grades up so that she would be able to go to college. Carly’s mother always encouraged Carly to be successful in school. Carly felt that her family didn’t have too much influence over the
friends that she chose, but they did influence how she felt about people by telling her to”
go on her own instincts” when choosing friends. They told her if she felt that they were
bad then she shouldn’t hang out with them. Carly’s mother believed that Carly had few
friends, and that her cousins were her friends, so she spent more time with her family
than friends. Carly thought that her family didn’t really know her friends too well.

Carly’s daily routine when she arrived home from school was to eat a sandwich or
something, then start her homework. Her mother said that when Carly arrived home she
would always make it a point to come in and tell her “Hi” and if someone else was there,
she would ask how their day was. She said that Carly would then eat something and
begin her homework. Because of work, her mother could not help her with homework
unless it was late at night. Her mother thought that Carly was very organized, and had
self-discipline. After Carly completed her homework she would help her cousin with her
homework, then help her grandmother make dinner, which they ate as a family at
approximately 6:00PM every night. Depending on who was over, she would either go
outside or stay inside and watch T.V. At about 8:00PM her cousin would leave then she
would watch T.V. with her grandmother. At 9:30PM Carly said that she would take her
shower, but her mother claimed that 9:30PM was Carly’s bedtime. Carly said that she
would be in bed by 10:30PM.

Carly’s mother said that the main thing around their home was that her children
perform their chores and do their homework. Carly said that she usually did her
homework when she got home from school and claimed that doing homework was not a
problem. Carly and the rest of the children in the home were responsible for keeping
things neat. Carly’s daily chores were to sweep the floor and help her grandmother in the kitchen.

A usual dinner at Carly’s house commenced with Carly, her cousin, her mother, and her grandmother fixing dinner. Usually they fixed Mexican food which generally consisted of tacos, rice, beans, chile, chicken, beef, and potatoes, but sometimes they fixed American food. If they did not feel like cooking, Carly said they would have hot dogs, while her mother said that they might have top ramen or hot pockets. To drink, Carly’s mother said that they would have kool aide or soda, or whatever they wanted. They would eat in their dinning room, next to the kitchen, with the entire family, approximately six people. They would get their food and take it to the table to eat. They would all eat slowly, taking their time. Carly said that they would talk as a family and share their day. Her mother said if her brother came over he would get ice cream for everybody. Whoever came over for dinner would contribute food.

Carly said that her mother, grandmother, aunt and uncle Victor would do the grocery shopping for the family. However, her mother said that for the household, she and her mother would shop. Both agreed that Carly did not have any influence over the food that was purchased, but her mother said that she made sure to have ketchup for Carly because that was a staple for her. Carly said that sometimes her mother would ask her to write down what she wanted. Her mother would generally buy juices, water, punch, rice, chips, milk, and everything to make meals. She also stated that she was a “soda-a-holic” and always bought soda. She also mentioned that she would buy cheese for Carly because she liked it a lot. However, she also mentioned that for the health of her father that she wouldn’t buy too much candy or cupcakes, but if they did they would hide it
from him, consequently, they really didn’t want to have it around. Carly said that if she were to go grocery shopping she would buy fruits and stuff to make salads.

Because Carly’s grandfather was diabetic, Carly’s mother learned how to read the nutritional information on food items, and to watch for sugars, salt, and sugar substitutes. She was also into checking her cholesterol, so she would watch for high cholesterol foods. Carly did not know how to read the nutritional information on food items.

Carly’s last visit to the doctor was in September, when school started. Carly said that went to the doctor every year for her shots. Her mother said that she was diligent about visits to the doctor due to her parents’ health. Her father was a diabetic and had recently had a shunt placed into an artery near his heart while her mother was in remission from breast cancer. During Carly’s last visit to the doctor, she had blood work performed in order to see if she might possibly have a thyroid problem. However, all of Carly’s blood work came back clean. Her mother thought that Carly’s weight problem might have been attributed to a thyroid problem.

Carly’s mother stated that Carly’s health was good, that she was just overweight. Carly said that her doctor told her to keep exercising. When asked if she had any health problems Carly replied “Not that I know of, but, maybe my arteries. Maybe my arteries aren’t working right.” The experience of Carly’s grandfather going through heart surgery perhaps made Carly believe that she too may have the same type of problems as he did. Additionally, Carly was aware that her grandfather had diabetes.

Carly’s mother reported that her health was good, but acknowledged the fact that she needed to visit the doctor. She thought and hoped that she was in shape. She had allergies and sinus problems with a touch of asthma, but thought she was in good health.
overall. She claimed her two sons were in good health but then laughed because she forgot about her twenty-five year old daughter who she casually mentioned was overweight. Upon seeing a picture of Carly with her sister, the two looked almost identical: the same height and approximately the same weight.

Carly said that her father didn’t talk to his side of the family even though his father lived close, a couple of cities away so she really didn’t know if their were any health problems on his side of the family. Carly’s mother stated that they were very open and honest with Carly and that she was aware of her family’s health history. She was proud of the fact that she told Carly about menstruation.

Usually on Saturday’s, Carly would eat a hot breakfast cooked by either her mother or her grandmother. After breakfast, her mother would go to work early, and Carly would do her chores. Carly had to clean the house which included wiping down the many Indian figurines and pictures in the family living room. When they were done cleaning they would watch T.V. Her mom would get back home at about 1:00PM. Her mother said that she bought Carly an IPOD and that Carly listened to it quite a bit. Carly said that she would often go to her cousin’s house in the afternoon and play with her cat. Carly’s mother liked to watch movies with her family so they would often do just that on Saturday nights. They would get together with pizza and popcorn, kick-back and watch movies.

A typical Sunday for Carly would be for the family to wake-up at 6:30AM in order to attend church services. After church they would all go out to breakfast and then go home. At home, Carly would nap or watch T.V. while her grandmother cooked Sunday
dinner for the family. Usually a lot of family was over, and a lot of times Carly had to watch her twin cousins.

Carly’s family attended a Christian church. Her family knew the pastor personally and they really liked the church. Mrs. Carmona felt like it was home because it was very comfortable and she liked that the preached the word. She felt that Carly’s Sunday school teacher (whose name she forgot) had a positive impact on Carly’s life, but Carly didn’t think anyone at the church has had an impact on her life. However, she did like her church. She liked to talk to the people there, and no one from her school went to this church because it was in another city.

When Carly went to church, which started on Sunday morning at 8:00AM she would go to her own classroom, away from the adult services and with other teenagers. When they first arrived the teenagers would sing, and everyone had to sing their own song. At 8:30AM the class would start bible study, which ended by 9:00AM. She went almost every Sunday. Her role in the church was as a parishioner, and she was proud of her role. Her mother thought that she must have liked it because she was up at 6:30AM every Sunday morning in order to attend with her grandparents. Her mother said that the other family members would attend later. She also jokingly said that she believed Carly’s favorite part of church was the end because she would go out to breakfast with her grandparents and cousins.

Carly enjoyed many of the church activities. She liked going to fellowship night and described the night as relaxing because she was able to listen to Christian bands play music. She also attended vacation bible school for one week in the summer, the week after school was out. Her mother also said that they usually went to a Halloween Jubilee
Night which was like a carnival. She liked the night because the children were safe there at church. She further stated that she didn’t like Halloween, because witches and things were not good.

Carly claimed that she did not participate in any park and recreation activities at all and could not describe any park and recreation programs in her community. However, her mother said that the community library had many activities and that Carly had just begun to attend a poetry class. She didn’t believe, however, that there was anyone at this program that has had an impact on Carly because she just started the class; however, the young man in charge did speak very highly of Carly. She perceived Carly as being a follower in this program, and thought that Carly liked it because she liked the library. She also thought that the program would keep her out of trouble.

The only other program that Carly was involved with was the school’s yearbook. Mrs. Carmona perceived the yearbook teacher to be a great influence on Carly and thought that she has had a significant impact on her daughter. She said that everybody loved this teacher. Carly felt that another student (a successful panther pride student) has had an impact on her life because she always received good grades and was still able to work on the yearbook. Because of her, Carly was always trying to keep her grades up. Although Carly’s mother was unsure of Carly’s role on the yearbook staff, Carly explained it as being a section leader for the eighth grade. She was responsible for interviews, mug shots, and working on the layout for the interviews. Her mother knew that she wrote and took pictures for the yearbook and she also knew that she liked it a lot. Carly said that she liked it but that it was frustrating because everyone asked questions
and she had to deal with silly questions and with seventh graders. Carly’s favorite part of the yearbook was doing the color pages.

By the end of the third trimester Carly began wearing her hair down and not in her typical ponytail. She received many compliments, so she continued to wear it down. When asked if she had to iron her hair daily she said “Yeah, with a straight iron, and the ends with a real iron.” During class time, and at lunch time she would continually play with her hair, wrapping around her right index finger and twirling it around and around. She would play with which shoulder she wanted her hair to be over, often taking it into a ponytail, and flinging her hair over first her right shoulder, then her left. With her hair down, Carly seemed to gain confidence with her appearance.

The third and final interview (Appendix E) focused on the personal desire for change and the perspective for making such change possible. Carly did not see herself making any personal changes in the near future. She was a person that was very happy with herself. She did see herself making changes academically because she thought that when she got to high school that she would have to change her study habits in order to be successful academically. Carly did not really see herself making any changes socially; socially she was very happy with her life. A social change that she felt she wanted to make was to run for ASB in high school. She said that she really did not see herself making any physical changes in the near future.

In the future Carly saw herself as either being a veterinarian or a teacher. If she were to become a veterinarian she thought that she would have her own practice. As a teacher, she would like to teach younger children. Carly’s yearbook teacher believed that Carly
would at least go to college although she did not know what profession she would choose. She thought that whatever she did choose, she would do it well.

Carly thought that high school would be harder academically, but that she would socially be okay. Her teacher thought that Carly would have no problems academically; however she was worried about her socially. Academically she thought that if Carly stayed on track that she would be fine. She thought that perhaps Carly would have trouble in high school because she was an overweight child. She was worried about her dating and how that could possibly affect her self esteem. However, she did believe that if Carly stayed on the right track socially that she would be fine also.

Carly thought that if she paid attention more to what the teachers had to say and if she studied more she would be successful in high school. She also felt that she could see herself attending college after high school, perhaps a two year college. However, her teacher felt that Carly would attend a four year University.

Carly felt that her family would be supportive of her future goals. She stated that they all want her to go to college. In her family one cousin was supposed to go to college, but turned down the offer to go. Neither one of her parents went. Her mother claimed that they have always wanted Carly to attend college, and they all support her dream of becoming a veterinarian. Carly's teacher had never met the parents butremarked that someone had done a good job with her, so she thought that the family should be supportive of Carly’s future goals.

Carly contended that success was very important to her. She said “if you don’t do good, then you won’t have a good job then you’ll have to live at home with your parents.” Carly’s teacher thought that success was important to Carly because she strived
for Panther Pride. Her teacher had no idea that Carly wanted to either be a veterinarian or a teacher, but she thought that Carly would do anything that was asked of her to accomplish her goals. She elaborated that Carly would need a certain G.P.A. in order to enter college and believed that should not be a problem for her. Carly thought that she would study more and try to keep her grades up and that would help her to accomplish her goals. Carly’s teacher declared that Carly needed to stay in school, study hard, and not get influenced by high school negativity and she should be able to accomplish her goals.

Carly’s teacher decided that an ideal day for any teenager would be to do whatever the person wanted on a Saturday, and she felt that this theory held true for Carly. Consequently, Carly said that an ideal day for her would be to go to Disneyland. She said that she would be going soon as she earned a trip because she achieved all “O’s” on her report card and the Panther Pride Society would be sending her there. She was excited that she was accomplishing her honor role goal. An ideal activity for Carly would be to play Volleyball with her friends. During physical education class, Carly and her friends would repeatedly ask if they could play Volleyball as she thought that it would be a fun activity. Unfortunately, the courts were under construction all year.

In ten years Carly saw herself working as either a veterinarian or a teacher. Her yearbook teacher saw her with a college degree, a job and a relationship of some sort. However, she said that hopefully Carly would enjoy being young and wouldn’t be too serious about someone. In twenty years her teacher saw Carly as having all of that plus a family. In twenty years Carly saw herself as a married career woman.
Physically, in ten years Carly saw herself as a little taller with longer hair, and weighing an amount that would be “just right”. Her teacher hoped that maybe she could outgrow some of her “baby fat”. She thought that maybe Carly would acquire different habits for eating and activity. In twenty years Carly saw herself physically as older with wrinkles. She thought that she would look different and that she would have shorter hair that she would die with spray. Her teacher hoped that she would be a healthy adult but elaborated that Carly would never be the skinny girl next door but acknowledged that in twenty years she may be just a few pounds overweight and not obese.

Case Analysis

The purpose of this study was to determine the behavioral, environmental, and personal influences on the health status of four overweight and/or obese Hispanic female adolescents utilizing Albert Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory. Bandura (1977, 1986, & 1989) defined the Social Cognitive Theory as a reciprocal interaction of personal factors, behavior, and the environment. These interactions do not occur simultaneously, and some sources of influence may be stronger than others; differing with each individual, behavior and situation in which the behavior occurs (Bandura, 1989).

According to Bandura (1986), the environment is not a fixed property; rather it is inoperative until it is actualized by an action or actions. Behavior determines what part of the potential environment will become the actual environment. Further describing the reciprocal interaction between the environment and behavior, Bandura (1986) explained that the environmental influences partially determine how behavior will be shaped and activated. Environmental influences may affect individuals apart from their behavior, as
when thoughts and feelings are modified through modeling, teaching and social influences. Additionally, by observable characteristics, people may affect their social situation due to preconceived notions of their social status, thereby demonstrating the reciprocal interaction between personal characteristics and environmental influences.

Additionally, ones personal factors: cognitive, what people think; the affective, what people believe and feel; as well as the biological events of individuals may shape and direct behavior. Expectations, beliefs, self-perceptions, goals and intentions also shape and direct behavior.

In this study, the environment was held constant while the personal factors and the behaviors of each individual were examined across all areas. The environment was threefold: physical, situational and social. The physical environment included the actual location, whereas the situation generally referred to the existing conditions or circumstances of that particular moment or place, and the social aspect of the environment referred to the relating society, its organization, community, and the interaction of its people. Behavior was viewed as the way in which a person responded or reacted to a certain set of conditions including social behavior, family, health related behaviors and task related behaviors. Personal factors referred to the cognitive, affective and biological events of each individual and included perceived self-efficacy, general attitude, personal responsibility, knowledge, and personal expectations. The following acronyms are representative of the data source(s) utilized to determine the personal factors and behaviors of the participants in relation to the environment: CF=Cumulative Files, Q=Questionnaire, OC=Observation Classroom, OPE=Observation Physical Education, OLT=Observation Lunch Time, I1=First Participant Interview, I2=Second
Participant Interview, I3=Third Participant Interview, IP=Parent Interview, IT=Teacher Interview and II=Informal Interview with the Participant.
Figure 7.1 Carly’s Personal Factors General School, Physical Education and Academic Classes Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td><strong>SELF-EFFICACY</strong> (Q, II, IT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: School buildings and surrounding areas on campus</td>
<td>Proud of herself for being in Panther Pride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Actions, self-perception, interactions and school events</td>
<td>Sees herself as funny, smart and trustworthy, with a pretty face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td>Happy to be there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS</strong></td>
<td><strong>SELF-EFFICACY</strong> (Q, II, IT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Locker room, field area, courts, MPR, and roll call numbers</td>
<td>Could motivate others to do well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, interactions and class activity</td>
<td>Favorite class because she liked to socialize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates and Physical Educators</td>
<td><strong>ACADEMIC CLASSES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Classrooms</td>
<td>Read well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, and class work</td>
<td>Felt good to achieve well academically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td>Favorite class: physical education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 7.2 Carly’s Personal Factors Lunch Time and Home Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENVIRONMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LUNCH TIME AT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Lunch</td>
<td>Many friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>line, lunch</td>
<td>Happy, laughing, very social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tables, quad</td>
<td>Didn’t look up to popular people, looked up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>area, and</td>
<td>to successful people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basketball courts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self perceptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conversations,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>actions,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interactions with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others, lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>classmates,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and school staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOME</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: House,</td>
<td>Felt loved, safe and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yard, neighborhood</td>
<td>comfortable at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perceptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Family:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immediate and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extended, friends,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and neighbors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SELF-EFFICACY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Q, I2, IT, OLT)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL ATTITUDE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(I1, I2, IT, OLT)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(I1, IP, IT, OLT)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KNOWLEDGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(I1, IP, OLT, CF)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12, IP, )</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Figure 7.3 Carly’s Personal Factors Community, Church and Future Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SELF-EFFICACY (Q, 13, PI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY</td>
<td>Follower in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Poetry class</td>
<td>Situational: Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHURCH</td>
<td>Proud to be a parishioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Christian Church</td>
<td>Situational: Beliefs, perceptions and opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTURE</td>
<td>Happy with herself and did not want to make any personal changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: N/A</td>
<td>Situational: Beliefs, goals, and intentions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Success important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 years: taller, longer hair, just the right weight</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Figure 7.4 Carly’s Behaviors General School, Physical Education and Academic Classes Environment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SELF-EFFICACY (II, IP, IT, OPE, OC)</th>
<th>GENERAL ATTITUDE (12, IP)</th>
<th>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (II, IP, OPE)</th>
<th>KNOWLEDGE (II, IP, II)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td>Good citizenship</td>
<td>No physical activities with friends</td>
<td>High G.P.A.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: School buildings and surrounding areas on campus</td>
<td>Walks and talks with many friends</td>
<td>No after school activities</td>
<td>Great behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Actions self-perception, interactions and school events</td>
<td>Yearbook, is able to walk around in between classes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Good test scores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td>Teased classmates, was teased back but it didn’t bother her</td>
<td></td>
<td>Leader in Yearbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS</strong></td>
<td>Walk and talk with friends</td>
<td>Failed CA fitness test</td>
<td>Class motivator, helped other students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Locker room, field area, courts, MPR, and roll call numbers</td>
<td>Encourage others to do activities</td>
<td>Participated minimally in activities that required running</td>
<td>Excellent behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, interactions and class activity.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Could not run well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates and Physical Educators</td>
<td></td>
<td>Begged to play volleyball</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACADEMIC CLASS</strong></td>
<td>Mutual respect between Carly and her classmates</td>
<td>Mother supportive</td>
<td>Leader in class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Classrooms</td>
<td>Very social—talked frequently in class</td>
<td></td>
<td>Talked a lot, missed instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, and class work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Completed assignments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 7.5 Carly’s Behaviors Lunch Time and Home Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (12, IP, IT, OLT, II,)</th>
<th>FAMILY (12, IP, II)</th>
<th>HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIORS (12, IP, OLT)</th>
<th>TASK RELATED BEHAVIORS (12, IP, II)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LUNCH TIME AT SCHOOL</td>
<td>Popular</td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not eat at school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Lunch line, lunch tables, quad area, and basketball courts</td>
<td>Always with large groups laughing and talking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self perceptions, conversations, actions, interactions with others, lunch events</td>
<td>Always with three or more people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates, and school staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOME</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: House, yard, neighborhood</td>
<td>Family movie night</td>
<td>Close, loving connected family</td>
<td>Favorite snack is cheese</td>
<td>Homework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Actions and perceptions</td>
<td>Best friend is a high school junior</td>
<td>Grandmother and mother did grocery shopping</td>
<td>Lived ten blocks away but aunt still drove Carly and cousin to and from school</td>
<td>Three hours free time; television, talks on phone, nap, or hang out with friends/cousin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Family: immediate and extended, friends, and neighbors</td>
<td>Family has annual camping trip</td>
<td>Sweats were not bought because of grandfather’s diabetes.</td>
<td>Carly had good health, annual doctor visits</td>
<td>Sweep floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doesn’t have many friends outside of school</td>
<td></td>
<td>Carly’s mother had sinus and asthma problems</td>
<td>Help Grandmother in the kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ate as a family at the family dinner table</td>
<td></td>
<td>Always had soda in the house</td>
<td>Help clean house on Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIRONMENT</td>
<td>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (13, IP, II)</td>
<td>FAMILY (13, IP, II)</td>
<td>HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIORS</td>
<td>TASK RELATED BEHAVIORS (13, IP, II)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>Poetry class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td>Actions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Classmates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CHURCH</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>Christian Church</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td>Beliefs, perceptions and opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Church services and Church Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breakfast with grandparents after church</td>
<td></td>
<td>Family event to go to church</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fellowship night</td>
<td></td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vacation Bible School</td>
<td></td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Halloween Jubilee</td>
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<tr>
<td>FUTURE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td>Beliefs, goals, and intentions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Family: immediate and extended, friends, neighbors and teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ideal Day: getting to school and having all homework done and nothing bad happens</td>
<td></td>
<td>Be at ideal weight</td>
<td>Supportive of future goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ideal Reward: Disneyland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Expected college degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ideal Activity: Play volleyball with friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family of her own</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

In the general school environment Carly perceived herself as high self-efficacious. According to her cumulative file, she was a good student, who received high marks throughout school and maintained a 3.3 G.P.A. However, Carly recognized that her grades had slipped and attributed it to a lack of effort. According to Bandura (1986) people who view themselves as highly efficacious generally attribute their failures to a lack of effort, whereas people with comparable abilities and low self-efficacy attribute their failures to deficient ability. Carly's expectations were to remain in the Panther Pride Honor Society and bring her grades back to honor roll status. Carly was proud of herself for being in Panther Pride.

When Carly was a fifth grade student her parents began to encourage her to attend college. Her mother felt that since Carly was ¼ Native American she could receive financial assistance from the government. As Carly entered junior high school she began to think about college and sat proximal goals in order to obtain her distal goal of becoming a college graduate. Bandura (1982, 1997) suggested that setting proximal subgoals provided individuals with immediate incentives and guides for action whereas distal goals may possibly be too far into the future to effectively mobilize effort or to direct what one does in the here and now. Carly was achieving good grades in junior high school so that she could attend college in the future; she knew that achieving high marks was the first step in being admitted to college. In school Carly was responsible, reliable and conscientious. Her yearbook teacher felt that Carly was a leader who was dependable, trustworthy and able to accomplish any task bestowed upon her.
Carly was motivated to do well and according to Bandura (1989) motivational effects stem from several self-reactive influences including affective self-evaluation of one’s attainments, perceived self-efficacy, and adjustments of personal standards that keep them within attainable bounds. Carly valued her membership in the Panther Pride Honor Society, and wanted to keep her membership, so, she adjusted her personal standards accordingly. She was also highly efficacious in the school environment.

Physical Education was her favorite class because she liked to socialize in the class, not because she enjoyed activity. She rarely performed any of the activities other than the daily stretches and at times it was observed that she could not perform some of the activities because of her body size. During a softball game observation, Carly was batting, and could not extend her arms for a full swing because her arms could not get past her chest. Additionally, Carly was observed having difficulty performing many of the class activities that involved running. Although Carly never said that the activities were difficult, it was perceived that they were because of the daily observations of Carly in class.

Carly was a cheerleader for others in the class, encouraging them and motivating them to do well in activity, even though she did not participate in all of the class activities. Carly dressed everyday for physical education but did not perform the physical activities that were required in the class. Carly was a large adolescent, at 5’5”, 280 pounds, with a BMI of 46.6 who should have been exercising regularly as a possible treatment for her obesity as regular exercise has been shown to improve total body composition and cardiovascular fitness (Owens, et al., 1999) and is a prevention and treatment for obesity (Grundy, et al, 1999).
Carly did not eat lunch at school even though she was eligible for a reduced lunch based on her family's income. During lunch she would walk and talk with friends and with other girls from the modified physical education class. None of the girls from the class were observed eating. Perhaps Carly did not eat because she was embarrassed to eat because she was overweight. Obesity may be considered a social stigmatism. According to Puhl and Brownell (2003), a stigmatized person possesses some attribute or characteristic that conveys a social identity that is devalued in some particular social context. Neumark-Sztainer, Story, and Faibisch (1998), found that obese children were harassed and experienced rejection from peers at school. When Carly arrived home after school she reported that she would usually eat lunch, or have a light snack Carly felt loved and safe at home, and perhaps with a high level of comfort, Carly was able to eat.

Carly's parents were supportive of her activities in school, emphasizing college and getting good grades. Carly lived with her immediate family and four extended family members, totaling nine people in the household. She shared a room with her brothers. In low-income Hispanic families, parents and the extended family serve as primary mentors who transmit important values of the culture, emphasizing family as the central focus (Zayas & Solari, 1994). Carly's father emphasized that family came first.

Carly's family ate together every night at the dinner table. Family life has traditionally occupied a central place in Hispanic culture, and this has influenced dietary behaviors through home preparation of meals and the practice of families eating together ("The Diet of Hispanics and Latinos", 2007). According to Dietz and Gortmaker (2001), the food choices of the child could be affected by familial influences in regard to food choice: quantity, density, amount of fat, and food patterns, inclusive of fast foods. They
did not purchase sweets because Carly’s grandfather had diabetes, however, since Carly’s mother loved soda they always had soda in the house. Usually the family ate Mexican food for their evening meal. According to The Diet of Hispanics and Latinos (2007), the traditional Mexican foods included rice and beans, fresh fruits and vegetables. These foods are traditionally high in fat and soda is high in sugar. Family factors that affect food intake and physical activity patterns and may promote obesity are age and gender, ethnicity, social norms, socioeconomic class, and family composition, as well as parents’ and children’s knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs (Dietz & Gortmaker, 2001). Carly’s family influenced her health status by allowing her to consume foods that were high in fat and sugar and by not monitoring her intake of these types of food. Carly’s eating behaviors were being perpetuated by the family, and no one acknowledged that these foods were unhealthy.

Carly’s mother claimed that Carly was a responsible person who would do her homework and her chores without being told to do so. However, Carly generally had three hours of free time on a daily basis where she would watch television, talk on the phone, nap or spend time with friends. Carly was sedentary in her spare time, engaging in no physical activity either inside or outside of her home. Research (Epstein, Valoski, Vara, McCurley, Kalarchian, Klein, & Sharger, 1995) has demonstrated that a decrease in sedentary behavior and an increase in activity were successful in weight change in obese children. Carly’s free time was not monitored, therefore, she was allowed to become sedentary, and was not involved in activities that would assist her with weight loss. Her mother did acknowledge that Carly was a little overweight and that she tried to limit the amount of cheese that Carly consumed, however she never mentioned any weight loss
intervention programs or any physical activity options for Carly. The family activity that she did mention was family movie night where she would pop popcorn and the family would cuddle together and watch television from her bed.

Carly revealed in an interview that she was close with her family and felt loved and safe at home. Therefore, her comfort level was high, and she felt as if she could be herself around her family. Bandura (1989) stated that the initial efficacy experiences are centered in the family. Carly’s main source of influence was her family and within SCT, social resources are extremely important during ones formative years when preferences and personal standards are developing, and there are many conflicting sources of influence. In order to overcome these obstacles, social supports are needed in order to give incentive, meaning and worth (Bandura, 1982). The social support of Carly’s family reinforced her behaviors of physical inactivity and eating foods that were high in fat and sugar.

Carly’s mother mentioned that Carly had enrolled in a poetry class at the local library but Carly made no mention of this class and further stated that she was not involved in any community activities. However, Carly and her family attended a Christian church just outside of her community even though the majority of Hispanics are Roman Catholic (Clutter & Nieto, 2007). Carly was proud to be a parishioner and participated in many of the church’s activities. It was a family event to attend church services as their religion was a significant part of their lives. After church Carly went out to breakfast with her grandparents and this was her favorite part of the day because she loved spending time with them.
Carly had a positive outlook for her future, and was happy with herself and did not want to make any personal changes. Carly did not perceive she had a problem with her health status. Carly perceived that everything was okay, and these behaviors were reinforced by her family as well as her peers. Her thoughts for the future were focused on becoming either a veterinarian or a teacher when she grew up and she knew that she had to graduate from college to obtain her goals. Carly was already in the pre-planning stages academically, achieving high marks and becoming a member of the Panther Pride Honor Society. According to Bandura (1997) performance accomplishments have proven to be the most influential source of efficacy information because they are based on one’s own mastery experiences. These mastery experiences affect ones self-efficacy beliefs via the cognitive processing of the information. Carly was doing well in school, she was involved with the yearbook, and she had many friends. Her family was supportive and they were extremely close.

Carly’s health related behaviors were non-existent; she did not participate in any physical activities and was nutritionally unaware. She did not know how to read the nutritional labels on food items and described nutritional foods as foods high in calcium. Her friends, family, school, and community did not guide her or influence her on nutrition and exercise. During the course of the study Carly did not gain or lose weight nor did she grow. As a result she maintained her BMI of 46.6. Carly’s mother recognized that her daughter was overweight but did not did not recognize the potential health problems that Carly may soon face. According to the Surgeon General (2006), being an overweight adolescent may increase the risk of health problems such as diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and heart disease. Carly did not have any
sources of support for a behavior change to help Carly reduce her BMI and to become physically active.
CHAPTER 8

BEATRIZ CASE STUDY

Beatriz was born in Huntington Park, California on September 20, 1993, the only child born to Ms. Cisneros. Beatriz has lived in Southern California her entire life. In Beatriz' home, both the Spanish and English languages were spoken. Beatriz began speaking at eighteen months, and her first language was Spanish. Her mother always spoke to Beatriz in Spanish; however, she stated that most of the adults in the home spoke to one another in English. Consequently, as a toddler, Beatriz began learning both languages.

Beatriz entered Kindergarten in the Montebello Unified School District as a healthy child, with 20/20 vision, and no known health problems. At the time of her registration for kindergarten, her mother was working with a social worker in order to receive federal aide, including food stamps. Ms. Cisneros was not married at the time, and the two lived together in a small apartment in a primarily Latino neighborhood in Los Angeles County.

A Home Language Survey was apart of the paperwork when Beatriz was enrolled in kindergarten. On the survey, Mrs. Cisneros indicated that Spanish was Beatriz' first language, therefore, she was tested for English language proficiency utilizing the
Woodcock-Munoz test. Students who entered school in California and whose primary language was other than English were required to test for English language proficiency. On the test, her scores indicated that she demonstrated intermediate fluency, and she was therefore placed in an English instruction classroom for Kindergarten.

Beatriz entered kindergarten as a chubby faced little girl. She had dark skin and dark eyes with shoulder length dark brown hair. Her arms were thick, and her stomach was a slight bulge on her torso. She was short for her age. She was shy but liked to help out and be praised for her deeds. On her first kindergarten report card the teacher remarked that Beatriz was very shy and quiet during class. She also noted that she enjoyed having her in class, but insisted that Beatriz learn how to write her own name. By the second trimester, she stated that Beatriz had come a long way and could recognize most of her letters and letter sounds and that she could now write her first and last name. However, she also remarked that Beatriz needed to put a little more effort into completing her homework and class work. Additionally, she thought that there was little support at home for Beatriz. By the end of the school year, she stated that academically Beatriz was working almost at grade level. Further, she said that Beatriz had a calm disposition but that she was slow in adjusting. She felt that overall Beatriz had made good progress.

Beatriz was promoted to the first grade.

Upon entering the first grade, Beatriz was once again tested for English language proficiency. This test occurred annually due to the fact that the mother had initially described the home as a Spanish-speaking home, and indicated that Beatriz’ first language was Spanish. Beatriz’ scores were between a 3 and 4, between intermediate and
early advanced in English acquisition, and it was recommended that she continue her education in English.

Beatriz looked much the same as she did in kindergarten when she entered the first grade. However, her face was not as chubby as it was as a kindergarten student, and she had grown taller; nevertheless she was still short for her age. Her hair had also grown, and was past her shoulders. She was still a shy child who her teacher noted needed encouragement. During her first trimester in the first grade, Beatriz struggled with all aspects of language arts: communication skills, reading, and the writing process. Her grades all indicated that she needed help. Other subjects where the teacher indicated that she needed help were health and art participation. Beatriz received an “S” (Satisfactory) in Physical Education. She received an “O” (Outstanding) in completing her homework and in respecting the rights and property of others. Her teacher remarked that Beatriz had made some progress in almost all subjects and that she was able to do good work when she wanted to work. She also found that Beatriz needed to be praised for her work as that helped her to work harder. Further, she wanted Beatriz to develop a sense of responsibility.

Beatriz’ grades remained the same for the second trimester of first grade, with the exception that her “completes homework” grade dropped to an “S”. She was showing improvement in all of her work, however, the teacher had concerns regarding her reading and writing; she felt that Beatriz needed to focus more strongly on these areas. She remarked that there was little support at home for Beatriz; nevertheless, she felt that Beatriz was beginning to contribute to class discussions and was gaining self-confidence. When the third trimester concluded, the teacher stated that Beatriz had improved her self-
confidence, but the teacher still felt that this was a huge issue for Beatriz. She also observed that Beatriz had trouble concentrating on her class work, but she felt that she had a pleasant personality and she enjoyed having her in class. Beatriz’ grades were mainly “S” grades, with the exception of Reading which the teacher marked as needing help and her “completes homework” grade which was also marked as needing help. Beatriz missed only two school days for the entire year and was tardy twice. She was promoted to the second grade.

As a second grade student, Beatriz was once again tested for English language proficiency. Her scores indicated that she could understand all English instruction at normal speeds, could speak in everyday English conversation, and was overall at an early advanced level with the English language. Additionally, her writing portfolio indicated that she wrote well, often scoring a “4” on a rubric scale of “1”- “4”. However, her grades for both the first and second trimester all were marked as “needs help” with the exception of art, music, physical education and spelling, where she earned “S” grades. The teacher felt that Beatriz was not working to her potential, and further elaborated that she was not at grade level. She felt that Beatriz was often confused. However, she did note that Beatriz was developing a sense of responsibility, self esteem and satisfaction on a daily basis.

During the third trimester, Beatriz was making an effort to improve her grades. She earned several “O’ grades, including physical education, and in several work habits categories. She improved her reading to an “S” mainly because she was entered into an after school intervention program for reading. She also took the state mandated test, the Stanford test, and was found to be at the basic level for English/Language Arts, scoring in
the seventieth percentile in spelling. She was also at the basic level for Math. However, Beatriz’ teacher still found that Beatriz had trouble staying on task. She noted that Beatriz seemed to stare/gaze off into space frequently. Her teacher remarked that Beatriz was friendly, yet somewhat distant. She felt that Beatriz may have gained self-confidence during a dance unit.

It was during this time, in the middle of Beatriz’ second grade year, when she was seven years old, that Ms. Cisneros began dating a man. This man had a son, two years older than Beatriz. Around Christmas time, the man and his son moved in with both Beatriz and her mother. Beatriz now had both a brother and a father. Her brother was diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome. Beatriz’ mother described Aspergers Syndrome as a mild form of Autism. She felt that because of this, Beatriz was very close with her brother, and that she protected him.

Beatriz’ stepfather began taking an active role in Beatriz’ education and felt that a change needed to occur, he wanted her out of English only classes; he wanted his new daughter to be bilingual. Therefore, during March of her second grade year, Beatriz’ new father filled out a “Parental Exception Waiver” which waived his daughter’s English Language Education requirements. For Beatriz’ third grade year, she entered the bilingual program option. She was enrolled in a classroom where both Spanish and English instructional materials were used.

Beatriz entered the third grade overweight. She had chubby cheeks, longer hair, and the same dark skin and dark eyes. She smiled widely in her third grade picture, showing a missing front tooth. She was enrolled in bilingual education, at the intermediate level, and was graded on a “1”-“4” numerical scale academically. “1” was below basic, “2”
was approaching basic, "3" was proficient, and a "4" was advanced. However, her work habits and behavior as well as her homework were graded on the "U"-"S" scale: "U" for Unsatisfactory, "N" for Needs Improvement and "S" for Satisfactory. For her first trimester, Beatriz earned all "2" grades in every subject with the exception of physical education participation and physical education sportsmanship, where she earned "3's". The teacher wrote that Beatriz was a very hard worker. However, the teacher encouraged the parents to help Beatriz practice her reading and writing skills as well as her multiplication facts. The teacher’s comments indicated that Beatriz enjoyed participating in the class activities as well as helping others in class. She felt that Beatriz was a great volunteer.

For both the second and third trimester Beatriz received a mixture of "2" and "3" grades. The teacher said that Beatriz progressed nicely in the classroom, but continued to urge her parents to assist her with reading, grammar, and multiplication facts. She noted that Beatriz' mother was very supportive of her daughter’s education and that she tried to help Beatriz whenever possible even though she was working and attending college. The teacher felt that Beatriz’ self esteem had improved since the beginning of the school year and that Beatriz was more confident in school. Further, she felt that Beatriz was a hard-worker who always tried her best. Beatriz was promoted to the fourth grade, and was assigned to the Mainstreamed English Program because her father requested that she be placed back into mainstreamed classes.

At the beginning of her fourth grade year, Beatriz was once again tested for English Language Proficiency, and found to be between the early advanced, and advanced levels. She was back in a mainstream English only classroom. Physically she looked much the
same as she did in the third grade, with the exception that her hair grew slightly longer.

Academically, Beatriz received mainly “3” grades during the first trimester. The only change in the grading system was that the subjects of physical education and health were relegated to the “U”-“S” grading system. Additionally, the physical education grade consisted of two parts: physical education skills and physical education sportsmanship/participation. Beatriz received “S” grades in both across all three trimesters. The subject of Health Studies had no academic marks at all; it was left blank.

In Math, Beatriz received mostly “3” grades in the first trimester. The teacher stated that there was a minor problem in math—two digit multiplication—and encouraged the parents to help her at home with Math. Her Math grades improved to straight “4” grades throughout the rest of the school year. Although both her reading skills grade and writing skills grade began the year with a mixture of “2” and “3” grades, she ended the school year with straight “3” grades. She was found to be at the basic level in English-Language Arts and at the Below Basic level in Math on her standardized test. To sum up her fourth grade year her teacher wrote the following comments: “Beatriz did a fine job learning her fourth grade skills. Please continue to support her. Congratulations for having such a wonderful child.” Beatriz was promoted to the fifth grade, and to intermediate school. Intermediate school in her school district consisted of students from grades 5-8.

When Beatriz entered the fifth grade, she had no health problems and did not take medication, but she was still an overweight child. As a fifth grader, she was redesignated into the mainstream English program due to the fact that her English language proficiency test showed that she was at an advanced level of English language acquisition. Beatriz no longer had elementary school report cards, filled with comments
by the teacher, where the academic subjects were divided into numerous subcategories, each getting their own numerical grade. As an intermediate school fifth grader, she had seven basic classes: Language Arts, Reading (ELD), Math, Science, Social Studies, Music/Art, and Physical Education, and the grading system was the traditional letter system of “A”-“F”. For the first trimester, Beatriz had “B’s” in all subjects with the exception of Science and Social Studies, where she earned “C” grades. No comments were left by the teacher. Her G.P.A. was a 2.71.

During her second trimester, Beatriz’ grades slipped. She managed just a 2.28 G.P.A., with “C” grades in all subjects except Math and Reading, where she earned “B’s”. For her language Arts grade she received the following comments: “Working below grade level. Works well with others. Pleasant cooperative attitude.” In reading she also received “Working below grade level.” For physical education the comments included “Achieving below ability” and “Does not participate.” At the conclusion of her third trimester, she brought her grades up, earning exactly what she did for the first trimester, including her 2.71 G.P.A. Her only comments were “Working below grade level” in both Language Arts and in Reading. The teacher also noted that Beatriz had excessive tardies. Her standardized testing results for her fifth grade year found Beatriz to be at the Basic level for Language Arts and at the Below Basic Level for Math. Beatriz was promoted to the sixth grade with no stipulations.

As a sixth grader at the same intermediate school, Beatriz had identical classes to those she had during her fifth grade year, however, this time she had three different teachers, and traveled to different classrooms. First and Second period were Math and Science, taught by the same teacher. Third period was a combination of Physical
Education and Health, followed by Social Studies, both taught by a multiple subject classroom teacher. Fifth and sixth period were Language Arts and Reading also taught by the same teacher. She achieved a 3.00 G.P.A., earning straight "B" grades for her first trimester. In first period, her teacher noted that she had excessive tardies. Additionally, she was at the low end of the grading scale in Math. There were no comments for Science and Physical Education/Health. She received an "improving in this class" comment in Social Studies. For both Language Arts and Reading she received the following comments: "Positive contribution to class. Dependable and self reliant. Pleasant cooperative attitude."

With five absences in the second trimester, Beatriz was still able to maintain a 3.00 G.P.A. In Reading as well as Language Arts her comments were "Positive contribution to class." However, during her third trimester, her grades dropped. Math, Social Studies and Physical Education/Health all lowered to "C" grades, with the latter being at the low end of the grading scale. Her Science, Language Arts, and Reading grades all were maintained at "B" grades with "positive contribution to class" and "pleasant cooperative attitude" comments. However, during her third trimester, Beatriz and her family moved from her long time home in Los Angeles County, to her Grandparent's home in San Bernardino County. Although she only missed two days during the last trimester, it was difficult getting up early with her mother in order to be driven the twenty-five miles back to her school so that she would be able to finish out the school year.

After the move, Beatriz lived with her mother, father, and brother and a house full of her mother's relatives in her grandparents' home. Beatriz and her immediate family moved into a four bedroom home with her grandmother and grandfather, aged 66, her
four Aunts, ages ranging from 12-25, as well as six younger cousins, all under the age of 9. Her eldest aunt shared one room with her six cousins, her grandparents lived in the larger room, her other aunts shared a room and she cohabitated in a room with her parents and her brother. Beatriz described her living situation as very loud. She said that everyone yelled a lot, but everyone got along. She said that the house had a large living room, kitchen, and a big back room.

Although her mother still worked near her old school, the family decided to enroll Beatriz, along with her twelve year old aunt, into a junior high school close to their new home. The school was within walking distance. Beatriz was looking forward to attending junior high school and playing the violin, like her mother did when she was her age.

Before she entered junior high school, Beatriz told her mother that she wanted to play the violin. Her mother was surprised, but, was totally supportive of her daughter’s decision. She bought Beatriz a violin at the beginning of Beatriz’ seventh grade year. Beatriz enrolled in beginning strings for an elective class. Stings consisted of the following instruments: cello, double bass, and the violin.

Upon entering the seventh grade, Beatriz was once again tested utilizing the English Language Survey in order to place her in the appropriate classes based on her English language ability. For the seventh grade, she placed at an advanced level, and was enrolled in English-only regular education courses.

Along with her Strings elective class, she had a second elective in her seventh grade year which was beginning music. She received “A’s” and “O’s” in each subject. She also earned “A’s” and “O’s” in Math and Social Science, a “B” in Language Arts, and a “C” in Physical Education, with “S” grades in the latter two classes. She earned a 3.5
G.P.A. which earned her a position in the “Panther Pride Society,” the school’s honor society.

During the second trimester, her G.P.A. was a 3.4 and her Physical Education grade jumped to an “A” with an “O” in citizenship. She did well in all of her classes, but was having a serious problem with getting to school on time. At the end of the second trimester Beatriz had eight tardies and was on a school intervention plan. After five hours of combined lunch and after school detentions, Beatriz was given a Saturday School for her seventh tardy, and another Saturday school for her eighth tardy. After the two Saturday school’s, she had a meeting with the Vice-Principal, and the two signed a personalized contract that would assist Beatriz with getting to school on time. According to the contract, she was to get a Saturday for every future tardy she obtained. Other than the tardy situation, Beatriz had no problems adjusting to the new school.

She continued to stay busy with her music, performing with beginning strings for the winter concert, and gearing up for a big concert at a local amusement park later in the year. Her music teacher, Mr. Winters, described Beatriz as quiet and conscientious. He said that he didn’t know if she liked playing or not because he had never had enough interaction with her to know what she was feeling as she was fairly shy. Further, he never really saw her interact a lot socially, he saw her with maybe one or two friends. He never saw her on campus, but she was always on time to class with her instrument prepared, which may have indicated that she had no social life. However, he said that she interacted well with her peers in class and played the violin well.

Beatriz’ mother said that Beatriz liked school a lot and that she enjoyed her music, and was proud to be a part of the school’s honor club. She said that Beatriz tried out for a
couple of sports, and for cheerleading, but didn’t make any of the teams. She said that Beatriz wanted to give up, but that she still watched her friends play even though she wanted to participate too. She liked her music, and talked about that a lot. She liked to tell her mother what they learned in her stings class. Her mother said that she thought Beatriz’ favorite part of playing in strings was to play with their programs, like the winter concert, because that’s when the parents got to come and watch. She also thought that it was exciting for Beatriz to plan for the end of the year trip to Disneyland with the school’s musicians.

The third trimester in her seventh grade year, Beatriz did very well in school even though she received two more tardies and had a total of ten tardies for the school year. However, her grades were all “A’s” and “B’s, including a “B” in physical education. As a part of physical education, students take a fitness test during the month of April. In the state of California it is mandated that all seventh grade students participate in the state fitness test. The standards for the fitness test represent a level of fitness that offers some degree of protection against diseases resulting from physical inactivity. The fitness test had three components: body composition, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility.

For body composition, skinfold measurements were taken on the back of Beatriz’ upper right arm and the inside of her right calf using a device called a skinfold caliper. A formula was used to calculate the percentage of body fat using these measurements. Her fitness test results indicated that for a twelve year old female she was at the high end of body fat percentage. The measurements on her triceps showed a fat percentage of thirty-two while her calf was at forty percent. A female her age should have been between
sixteen and thirty-two percent fat. In order to test for abdominal muscular strength and
endurance, a maximum curl-up test was utilized. She was able to perform thirty curl-ups,
meeting the California standard. Testing for upper body muscular strength and
endurance a maximum push-up test was performed. She performed twelve push-ups, and
again met the California standard. The test for trunk extensor strength and flexibility was
the trunk lift test. Beatriz demonstrated a performance of a maximum trunk lift of twelve
inches. The test that measured flexibility was a shoulder stretch, the touching of the
fingertips together behind the back by reaching over both the right and left shoulder and
under the elbow. Beatriz passed on both the right and the left side, meeting the standard
once again. A timed mile-run was used to test for muscular endurance. Her mile time
was 15:46, and for a female her age it should have been between 9:00-12:00. It was
determined that Beatriz did not meet the overall standards for all of the fitness areas set
forth by the state of California, however, she did meet the standards of abdominal, upper
and trunk extensor strength and flexibility.

As a seventh grader, Beatriz was short and chubby, and had a hard time running in
physical education class. When she ran, she severely leaned to the left, and she could not
run for extended periods of time. She was becoming extremely overweight, and unable
or unwilling to perform in a regular physical education environment. Her mother said
that she was teased a lot because of her weight during this time in her life. Consequently,
even though Beatriz did performed well enough in physical education to earn a “C”
during the third trimester of her seventh grade year, her physical education teacher felt
that a modified physical education class would be better suited for her because he was
worried that she might become even more obese, and he thought that she would do well in a modified physical education environment.

Beatriz was thirteen years old when she entered the eighth grade and thirteen years old and one month at the time of this study. She was 5’2” tall and weighed 190 pounds. Her BMI was 34.8, which placed her at the 99th percentile for girls her age.

As a part of the regular physical education class experience, Beatriz completed a questionnaire (Appendix B) during the first week of class. From the questionnaire, it was learned that Beatriz lived about five blocks away from school with fifteen different family members including her mother, father, brother, grandparents, four aunts, and six cousins. The family also had a two year old dog.

Beatriz described herself as a loving person who was sometimes a “little” mean. Her mother said that she was very sensitive and emotional, one who cared a lot about her family and friends. Her music teacher, Mr. Winters, viewed her as a nice girl who got along well with everyone. He explained that many times there could be competition in a band or strings setting, which may make individuals into cruel competitors, but he did not see this from Beatriz. He perceived her to be a part of a cohesive, tolerant group, that were overall “good kids.” He felt that Beatriz found her spot in strings (in the second violin section) and accepted it, and that others never looked down on her. Further, he felt that her violin group was respectful of Beatriz as well as of one another.

During a classroom observation of her strings class, Beatriz was found to be a quite, shy child, who was focused on her music. When the teacher instructed everyone to go wherever they wished to practice, Beatriz stayed at her seat, while everyone else around her moved to different parts of the room, some even going outside of the classroom to the
shaded lunch area. There were fourteen other students playing the violin in the advanced strings class. Beatriz practiced solo at her seat, playing right handed, gently stroking the strings with the bow. As she played, she shuffled through her music often, and would play sections of certain songs with a serious, determined look on her face. She would sometimes play each piece four times before she would move on to the next section of her music. At one time she selected the same music as the girl to the left of her. The other girl played louder, with stronger, sure strokes while Beatriz seemed to be more tentative, often stopping, and playing slower than the other girl. It appeared that Beatriz was making sure it was played “right.”

Beatriz played the violin tucked under the left side of her chin, while the fingers of her left hand moved up and down the violin’s neck. Her hands were small and chubby with short, well manicured finger nails. She wore her black, straight hair slicked back tightly into a single ponytail, with a small one inch part on the left side of her forehead. Her clothes were clean, and were inline with the school uniform policy. She wore Levi denim jeans over black tennis shoes and a white hooded jacket with blue sleeves.

Beatriz did not talk to anyone in the class until the teacher told everyone to pack up. At the signal to pack up, Beatriz closed her music folder, held her violin in her left hand, picked the violin case up with her right hand, laid the case on the floor and put her violin inside the case, followed by the bow. She closed the case and headed to her locker, inside the classroom, to lock-up her violin. At this time she interacted with the teacher for a brief moment at the front of the classroom, asking him about the music fundraiser. She retrieved her backpack from a cabinet located near the classroom door. She stood with her backpack on her back and her physical education uniform in her hand next to the
classroom door, and waited for the bell. A girl approached her and began to talk to her. After a brief encounter, Beatriz walked over to another girl, said something to her, and went back to standing by the classroom door. She read the Panther Pride Society list hanging from the band room wall until the bell rang; she was then the first out the door, headed to her next class.

Beatriz believed that while some people saw her as mean, others saw her as a nice person, one who was loving, kind, and sweet. It was never observed during classroom and lunchtime observations that Beatriz was mean or cruel to other students. Rarely did she interact with her classmates. She had a few friends that she spent time with at lunch, however, her closest friend appeared to be her aunt, whom she was always partnered with during classes, such as physical education and social studies and with whom she spent time with at lunch. Often she would interact at lunchtime with other students from her modified physical education class, but, she was never seen around her advanced strings classmates at lunch.

During another observation in her strings class, with much the same lesson plan as before, the students could move anywhere they wanted in the classroom, or outside by the lunch tables, in order to practice music that they had trouble playing. Again, Beatriz elected to stay in her seat. Beatriz sat and played alone for six minutes, stopped, and stretched. Her green hooded jacket was tucked under her stomach accentuating the fact that her stomach was larger than her chest. While Beatriz was practicing alone, the two girls on her right side were practicing together. Soon, however, Beatriz lowered her violin, placed a different piece of music in front of her and began to play. She stopped, pointed with her bow on the other girls' sheet music, talked to the girl nearest to her
about the music, and then resumed playing. Beatriz again stopped, waited for the girl to get the same sheet music as she had, then, with no signal whatsoever the two started to play together. They stopped, talked about the music, and again played. While the two played, a third girl came over to them, talked to the first girl, and placed her hand over the girl’s violin in order to stop her from playing. Beatriz continued to play on her own. After the two other girls talked for a brief moment, Beatriz stopped playing, and asked them to play with her. They all looked at the music together that Beatriz presented, and finally the three girls agreed on a piece of music and three played together. A fourth girl came over to the group, and all four girls played. After the girls finished the song, they all began playing on their own. The teacher told everyone to pack up. After Beatriz packed her violin and locked it in her locker, she walked past a boy, said “hi”, picked up her backpack and continued to the classroom door, where she waited for the bell to ring. At the door, she talked to a girl while watching other students come in from outside. Beatriz stayed at the door talking, while two other girls joined them. They chatted until the bell rang. It was never observed that people saw Beatriz as a mean person, nor did her teacher feel that this was the case. On the contrary, Mr. Winters felt that she was treated with respect and that the other students liked her, however, he did comment that she was one of the shyest students in strings.

In her free time Beatriz enjoyed playing with her little cousins that lived with her. She said that she also tried to sleep as much as possible because she woke up so early everyday. However, Beatriz’ favorite thing to do was to play the violin because she liked to play classical music. She felt that she could calm people down with her classical music especially when they were mad. She was able to play the violin anytime because
she said it didn’t “bug anybody” except if they were asleep. Mr. Winters said that Beatriz did well with the violin, and explained that she was conscientious about practicing, and thought that perhaps strings was her favorite subject in school, but he wasn’t too sure as he did not have enough interaction with her to know.

Beatriz’ stated that her favorite teacher was her math teacher because she was nice to everyone. Additionally, Beatriz said that her favorite subject in school was math because she enjoyed things that were challenging and because when she grew up she wanted to be a doctor. Her mother knew that Beatriz wanted to be either a lawyer or a doctor, and that at this time in her life Beatriz couldn’t decide which. However, she knew that Beatriz hated science. During the beginning of her eighth grade year Beatriz had a bad experience with science. The school had not hired a science teacher for her class, and Beatriz had three different science teachers by the third month of school. At the conclusion of the first trimester, a teacher had finally been hired, and, according to Beatriz, he destroyed the classroom atmosphere, and made everyone hate science.
Beatriz earned a “B+” during the first trimester with an “O” in citizenship. When the second trimester of science was over, with the new teacher in charge, Beatriz failed and had earned an “S” in citizenship. Prior to this experience, Beatriz described her best experience as never flunking a grade. She was adamant about the fact that she never would either. Additionally, prior to her eighth grade science class she said that she never had a “worst experience;” now she did.

Beatriz described the thing that she did best was fighting with her brother. Her mother concurred with the fact that Beatriz and her brother fought a lot, but she also claimed that if something went wrong, Beatriz was right there to help him out. She said that Beatriz
would be the first one to defend him. She also said that Beatriz stayed close to him
because of his Aspergers Syndrome, but Mrs. Cisneros didn’t talk about his Autism as
she was not up front about the problem. For Beatriz, her family meant a lot to her. She
stated that she wouldn’t know what to do if something happened to them, especially to
her mother, because she loved her family a lot. Her mother said that Beatriz always
wanted to go everywhere with her because they were very close.

Every morning Beatriz’ parents would drive her and her brother to school. Her
mother said that Beatriz had an overall good attitude about school, and she was good
about going; she never faked an illness to get out of school, but because they woke up so
early, she never wanted to get up. Her brother went to high school, which started later, so
Beatriz would get dropped off first at the junior high school. Even though her aunt
attended the same school, they never seemed to come to school together. In fact, if one
of the girls was not present in physical education class, the first class of the day they had
together, the other would try to find out where she was. The present student would ask
the teacher if the other one was absent or not. When school ended for the day, their
grandmother would pick up the two girls and drive them home; they did not walk home
even though they lived only a few short blocks away.

According to Beatriz, she was not very good at doing exercises because she was lazy.
Her mother said that her attitude regarding activity varied. She believed that Beatriz
wanted to do things, and then she would be lazy, and not do anything. In physical
education she said it depended on the activity. However, during physical education
observations, it was noted that Beatriz always did just enough to pass. For example,
when the class was told they had to complete one lap around the field under four minutes,
Beatriz would run/walk, and arrive at just under four minutes. When the class had to perform push-ups, Beatriz would not go all the way down to the ground with her chest, she would just slightly bend her elbows in order to give the appearance that she was performing a push-up. During weight training, Beatriz would spend as long as possible at one station, before moving to the next. She would perform her exercises, it would simply take all period for her to finish. Beatriz achieved a “C” grade in physical education during the first trimester in her eighth grade year.

Beatriz described some nutritional foods as good, but some as “just really nasty, like broccoli. Yuck.” Her favorite foods included chicken tenders, hamburgers, and orange chicken. Beatriz expressed concern about her weight as well as her BMI and stated that she was interested in learning about nutrition. However, while observing Beatriz at lunch, it was noted that Beatriz ate junk food from the cafeteria and occasional bites from her aunt’s hot lunch. Beatriz’ aunt was the same age as Beatriz, and the two looked similar with the exception that her aunt was smaller—thinner and shorter than Beatriz. The lunches that Beatriz ate were far from healthy, and it did not appear that she was too concerned with eating healthy, even though her new physical education class focused on healthy eating. On the days that she was observed, Beatriz ate Hot Cheetos, bites from her aunt’s hot lunch which consisted of a spicy chicken sandwich on one occasion and a hamburger on another occasion. Beatriz always ate with her aunt and the two girls would eat after one another frequently. What her aunt did not eat in her lunch, Beatriz would finish. Beatriz would never purchase a lunch on her own, solely snack items. They would eat quickly, never use a napkin, and leave the lunch area as soon as possible so they could walk around, always together, in search of other friends.
During an observation one day, Beatriz snuck food from the lunch area: two bags of Hot Cheetos and a Gatorade. When she and her aunt left the lunch area, they found two other girls on the basketball courts. Beatriz handed a bag of Hot Cheetos to one of the girls, and she kept one. She opened her Hot Cheetos as well as the Gatorade. She drank from the bottle, passed it to her aunt who took a drink. Her aunt passed the Gatorade to the two other girls who also drank from the bottle. Beatriz, who was eating the Cheetos, and licking her fingers after every bite, took the bottle back, and took a drink. She offered the Hot Cheetos to her aunt, who reached inside the bag and grabbed one. Beatriz held the Gatorade bottle, and played with it for the rest of the lunch period. When the bell rang, all four girls walked to their next class.

The first formal interview (Appendix C) examined the reciprocal interaction between Beatriz’ personal factors (likes, dislikes, and hobbies) and behavior (attitudes and feelings) in order to understand how they relate to the school environment. In addition, Beatriz’ personal relationships with both classmates and friends were examined in order to understand the social influence on the behaviors and personal characteristics of Beatriz. Both Beatriz and her advanced strings teacher, Mr. Winters, were interviewed, and were asked relatively the same questions regarding Beatriz’ school environment.

Beatriz described her school as big. She also thought that the school had nice teachers. A typical day for Beatriz was to walk around the school in the mornings, and to wait until the bell rang to go to first period. Her first period class was the dreaded physical science class, without an assigned teacher, and the class where she received ten tardies for the first trimester. Second period was Advanced Strings, followed by third period Physical Education. Her fourth period class was social science, which included
the majority of her third period physical education class, including her aunt. Following fourth period was lunch, which Beatriz described as walking around, buying something to eat, and hanging out with her aunt on the basketball courts. She also said that she didn’t eat at lunch. After lunch was her fifth period language arts class, followed by her favorite class, math, for sixth period. After sixth period she would head to the front of the school where her grandmother would pick her up and drive her and her aunt home.

Beatriz liked school. Her mother was proud that she was on the honor roll. She felt that Beatriz was doing very well, with “A’s”, “B’s”, and a couple of “C’s”. She said that there had never been any complaints from a teacher. Beatriz claimed that she didn’t actually study for a test, that when she was given the test she would simply follow the directions. However, she felt happy when she did well. She was comfortable with her teachers and was quite around them. Her favorite teacher was her math teacher because she was always happy, and never in a bad mood. Beatriz said that she wanted to stay quiet around her so she wouldn’t yell at her.

Beatriz described an ideal day at school would be to meet new people. However, she was never observed attempting to make new friends, or going to new places during lunch time. Every lunch period observed was basically the same. For fifteen minutes, Beatriz and her aunt would stand in line and get food. They rarely spoke with anyone but one another. They would get their food and eat in the lunch area. On one occasion, they sat at a lunch table with two other girls, but did not talk to the other girls, or to one another. They ate quickly, and left to walk around on the basketball courts. Beatriz did talk to others at lunch, but they were usually the same people everyday, and she was never far from her aunt.
Beatriz depicted physical education as a class with a lot of exercise. She said that it was a place to sometimes talk to her friends. Her role in the class was as a “normal person;” she did what she was supposed to do. She liked to participate in the class and her favorite part of the class wasn’t the running, rather she liked to have free activity time so that she could talk to her friends because she liked to know her friends a little more. Free activity time included a choice of participating in one of the following activities: flag football, kickball, soccer, running, or walking. It usually occurred on minimum days with four classes of physical education students (approximately two hundred children on the field at one time). During an observation of free activity time, Beatriz choose to walk the field. Beatriz began walking alone but soon her aunt caught up with her, and the two began to walk together. They were joined by three other girls. The five continued to walk, and soon Beatriz was walking with just one girl, and a tall boy, who walked backwards talking to the girls. At the corner of the field, Beatriz’ aunt joined them along with three other girls. Before long, however, Beatriz and her aunt were alone again, walking and talking. They continued walking together after the bell rang, and walked all the way inside the girl’s locker room to change clothes. Consequently, even though Beatriz did walk and talk with friends, she still wound up being alone with her aunt in the end.

Beatriz stated that she didn’t really have a best friend, but thought that maybe her aunt was her best friend because she hung around with her for most of the day. Her mother said that Beatriz and her aunt may have been close at school, but at home they argued and were pushy and mean with each other. Beatriz said that her aunt always made her feel happy and that she was glad to be with her. Overall, Beatriz said that she was happy to
have friends, even though she did not have many. She liked to joke around and fool around with them.

Beatriz and her friends did not participate in any physical activities together and they never discussed diet and exercise. She said that sometimes she ate with her friends, both in and out of school. She liked to eat Burger King with her friends outside of school. She said that she ate when she was happy and sometimes when she was sad. She did not eat when she was depressed. She ate breakfast and dinner at home and did not eat lunch at school. She ate snacks at both home and school.

Beatriz perceived her relationships with her friends to be good and she felt that she was a good friend. She said that she didn’t talk bad about anybody; she felt that there wasn’t really anything to say about them. She considered her friends to be a good influence because they would tell her to do “good stuff and not bad (stuff).” Her friends would usually just walk and talk together at school, but sometimes they would go to the movies on the weekends, and after the movies they would just hang out until their parents came to pick them up. Beatriz’ mother felt that Beatriz liked to go out with her friends, especially to the movies, but said that Beatriz had changed friends a couple of times during the beginning of eighth grade, and that Beatriz felt like she got left behind. According to her mother, it made Beatriz upset to loose her friends as she got sad and emotional when it happened. Her mother said that one of Beatriz’ biggest strengths was that she was sentimental, but that by being that way sometimes Beatriz would get hurt.

Beatriz liked some of her classmates and felt comfortable around some of them and uncomfortable around others. She didn’t dislike anything about them, and felt that they were funny and always talked during class. They treated her nicely, and she treated them
the same way. She spoke with some of them during lunchtime and during class, and a
typical day at school was spent walking and talking to her classmates. After school, she
would chat briefly with them while she waited for her ride home. She admitted to teasing
some of her classmates that she did not like, but would get mad when they teased her
because she felt they were talking about her.

Mr. Winters felt that Beatriz liked her classmates and felt that she treated them with
respect. When Beatriz was in a group setting, liked Advanced Strings, Beatriz was able
to hold her own, however, he never saw her interact much, and felt that she wasn’t too
social. He thought that she handled things well, and that other students liked her. Further,
he felt that no one looked down on her and no one said “eeww, Beatriz.” He believed
there was a feeling of mutual respect between Beatriz and her classmates, that they
accepted her. However, he thought that last year, in beginning strings, Beatriz would
interact more, and that this year she was more on her own. He assumed that she was
comfortable with being on her own. He also mentioned that if he were to make an
educated guess that perhaps Beatriz was inhibited because she was overweight, and that
she pulled away from her classmates because of this.

According to Mr. Winters, a typical day in Beatriz’ advanced strings class had no
variation for her. She came in, sat down, and spoke only when she was spoken to. She
was quite and unassuming. He professed that if Beatriz wanted to work with someone
that she could work with them and that no one would walk away from her but he felt that
she was just shy. He was of the opinion that she was comfortable with her classmates.
When asked if Beatriz was teased by her classmates, his response was: “Never. No. They
respect and like her. She is not a suck-up, she is just herself.” He had never seen Beatriz tease anyone either.

Beatriz did not know who the most popular student in the school was because she always saw all the popular people together, and didn’t know which one was the most popular. She thought that they were popular because they had a lot of friends and they knew everyone at school. She professed that she didn’t look up to “those kind of people.” She did, however, describe a successful student as a person she looked up to. A successful student, to Beatriz, was a specific girl at her school, Elvy, who Beatriz described as always getting “A’s”. She said that she looked up to Elvy because she was smart. However, Mr. Winters thought that it was more than that, he thought Beatriz would look up to someone who respected the rules, one who wore the school uniform properly, and one who stayed out of trouble. Elvy was that kind of person.

Beatriz’ second formal interview provided insight into familial influences and the interaction between Beatriz and her home environment and also her community (Appendix D). Both Beatriz and her mother were interviewed, and were asked relatively the same questions regarding their family and their community.

Beatriz described her immediate family as being very loud with lots of kids. Beatriz’ father, and both grandparents only spoke Spanish, but the rest of the household was bilingual, speaking both Spanish and English. Her mother said that because so many people were in the house that they had to really pick up after themselves and they had to be careful with everything. She said that she was raised as one of eight children and therefore felt it wasn’t hard for her to live with a lot of people. However, she and her
husband were looking forward to the day when they would have their own home. They had purchased a new home and it would be ready by February.

Beatriz had a large family, she said that some of her family lived in Colorado but she didn’t really see them a lot, and she didn’t know them too well. Sometimes her immediate family would travel to Colorado to visit, but that didn’t happen too often. She had an aunt that lived in Los Angeles whom they frequently visited and who was close to her family. They also had recent additions to their family as her aunt and her cousin just had babies. Beatriz felt that her entire family was very close and caring about one another. Her mother agreed and was thankful that her children were not rebellious.

Beatriz’ mother and father worked long hours, but still found time for the family. On the weekends they would go together to local places like the mall or to the movies. During the winter, usually in November, they would travel to Mexico and visit relatives in Rosarito or in Delongo. For the holidays they would get together with whoever had the biggest house. Thanksgiving was usually at their grandparent’s house, where they lived. In the summertime they would stay near home as both parents worked. During the summer Beatriz loved to go to the local water park or to the lake.

Beatriz’ mother influenced her life tremendously. Beatriz admired her for trying hard and for working a lot. Her mother said that Beatriz really paid attention to what she and her husband said—who she could hang out with or what classes she should take in school. However, it was getting harder for her to listen to Beatriz without criticizing her, and she knew that Beatriz did not listen much to criticism. She felt that Beatriz was very independent, and would ultimately make her own decisions. Beatriz said that her family
told her not to hang around people who did drugs and to finish school. Most of Beatriz’ family finished high school, but no one had gone to college.

At home, it was not calm during the weekdays. Beatriz said that everyone would just run around. However, Beatriz had a set routine everyday. She would get home at about 2:00PM and do her homework while she watched television. She said that she watched a lot of television, from about 2:00PM-7:00PM everyday. When she arrived home she might eat a snack, or she might not. Her mother said that it was hard to monitor her after school everyday because she was not there, she was working. She would call home every afternoon to see how Beatriz was doing; and found that she was usually doing homework and watching television. When dinner time came, her aunt cooked for her children, so Beatriz ate with them. She would eat whatever they cooked, and if she didn’t like it, she would wait for her mother to bring home take out food. Beatriz described a typical dinner at her home as a big family gathering, where everyone ate dinner as a family in the dining room. She said that they were made to eat there and to sit as a family and that either her Aunt Ruby or her Grandmother would cook, not her mother because she came home too late to cook. The meals were usually Mexican food. They ate beans, rice, and they always had meat. Beatriz said that she ate slow and was usually the last one to leave the table every night. Beatriz’ mother remarked that she did not have much control over what Beatriz ate during the week. She knew that Beatriz had to loose weight and she wanted her to loose weight for her quinceanera (the celebration of a young Hispanic woman’s fifteenth birthday), but she professed that she did not control her daughter’s diet.

Mrs. Cisneros would arrive home between 8:30PM and 9:00PM during the weekdays. Shortly after she came home, Beatriz would take a shower and go to bed. Her bedtime
was about 9:30PM every night. Her mother said that Beatriz would talk to her a lot at
night time. She also remarked that it was difficult to share a bedroom with her children
because they usually went to sleep earlier than she or her husband, and that their room
was very crowded.

On Friday nights, Mrs. Cisneros would get off of work early so that she could take her
children out to dinner, and they would have a big dinner together. On the weekends there
would be big family dinners at their house. Many family members would come over on
Saturday and Sunday, and eat and spend time together. Beatriz' mother was one of eight
children; seven girls, and one boy, and each of her sisters and brother had children,
therefore, there was always a household full of people on the weekends. Mrs. Cisneros
had to work every Saturday morning, and would work until 1:00PM. When she arrived
home, she would pick up her family, and get out of the house, and go do something, go
anywhere, like to the mall or to the movies. She liked the weekend because during the
week she had so little time with Beatriz. They would wake up at 5:30AM during the
week, and from that time until the time they left, Beatriz and her brother were usually
arguing and hurrying trying to get ready for school. After she dropped Beatriz off at
school in the morning, she wouldn't see her again until the evening, right before bed.

The weekends were enjoyed by everyone in the family. Beatriz remarked that they all
woke up early because there were a lot of children in the house and the younger children
would awaken everyone. The family would clean house, and she would wait for her
mother to get home. Usually extended family members began to show up in the
afternoon. When they came over the house became very noisy. There were always
people outside, where the music played, and the family fixed carne asada for everyone.
Beatriz' responsibilities at home were limited. She said that she only had to clean when she felt like cleaning. Her mother said that Beatriz had to clean up after herself on a daily basis and the entire family would all help clean the house on the weekends before other family members arrived. Beatriz outlined her daily responsibilities as: brushing her teeth, taking a shower, and doing her homework. Her mother remarked that there were just so many people in the house that everything was difficult. One chore that she made sure Beatriz did was to wash the dishes.

According to Mrs. Cisneros, each adult did the grocery shopping for their own family. However, Beatriz claimed that all of the adults shared the grocery shopping duties for the entire family. She asserted that every week someone different would go shopping and they would all take turns going separately. Beatriz recognized that all of the adults shared the bills and the rent money. She did not have any influence over the food that was purchased, and she "ate what they got." Her mother elaborated further that when Beatriz was younger they had very little money, so they "didn't buy a lot of junk food, and Beatriz got used to it." Now when she shopped they did not buy a lot of sugary foods. Aside from the sugar content in food items, Mrs. Cisneros did not pay attention to much else regarding the nutritional information contained on food items.

If Beatriz were to go grocery shopping she would buy "ordinary fridge stuff" like pizza, chicken, fish sticks, cheese, milk, and cereal. She was not aware of how to read the nutritional information on food items. Her mother claimed that if she did the grocery shopping she would buy nothing but vegetables and force them on her children. She said that her children complained because they always ate meat and that no one bought soda.
Beatriz described her health as being “good”. She had no problems that she was aware of. Her mother stated that aside from Beatriz being slightly overweight, she was fine. Mrs. Cisneros had hearing problems, needed glasses, and remarked that she was overweight, but other than that, she felt she was fine. She elaborated that her mother, Beatriz’ grandmother, had stopped working due to problems with her feet. She said that her mother’s feet would bloat up, and they didn’t know why, but nothing was wrong. She said that this had happened both in Mexico and the United States. Her father, Beatriz’ grandfather, was getting rheumatism, but he was still working. He had never visited a doctor in his life, and he was 68. He had never had physical either. Beatriz had a great aunt that “died of leukemia, but it was all natural causes” and other than that, her mother didn’t know of any other family health problems. Beatriz thought that her family was healthy, but they just didn’t eat healthy. Her mother said that Beatriz sometimes asked what was wrong with her grandmother.

When asked if she visited the doctor regularly, Beatriz replied that they only went for shots if they were sick. Her last visit, according to Beatriz was “A long time ago. My dad took me and my brother for shots but I don’t know when.” Mrs. Cisneros claimed that Beatriz had a physical a year ago. She also said that her relatives did not regularly visit the doctor except for her sister because she had six kids and they went frequently. She remarked that she only had two kids and they were not sick a lot so they did not go.

Beatriz and her mother, father, brother and grandmother attended church at St. George’s Catholic Church. Her grandfather didn’t go because he worked. This was a relatively new church for the family. They used to drive to East Los Angeles for church, and bounce back and forth between the two churches, but then switched to full time
parishioners at St. George because it was too far to drive to East Los Angeles every Sunday. Beatriz claimed that they went every Sunday to the Spanish Mass at 1:00PM. However, her mother said that Beatriz and her brother would argue if they didn’t want to go to church and that they would sometimes go to the English Mass. Both Beatriz and her brother went to catechism class every Wednesday afternoon at 5:30PM.

Beatriz didn’t feel as if there was anyone at her church that had an impact on her life. Her mother said that Beatriz had not made any friends at the church, and that Beatriz didn’t talk to anyone there. Further, Beatriz did not participate in any of the church activities unless she was forced to do so. She did attend catechism classes due to the fact that if a child in the Catholic Church does not attend catechism then he or she will not be able to be confirmed, which is a religious ceremony celebrating becoming an adult in the Catholic Church.

In catechism, Beatriz talked about God and listened to others. In church, she was a person who liked to go and listen to the priest. Her mother thought that Beatriz’ role is church was that of a follower, which is exactly what Beatriz thought too. Mrs. Cisneros said that Beatriz complained about going to church at times but overall felt it was okay. Beatriz was happy about her role in the church; it made her smile all of the time. Her favorite part of being involved with her church was when they passed the collection plate around during Mass. Her dad would give them money, and they would put it into the collection plate and it made her feel like she was helping. Her mother thought that Beatriz’ favorite part of mass was when everyone said the sign of peace to one another, because everyone would say “Hi” to their neighbors. She thought that Beatriz enjoyed this.
Aside from being a parishioner at St. George's church, Beatriz was not involved in any other community activities. However, she was involved with Strings at her junior high school, playing the violin. She began to play the violin because her mother played it in school, and she wanted to play too. According to Beatriz, there were no “seats” or “chairs” in strings, just sections, and her role was to play in the second section. Her role as a second section violinist was to sit and play and memorize the music even though it was sometimes hard to memorize music. She was indifferent to her role and claimed that it was neither hard nor easy. Beatriz felt that a girl in the first section of strings was a great influence on her because she was a good violin player. However, her mother didn’t think that anyone in strings had a great impact on Beatriz. She knew that Beatriz liked her teacher, but, she felt that Beatriz played in strings because she enjoyed playing the violin. Beatriz’ favorite part about participating in strings was that she got to go places to perform. She liked playing the violin so much she wanted to continue in high school. Her mother knew that she liked to play because she would often talk to her about the music and what they were learning.

The third and final interview (Appendix E) focused on the personal desire for change and the perspective for making such change possible. Beatriz didn’t see herself making too many personal changes because she was basically happy with the way things were. She thought that perhaps she could respect people more and be nicer. She did see herself making changes academically because she thought that she needed to study and read more in high school. Socially Beatriz wanted to be friendlier, and physically she wanted to exercise more, for example running instead of walking.
In the future Beatriz saw herself working as a doctor, working with little kids, but she forgot the word "pediatrician." Her mother said that she loved kids, and truly wanted to be a pediatrician. In the near future, Mr. Winters saw her working towards achieving higher education, realizing that they would be the way to go. He saw her in a meaningful job. He definitely did not see her getting arrested or joining a gang.

Beatriz thought that high school would be hard. Her strings teacher thought that high school may be rough on Beatriz depending on where she went. He thought that she may seek refuge in orchestra, but that she might become more withdrawn and that it may be harder without her "crew" going into high school with her. His belief was that she would be successful in high school if she stayed focused on the task at hand and didn’t worry about being with the popular crowd. Beatriz thought that as long as she did her work—actually studied and read, instead of just pretending to study and read that she would be successful in high school.

Beatriz, her mother, and her strings teacher all saw Beatriz attending college in the future. Beatriz saw herself attending a big college such as U.C.L.A. However, Mr. Winters said that she would have many factors to consider, and thought that maybe she would try the easy thing, such as a Bryman school for a specific trade. However, he thought that if she could get into a two or four year college that she may wind up there. He knew that she would want to go to college.

Mrs. Cisneros always spoke with Beatriz about the importance of education, and about taking advantage of the opportunities that were out there, so, she was supportive of Beatriz’ future goals about becoming a pediatrician. Mr. Winters declared that based on how Beatriz acted, dressed, and the fact that she had an instrument, her family would be
supportive of her future goals. Beatriz said that her family “better be” supportive of her future goals, and honestly felt that they would be.

Beatriz contended that her parents were supportive of her school activities. Her mother was supportive of her playing the violin and even bought Beatriz her own violin. Beatriz told her that she wanted to play, so she went and got her the violin. Mr. Winters said that the parents made the concerts last year, and were supportive of her in that manner.

Success was important to Beatriz. She wanted to do well in school. She felt that if she did well that she could perhaps get a scholarship to college and her parents would not have to pay. Her strings teacher thought that what success meant to Beatriz was keeping up with others. He knew that she could keep up, but did not see her as a superstar that would surpass others.

An ideal day for Beatriz would be to go out and spend time with her mother because she felt that she didn’t get to spend any time with her. She said she just wanted one day, a day when her mother wouldn’t yell at her. Beatriz pictured an ideal activity as getting together with her cousins and playing all day at her grandmother’s house. Mr. Winters had a more general “ideal day” in mind, a day that any teenage girl would want, that perhaps a boy would talk to her, or she would pass a test, or perhaps someone would ask her to the be included in something.

Beatriz thought that an ideal reward would be either money or clothes for doing something good. Mr. Winters thought that any kind of recognition would be good for Beatriz. He thought that Panther Pride would mean a lot of her, but did not know if she
was in it or not. Beatriz' mother said that it did mean a lot to her to be a part of the school’s honor club.

In order to accomplish her future goals, including becoming a pediatrician, Beatriz was trying to get good grades, and was kind of doing her homework. She watched a lot of doctor television shows. What she planned on doing to accomplish her goals was to begin listening in science class. She also wanted to learn the anatomy of the human body.

In ten years Beatriz saw herself still attending school to be a doctor and getting her degree. Mr. Winters thought that in ten years Beatriz would probably be working part time and in still in school. He did not know that she wanted to become a doctor. He had no idea what she wanted to be when she grew up. In ten years, he said that he didn’t see her as pregnant because she was a serious person.

Physically in ten years Beatriz said that she would look like her mom because everybody said that she looked like her mom now. Some people had even mistaken them as twins. Mr. Winters said that Beatriz would probably not enter a beauty contest, and he knew that she was more realistic than that. He thought that she could either get heavier, or loose weight, but that it would ultimately be up to her. He thought she was big boned, so he just didn’t know.

In twenty years Beatriz saw herself as a doctor, helping children in a hospital or in “a doctor place.” Mr. Winters thought that it was hard to say where Beatriz would be in twenty years; he thought that she might have a family, but it was hard to say. He thought that she would be working at or close to being what she started out to do. He could see her setting a goal that she would be able to achieve, working within herself. He
perceived Beatriz as not having the confidence to do anything "big". He said that she probably wouldn't be a brain surgeon or an astronomer because she probably thought that she could not get there.

Physically in twenty years Mr. Winters thought that Beatriz might level out with her weight. He thought that she would have lost all of the weight she was going to loose or gained all the weight she was going to gain. Beatriz thought that in twenty years, she would look the same as she did when she was twenty-three.

Case Analysis

The purpose of this study was to determine the behavioral, environmental, and personal influences on the health status of four overweight and/or obese Hispanic female adolescents utilizing Albert Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory. Bandura (1977, 1986, & 1989) defined the Social Cognitive Theory as a reciprocal interaction of personal factors, behavior, and the environment. These interactions do not occur simultaneously, and some sources of influence may be stronger than others; differing with each individual, behavior and situation in which the behavior occurs (Bandura, 1989).

According to Bandura (1986), the environment is not a fixed property; rather it is inoperative until it is actualized by an action or actions. Behavior determines what part of the potential environment will become the actual environment. Further describing the reciprocal interaction between the environment and behavior, Bandura (1986) explained that the environmental influences partially determine how behavior will be shaped and activated. Environmental influences may affect individuals apart from their behavior, as when thoughts and feelings are modified through modeling, teaching and social
influences. Additionally, by observable characteristics, people may affect their social situation due to preconceived notions of their social status, thereby demonstrating the reciprocal interaction between personal characteristics and environmental influences. Additionally, one's personal factors: cognitive, what people think; the affective, what people believe and feel; as well as the biological events of individuals may shape and direct behavior. Expectations, beliefs, self-perceptions, goals and intentions also shape and direct behavior.

In this study, the environment was held constant while the personal factors and the behaviors of each individual were examined across all areas. The environment was threefold: physical, situational and social. The physical environment included the actual location, whereas the situation generally referred to the existing conditions or circumstances of that particular moment or place, and the social aspect of the environment referred to the relating society, its organization, community, and the interaction of its people. Behavior was viewed as the way in which a person responded or reacted to a certain set of conditions including social behavior, family, health related behaviors and task related behaviors. Personal factors referred to the cognitive, affective and biological events of each individual and included perceived self-efficacy, general attitude, personal responsibility, knowledge, and personal expectations. The following acronyms are representative of the data source(s) utilized to determine the personal factors and behaviors of the participants in relation to the environment. CF=Cumulative Files, Q=Questionnaire, OC=Observation Classroom, OPE=Observation Physical Education, OLT=Observation Lunch Time, I1=First Participant Interview, I2=Second
Participant Interview, I3=Third Participant Interview, IP=Parent Interview, IT=Teacher Interview and II=Informal Interview with the Participant.
Figure 8.1 Beatriz' Personal Factors General School and Physical Education Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS</th>
<th>KNOWLEDGE</th>
<th>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td><strong>SELF-EFFICACY</strong> (Q, II, IT)</td>
<td><strong>GENERAL ATTITUDE</strong> (Q, II, IT, IP, II, OPE)</td>
<td><strong>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY</strong> (Q, II, IT, OPE, CF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: School buildings and surrounding areas on campus</td>
<td>Sees herself as a loving person</td>
<td>Liked school</td>
<td>Frequent tardies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Actions self-perception, interactions and school events</td>
<td>Tried hard to do well academically</td>
<td>Liked being in strings</td>
<td>Occasional absences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td>Proud of herself for being on Panther Pride</td>
<td>Was sensitive and emotional about friends at school</td>
<td>Panther Pride Society Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Liked the teachers</td>
<td>Complied with school uniform policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Didn’t like getting up early for school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS</strong></td>
<td>Can do activity, but has little interest</td>
<td>Attitude about activity varied, but liked free activity time</td>
<td>Did what she was supposed to do in class to get by.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Locker room, field area, courts, MPR, and roll call numbers</td>
<td>Liked class because made friends in class</td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not make up work when she was absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, interactions and class activity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates and Physical Educators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 8.2 Beatriz’ Personal Factors Academic Classes and Lunch Time Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SELF-EFFICACY (Q, II, OLT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GENERAL ATTITUDE (Q, II, IP, OLT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (II, IT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KNOWLEDGE (II, IT, OC, OLT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS (II,)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMIC CLASSES</td>
<td>Proud Panther Pride Honor Society member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Classrooms</td>
<td>Enjoyed the violin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, and class work</td>
<td>Upset about science class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td>Favorite class: Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good friend to friends at school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hung out with other girls from modified physical education class among other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUNCH TIME AT SCHOOL</td>
<td>Didn’t look up to popular people, looked up to successful people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Lunch line, lunch tables, quad area, and basketball courts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self perceptions, conversations, actions, interactions with others, lunch events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates, and school staff</td>
<td>Happy to walk and talk with friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upset about loosing friends as grew apart when they got older.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quiet, shy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Got along well with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not assertive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not to fail a class and to remain in Panther Pride</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 8.3 Beatriz' Personal Factors Home Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>PERSONAL FACTORS (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOME</td>
<td>SELF-EFFICACY (Q, I2, PI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: House, yard, neighborhood</td>
<td>Family meant a lot to her, felt she was a contributing member to family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Actions, perceptions and situations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Family: immediate and extended, friends, and neighbors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 8.4 Beatriz’ Personal Factors Community, Church and Future Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Personal Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY</strong></td>
<td><strong>PERSONAL FACTORS</strong> (Cognitive, Affective, and Biological Events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHURCH</strong></td>
<td><strong>SELF-EFFICACY</strong> (I3, IP, IT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Catholic Church, classroom</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Beliefs, perceptions and opinions</td>
<td>Felt good about herself when she donated money to the church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Mass, Catechism, and Church Activities</td>
<td>Enjoyed being a parishioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FUTURE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: N/A</td>
<td>Happy with the way things were so no future change was necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Beliefs, goals, and intentions</td>
<td>Success was important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Family: immediate and extended, friends, neighbors and teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 8.5 Beatriz’ Behaviors General School and Physical Education Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (11, IT, OC, OPE, II)</th>
<th>FAMILY (12, IT, 1P)</th>
<th>HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIORS (12, IP, OPE)</th>
<th>TASK RELATED BEHAVIORS (12, IT, II, OLT, OPE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL SCHOOL</td>
<td>Played violin in strings</td>
<td>Mother played violin</td>
<td>No after school activities: failed to make sports teams and cheerleading</td>
<td>Habitual tardies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: School buildings and surrounding areas on campus</td>
<td>Had one or two close friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High rate of absences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Actions, self-perception, interactions and school events</td>
<td>Got along with everyone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complied with school uniform policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td>Teased because of weight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes uncomfortable with her classmates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doesn’t like being teased by classmates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS</td>
<td>Had few friends, frequently partnered with aunt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Locker room, field area, courts, MPR, and roll call numbers</td>
<td>Got along well with everyone</td>
<td>Failed the Ca fitness test</td>
<td>Participated the majority of the time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, interactions and class activity</td>
<td>Quiet, shy</td>
<td>Unable to run without difficulty—leans to left</td>
<td>Excellent behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, classmates and Physical Educators</td>
<td></td>
<td>Did just enough to pass the class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Figure 8.6 Beatriz’ Academic and Lunch Time Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (12, IP, OLT, II.)</th>
<th>FAMILY (12, IP)</th>
<th>HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIORS (12, OLT)</th>
<th>TASK RELATED BEHAVIORS (Q, IT, IP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACADEMIC CLASS</strong></td>
<td>Positive, but limited social interactions in class</td>
<td>Mother proud and supportive</td>
<td>Violin at school daily, ready to play</td>
<td>High achievement equaled Panther Pride Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Classrooms</td>
<td>Focused on music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self-perceptions, actions, and class work</td>
<td>Mutual respect between Beatriz and her classmates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: Friends, school staff and classmates</td>
<td>She liked her classmates and they liked her.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LUNCH TIME AT SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td>Sat down, ate snacks and shared lunch with aunt</td>
<td>Ate junk food from cafeteria and part of aunt’s lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical: Lunch line, lunch tables, quad area, and basketball courts</td>
<td>Walked at lunch with aunt, shared food</td>
<td>Shared food and drink with friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational: Self perceptions, conversations, actions, interactions with others, lunch events</td>
<td>Always with aunt and 1 or 2 more people</td>
<td>Did not wash her hands before or after eating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 8.7 Beatriz’ Behaviors Home and Community Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (12, IP, II)</th>
<th>BEHAVIORS</th>
<th>TASK RELATED BEHAVIORS (12, IP, II)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOME</td>
<td>Lived with 15 extended family members</td>
<td>Aunt was her best friend</td>
<td>Homework on own everyday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visited family out of state and out of country</td>
<td>Shared bedroom with her mother, father and brother</td>
<td>Pick up after self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dinner was a big family gathering at the table daily</td>
<td>Grandmother and aunt cooked dinner for family</td>
<td>Do dishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weekends were extended family gatherings for dinner</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clean the house on the weekend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5+ hours of television everyday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical: House, yard, neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Situational: Actions and perceptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social: Family: immediate and extended, friends, and neighbors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOME</td>
<td></td>
<td>Too lazy to be physically active</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lived five blocks from school but was driven to and from school daily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Diet not controlled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beatriz was in good health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual doctor visits, or when sick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mom and grandfather healthy, grandmother mysterious leg disease</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adults in the home shared grocery shopping duties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Figure 8.8 Beatriz’ Behaviors Church and Future Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (13, IP, II)</th>
<th>FAMILY (13, IP, II)</th>
<th>HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIORS</th>
<th>TASK RELATED BEHAVIORS (13, IP, II)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHURCH</td>
<td>No church activities</td>
<td>Went to church with mother, father, brother and grandmother</td>
<td>Religious, Catholic</td>
<td>Catechism classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td>Beliefs, perceptions and opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Mass, Catechism, and Church Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTURE</td>
<td>Ideal day: to spend day with mom and meet new people at school.</td>
<td>Family supportive of future goals</td>
<td>Perhaps loose weight through diet</td>
<td>Getting good grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical:</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Watches doctor television shows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational:</td>
<td>Beliefs, goals, and intentions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listen in science class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social:</td>
<td>Family: immediate and extended, friends, neighbors and teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Learn human anatomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ideal Reward: Money or clothes for doing something good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ideal Activity: Playing with cousins all day at her grandmother’s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

Beatriz perceived herself as having high self efficacy in the general school environment as well as in her academic classes. During an interview she stated that she tried hard to do well academically and was proud of her academic achievement. Her motivation was to never fail a class and to remain in the Panther Pride Society. When one becomes a member in the Panther Pride Society, a special T-shirt is issued to the person. Beatriz was observed wearing this T-shirt to school on numerous occasions, showing that she was proud of her accomplishments. Beatriz tried hard to do well academically, and was successful with her efforts. According to Bandura (1986, 1989), motivation stems from several self-reactive influences including, affective self-evaluation of one’s attainments, perceived self-efficacy, and adjustment of ones personal standards to keep them within attainable bounds. Further, the stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the more vigorous and persistent are the efforts to do well. She enjoyed school and was happy to be there; her grades were good, her test scores were average to above average, and she had positive experiences in school including learning to play the violin in strings.

Bandura (1997) suggested that one’s performance accomplishments have been shown to be the most influential source of efficacy information because they are based on one’s own mastery experiences. In Beatriz’ case, school successes, such as learning to play the violin like her mother and academic achievement suggest that she increased her self-efficacy beliefs.

Beatriz’ strings teacher described her as a shy, quiet individual who found it hard to make friends in school. During an interview Beatriz’ mother agreed with her teacher and disclosed that when Beatriz did find friends she became sensitive and emotional about
them. Further, she said that Beatriz was having a hard time finding friends in the eighth grade because Beatriz and her former friends from the seventh grade had grown apart and Beatriz was sad as a result. In order to be more socially active and to be around her friends she was compelled to try-out for the various teams at school: cheerleading, volleyball and basketball. However, she did not make any of the teams and was disappointed and disheartened with herself. Her mother encouraged her to attend the sporting events and watch her friends play even though Beatriz did not want to because she failed to make the teams. Bandura (1997) suggested that performance accomplishments on difficult tasks, tasks attempted without external assistance, and tasks accomplished with occasional failures may carry greater efficacy value than tasks that are easily accomplished, accomplished with external help or tasks where repeated failures are experienced with little sign of progress. Beatriz' failure to make the teams did not undermine her efforts to be successful in school, rather she continued to excel academically and musically, and declared that she would not fail a class and that she would remain in Panther Pride.

Beatriz was observed at lunch time purchasing food items, usually chips, from the cafeteria on at least five occasions during the course of the trimester. However, she denied that she ate lunch at school. After she purchased her snack food items she would sit at the lunch tables with her aunt and eat her snacks as well as food from her aunt’s lunch. Beatriz did not receive free or reduced lunch from the cafeteria. On two occasions she and her aunt were observed finishing her aunt’s lunch and walking with other girlfriends around the lunch area and basketball courts, sharing the remainder of Beatriz’ chips and other food items. Prior to eating they did not wash their hands. They

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would all dip into the bag of chips and pass them around. She and her aunt also drank from the same drink at lunch. This is perhaps an example of the normative influences that regulate ones actions: the social sanctions and self sanctions. These sanctions in turn influence behavior (Bandura, 1998). Bandura (1998) explained that behavior that fulfills social norms gains positive social reactions. The positive social reaction was the ability to share; food sharing is an important part of the human social life (Markovits & Benenson, 2003). It is an everyday occurrence to see children share food and drink. They often ate from the same bag of chips and drank from the same bottle of soda, Gatorade, or water. At this particular school the restrooms did not have soap or even soap dispensers. Therefore, when the children shared food, they also shared the risk of spreading germs and diseases.

Beatriz revealed in an interview that she had little interest in the activities in physical education. She felt that she could perform the activities, but had little concern whether she participated in the activities that were required in the class. Consequently, Beatriz only did enough to pass the class, she completed her laps in the maximum amount of time, completed a circuit in weight training using weights that were too light for her, and went through the motions of kick-boxing moves. She always dressed out in her physical education uniform but did not make up any of the work that was missed when she was absent. She liked the class because she was able to socialize and make friends. Other than the physical activity that Beatriz had in physical education class, Beatriz was not physically active in organized sports or in any other activities after school.

Perhaps because Beatriz tried out for so many teams and failed to make those teams she felt unmotivated or unwilling to participate in physical activity. Because she felt that
she still could perform the activities, but she didn’t perform them as well as should or could, her efficacy beliefs were in question as it appeared that Beatriz may have doubted her abilities due to her recent failures. According to Bandura (1989), negative discrepancies between internal standards and attainments may be either motivating or discouraging, and are determined in part by one’s beliefs that they can attain the goals they set for themselves. Further, those who harbor self-doubts about their capabilities are easily dissuaded by failure. Perhaps the multiple failures influenced Beatriz’ activity level in the class.

According to the Surgeon General (2001), decreased levels of physical activity may be attributed to the cultural, environmental, and lifestyle habits adopted by overweight/obese adolescents and may be the main reasons for the threefold increase in adolescent obesity over the past two decades. Beatriz’ family was not active and they did not encourage or influence Beatriz to be active. According to the interviews conducted with both Beatriz and her mother, Beatriz would arrive home in the afternoon and her aunt and grandmother usually watched her and the other young children that were living with or visiting Beatriz’ grandmother. Beatriz was one of the older children so she was left alone the majority of the time. During that time Beatriz was allowed to watch approximately five hours of television daily. Research has shown that the reduction in the amount of time children spend watching television has been shown to reduce weight gain (Robinson, 1999) and decrease energy expenditure (Dietz & Gortmaker, 2001). Neither Beatriz’ mother or father was home until late evening, therefore, Beatriz spent her time in front of the television. Her mother would call to check on her but she did not encourage Beatriz to be physically active, rather she wanted Beatriz to finish her homework.
Beatriz said that there were so many children around and that she had to get up early everyday, so when she did find a moment of peace she would sleep.

Beatriz did not participate in any community activities outside of school even though she had access to a park and recreation sport program. The only outside activity in which Beatriz participated was playing the violin and this occurred as a school function. Beatriz was not aware of the community activities that were available to her in her neighborhood. In an interview with Beatriz, she claimed to do homework and watch T.V. when she arrived home from school. On the weekends she said that the family would do things together like go to the mall. Her family was not physically active and they did not influence her to be active either.

Beatriz’ grandmother and aunt prepared dinner for the entire family every night, all fifteen different family members, including Beatriz and her autistic step-brother. The dinner was a big family gathering at the dinner table. Beatriz’ mother did not know what meals they cooked for her daughter, but knew that Beatriz ate most of what they prepared. However, if Beatriz did not like the dinner, then her mother would bring her home “take out” and Beatriz would have a late dinner at about 9:00PM. Beatriz did have some control over the food she consumed, as she purchased snacks at school and had her mother purchase dinner at fast-food establishments that typically sell foods that are high in fat, sugar, and salt (Hendrickson, Smith & Eikenberry, 2006) and if consumed over a life time may possibly have adverse effects on health (Gillis & Bar-Or, 2003). The adults in the home did the grocery shopping for the family as well as the food preparation, consequently, Beatriz did not have control over what was served for meals in the house.
Beatriz went to church with her mother, father, brother and grandmother. They were a religious family who believed in the Catholic faith. Beatriz attended mass every Sunday and catechism classes during the week. She did not attend any church activities but felt good when she donated money to the church. The Catholic Church influences family life and community affairs, giving spiritual meaning to the Hispanic culture by providing sources of strength (Caldwell, Sturges, & Silver, 2006). After the church services the family would have a huge gathering for extended family members, and food would be served. The food was served by the matriarch of the family and was usually at Beatriz’ home because she lived with her grandmother, the family’s matriarch. The family was close only to Beatriz’ mother’s side of the family. Her father’s family lived primarily in Mexico and they did not see them frequently, nor were they as close to his side of the family. Religion was a large part of Beatriz’ culture and her family life and she was influenced by the modeling provided by her religion as well as the instruction and social persuasion that organized religion conveys.

Both Beatriz and her mother stated in interviews that during the weekday afternoons Beatriz’ grandmother and her adult aunt watched over her and the other children in the household while Beatriz did her homework and watched television. Among Hispanic low socioeconomic families, child care is usually allocated to extended family members, establishing the child’s attachment to several significant adult relatives, despite the presence of the parents as the primary caregivers (Garcia-Coll, 1990). According to Bandura (1989), the values and attributes of children are reflective of the diverse sources of ones family. Children develop attributes comprised of different features of parental
and sibling values at each generation. Moreover, through familial transmission significant psychosocial patterns could emerge across the generations.

Both Beatriz and her mother said that during the weekdays Beatriz’ chores were to pick up after herself. Her mother said that everyone in the house had to do this chore because there were just so many people. Additionally, on the weekends Beatriz had to help clean the house. Beatriz was responsible with her chores, but sometimes she slacked off with her homework and studying, however, she knew that in order to be successful in the future she would have to study and read more because she wanted to be a pediatrician when she grew up. Beatriz had an optimistic plan for her future, and was motivated to achieve success. According to Bandura (1986), when a person personally pledges to a future goal, the commitment also creates motivational incentives by enlisting self-evaluative influences. Further, public commitment to a goal enhances the likelihood that one will achieve the goal due to the expectations of others, and possible embarrassing explanations or serious consequences if the goal is not achieved. Her family was supportive of her future goals. Beatriz knew what she wanted to be and do with her life, graduate high school, followed by graduating college and medical school, and eventually becoming a pediatrician within twenty years.

Through interviews with Beatriz about her home and school environment it was determined that Beatriz was a highly efficacious individual with a positive overall attitude at both home and school. She was quiet and reserved and had few friends, but she was well liked by her classmates and the school staff. Her family was close to her, and meant everything to her. They were also supportive of her. However, Beatriz professed during an interview that she was too lazy to be physically active and her
mother stated in a subsequent interview that Beatriz’ diet was not controlled. Beatriz ate foods high in fat and sugar almost exclusively. Additionally, she did not exercise nor did she participate in any physical activities. She received no guidance from her family, the school or the community on nutrition and exercise. During the course of the study Beatriz did not gain or loose weight nor did she grow. As a result she maintained her BMI of 34.8. Beatriz’ family and friends did not recognize the fact that she was an obese adolescent. She did not have a source of support for a change in behavior because her family and her friends did not recognize that she needed to change her behaviors in order to reduce the health related risks of her obesity.
CHAPTER 9

CROSS CASE ANALYSIS

In the previous chapters four case studies were presented and discussed. This chapter will examine the similarities and differences across the four cases in this study. The cases were determined to be similar if three or more of the participants exhibited like personal factors or behaviors in the same environment.

Commonalities

*School Environment: Personal Factors*

*Self Efficacy*

Within the school academic environment the four participants were all highly efficacious, had an overall positive attitude and high personal expectations. Self-efficacy is defined in terms of an individual’s perceived capability to attain a certain type of performance level that is task and situation specific in order to achieve specific results or goals (Bandura, 1986, 1989), whereas expectancy constructs are more global and general self-perceptions (Pajares, 1996). Carly, Jackie, and Jeannette perceived themselves to be smart, whereas Beatriz claimed she tried hard to achieve academically. All four of the participants felt they were good at something in school: Beatriz playing the violin in strings, Carly being a member of the yearbook, Jackie speaking intelligently and
Jeannette teaching others to dance in dance club. They all also enjoyed school they attended. Beatriz and Carly were both in the Panther Pride Honor Society and it was their personal expectation to remain members by achieving good grades. Jeannette’s personal expectation was to make Panther Pride and Jackie expected to get good grades.

In physical education class the four participants once again were all highly efficacious, had an overall positive attitude but had virtually no personal expectations for themselves. Bandura (1997) explained that outcome expectations consist of beliefs about whether a given behavior will lead to particular outcomes; whereas efficacy expectations consist of beliefs about how capable an individual is performing the behavior that leads to the desired outcome. Therefore, the four participants believed that they were able to perform the physical activities that were apart of the physical education class: Beatriz felt she could participate, but she had little interest, Carly felt that she could motivate others to do well, Jackie felt that she could perform the activities, and Jeannette claimed she liked to exercise. However, their personal expectations were to be participants in the class. With the expectation to be a participant, simply taking part in the class, their behaviors were consistent with their expectations. They all dressed for class, with the exception of Jackie who often forgot or lost her clothes. They also followed classroom rules, but did not expend any effort; they barely did enough activity to pass the class. For example, during an observation of the four participants, they were to walk/jog a ¼ mile in five minutes, Beatriz finished with a time of 4:55, Jackie and Carly were slightly over the five minute mark, and Jeannette was the last person in the class to finish. Their behaviors led to non-performance of activity and they did enough to prevent failing the class.
According to their report cards, Carly and Jeannette received “C” (average) grades and Beatriz and Jackie earned “D” (below average) grades.

Personal Responsibility

Beatriz, Carly and Jeannette were able to set, manage, and achieve their personal expectations in the academic school environment, whereas Jackie was not. Although sometimes the three participants had problems with personal responsibility, such as not completing homework or Beatriz’ frequent tardies and occasional absences, all three performed well academically and socially in school. Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette generally followed school rules; they always wore their school uniforms and were never a discipline problem. According to Bandura (1998) behavior is partially controlled by the social reactions it evokes, and all four of the participants got along well with their classmates and were socially active at lunch time, usually walking and talking with many friends. Additionally, all four of the participants felt that they were a good friend to their friends at school.

School Environment: Behaviors

Social Behaviors

The four participants got along well with their classmates. Carly’s yearbook teacher felt that Carly and her classmates had a mutual respect for one another, and even though Jackie used humor to prevent her classmates from teasing her, Jackie’s teacher felt that Jackie and her classmates treated one another with respect. According to Jeannette’s teacher, Jeannette was the classroom leader who was well respected by her classmates because they looked up to her. Beatriz’ strings teacher said that Beatriz had limited social interactions in class, but the interactions that she had were positive. The
participants agreed with the teachers’ assessment that they got along well with their classmates. Beatriz was shy and quiet while Carly, Jackie and Jeannette were outgoing and at times loud. All of the participants were social and sometimes Carly and Jackie talked in class to their classmates and friends and did not always pay attention to the teacher.

According to Bandura (1986), individual social situations interact with psychosocial factors through the evaluative and judgmental subcomponents of each psychosocial factor. The four participants felt that the physical education class was about being socially active, not physically active. Carly claimed it was her favorite class because she was able to socialize, and for the same reason Beatriz and Jackie liked the class. Even though Jeannette did not voice this opinion it was observed during class that she would rather socialize than perform physical activity. Jeannette’s socializing affected her activity level during class. Carly enjoyed motivating others to do activity while she would stand and watch from a distance cheering for them. Bandura (1986) stated that behavior is influenced by social norms through social or self sanction and self-sanctions help individuals to adopt personal standards and regulate their own behavior (Bandura, 1998). The conduct that was being valued by the participants and by their peers was one of socialization, not of personal responsibility to the activities required of the class.

At lunch time the four participants had many friends and were always with two or more friends as they walked and talked either with one another or with other friends. All four of the girls were socially active during lunch. Carly and Jackie were near one another at lunch and would often interact together and with one another’s friends. Jeannette usually sat at the lunch tables and talked with a different group of friends, but
Carly and Jackie always walked around the area and would often interact with Jeannette. Beatriz did not interrelate at lunchtime with the other three participants. They were social with many people at school, but, the only person in the school environment that had a best friend was Beatriz, and her best friend was also her aunt. Socially, the family influence appeared to be stronger than the social influence of the school environment to all four of the participants.

Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette were involved in after school activities with the school, but Jackie was not. Beatriz played in the second section violin in the strings section. Carly was the eighth grade section editor for the yearbook and Jeannette was a member of the school’s dance club.

*Family Behaviors*

According to Clutter and Nieto (2007), the most basic and common social unit for the Hispanic family is their immediate family, however, it is not uncommon for several family units to live with one another or in close proximity to one another. When interviewed, the four participants in this study stated that they were close to their immediate families, and either lived near or with extended family members. There is usually a strong reliance on family in day to day functions and crises. The father or oldest male relative holds the greatest power in most families and is expected to provide for and be in charge of their families. This was evident with the participants. In an interview with Jeannette’s mother, she stated that her husband was a good man who provided for her family. He worked as a truck driver and she stayed home and raised the children. With in the Hispanic community, women are expected to be in charge of the home and take care of the children (Clutter & Nieto, 2007).
Bandura (2001) asserts that within the SCT, family structures affect behavior mainly through their impact on the aspirations of the individual, his/her sense of efficacy, personal standards, affective states, and other self-regulatory influences, rather than directly. All four of the participants were supported in their academic endeavors by their parents and families. Carly's parents were adamant about Carly attending college, and encouraged her to do well academically. Jeannette's mother attended all of Jeannette's IEP meetings, and was very supportive of her in school. However, Jackie's mother did not know how Jackie was doing academically, and Jackie professed that she had told her parents she was doing fine in school and her mother believed that she was. However, she was close to failing the eighth grade.

Task Related

Beatriz, Carly and Jackie were not physically active at school nor were they physically active with friends. Jeannette was involved with dance club once per week and both Jeannette and Beatriz tried out for the after school sports teams at school but neither made the teams. All four of the participants failed the California State Fitness Test and were unable to run without difficulty. In observations of their physical education class, they all usually walked and only ran sporadically when completing their daily laps. During the course of the study, despite being enrolled in a physical education intervention class, the participants did not lose or gain weight nor did they grow; they stayed the same.
Home Environment: Personal Factors

Self-Efficacy

According to Bandura (1989), a child’s initial efficacy experiences are centered in the family and for all four of the participants, their families were their central focus. The four participants came from a positive home life. An adolescent’s positive home life, that includes familial support, nurturance, monitoring, and involvement tends to increase pro-social behavior (Griffin, Botvin, Scheier, Diaz, & Miller, 2000). Beatriz felt happy around her family and also believed that she was a contributing member. Carly’s family came first for her, and Jackie enjoyed her family even though at times she was annoyed with her siblings. Jeannette claimed that family was everything to her and her mother stated that Jeannette was affectionate with her family.

Personal Responsibility

All four of the participants had chores to do at home that were assigned by their parents. According to their mothers, Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette completed their daily and weekly chores with no problems. Beatriz was expected to clean the house on the weekend and to pick up after herself during the week. Carly had to help her grandmother make dinner every evening and Jeannette had to put away the clean laundry and keep her room clean. Jackie’s mother said that Jackie did not do her chores at home because there was no set schedule for completing them. Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette also completed their homework almost every night. According to Jackie’s teacher and Jackie, Jackie did not do her homework regularly, and would often loose assignments if she did complete them.
Beatriz, Carly and Jeannette expected their families to be supportive of their lives and perceived them to be influential. However, Jackie did not feel as if her family was influential in her decision making process, but her mother felt that she and Jackie's father were supportive of Jackie in school. Bandura (2001) asserts that personal agency and social structure depend on one another in order to operate. Further, human activity gives rise to social structures and sociostructural practices then impose constrains and provide enabling resources and opportunity structures for personal development and functioning. Jackie's inactivity is leading to the fall of the social structure of Jackie's family and Jackie's family structure does not impose constrains on her life with personal responsibility, physical activity, and diet thereby Jackie is not personally developing and functioning in school and at home.

Home Environment: Behaviors

Social Behavior

The four participants had dinner at the family dinner table as it was important to their family dynamic. Traditionally, midday and evening meals are considered to be significant family or social events (Clutter & Nieto, 2007). The four participants and their families would talk and share stories of their day. On Sunday afternoons extended family would join together for food, drink, and a family party. All four of the participants enjoyed these family gatherings. Beatriz' ideal day included playing with her cousins all day at her grandmother's house. Carly liked going to church on Sunday's so that she could go out to breakfast with her grandparents and other relatives after the church services. Jackie said that she liked it when her family got together on Sunday's, and her uncle's would get drunk and give her money. Jeannette's family even named their family
gatherings "recalentada's", which meant, to her family, a renewing of the party. Jeannette loved spending time with her god brother who was also her cousin. All four of the participants were family oriented and they did not have many friends outside of school, therefore, their family was considered to be very important to them. Traditionally, the Hispanic family is a close-knit group with strong family ties and is considered the most important social unit (Clutter & Nieto, 2007). All four of the participant's also indicated that they were closer with their maternal family than with their paternal family.

*Family Behaviors*

Beatriz, Jeannette and Jackie all were fluent speakers in both the English and Spanish Languages. The three participants also spoke Spanish as their first language. However, Carly did not speak Spanish, but understood a little of the language... All of the participants were also from a low SES background. Carly, Jackie, and Jeanette all lived with their mother and father as well as other siblings. However, Beatriz lived with her mother, step-father and step-brother.

The mother’s of all four participants did the grocery shopping for the family. Beatriz’ mother shared the duty since there were so many people living in the household. Both Carly’s mother and grandmother shopped for their family, once again because they were buying food for a large group of people. Both Jackie and Jeannette’s mothers purchased groceries for their families; however, they were both shopping for just their immediate family, and Jackie’s mother was shopping with WIC coupons, and Jeannette’s mother was also receiving government assistance. Carly, Jackie, and Jeannette did not have any control over the food that was purchased; they simply ate what was given to them, and
Beatriz would occasionally ask her mother for fast food if she didn’t like the meal that her aunt prepared. Food choices of the child could be affected by familial influences in regard to food choice: quantity, density, amount of fat, and food patterns, inclusive of fast foods. The family could also have an effect on energy intake in the way that the food is prepared and consumed (Dietz & Gortmaker, 2001). All four of the participants and their mothers said that they ate mainly Mexican food for dinner. According to the Diet of Hispanics and Latinos (2007), certain traditional Mexican foods are common, including rice and beans, usually prepared with lard. Additionally, tortillas, also prepared utilizing lard, are eaten at most meals. The Hispanic diet also incorporates fresh fruit and vegetables.

The four participants claimed that their refrigerators were continually stocked with fresh fruits and vegetables. However, all four participants said that chips were the most common item that they ate with their friends along with other junk food items. Drewnowski and Spector (2004) found that the association between poverty and obesity may be related due to the low cost of energy-dense foods, such as chips, which because of the economic value may be consumed in larger quantities in low-income households.

*Health Related Behaviors:*

All four of the participants were driven to and from school by various family members even though they lived within walking distance of the school. Dietz and Gortmaker (2001) suggest that the family may influence the child’s energy expenditure by various behavioral patterns, including whether or not the child walks (to school). Jeannette lived the farthest away at 1 ½ miles, whereas Jackie lived only three blocks away. However,
Jackie said that her mother drove her because her mother was afraid she would be run over by a car.

All four of the participants did not have their diet or physical activity controlled at home. No family members acknowledged that there was a problem with the weight of the participants. No one counseled or advised the participants on nutrition or exercise. Therefore, the participants were not physically active at home or away from home. They also were not knowledgeable about nutrition. The participants claimed they knew what nutritional foods were, but, when they described their favorite foods, they described foods high in fat, salt, and sugar, and because these foods were their favorites they probably consumed these foods more than any other type. However, Jackie's mother claimed that Jackie ate more nutritious food than junk food. The diet of Hispanics and Latinos (2007) attribute the changing quality of the Hispanic diet and the adoption of a more sedentary lifestyle to the rise in obesity among the Hispanic Population.

The participants were in good health according to their mothers as well as individual accounts of their health status. They all stated that they visited the doctor annually for shots, and went to the doctor if they were ill. Carly's mother mentioned that she had Carly tested to see if she had a thyroid problem, and the results were negative. She did not elaborate on Carly's weight, however. The family members of the participants had various health problems: Beatriz' grandmother had a mysterious leg disease, Carly's grandfather was diabetic and her mother had sinus problems, Jackie's uncle had heart disease, and Jeannette's mother had sciatica, therefore, the participants as well as their mother's were aware of various family health issues, but they still did not address the weight issue with their children.
According to interviews with both the participant and her parent, the participants were not physically active at home and neither were their parents. There is strong evidence that suggests the importance of including family-based components to enhance the effectiveness of children's health promotion (Perry, Luepker, Murray, Kurth, Mullis, Crockett, & Jacobs, 1988). Parents appear to be strong influences on the physical activity behavior of children. Children whose parents were physically active were shown to be five times as likely to be active than children whose parents were inactive (Moore, Lombardi, White, Campbell, Oliveria, & Ellison, 1991). The participants were inactive most of the day partially due to the self-reported amount of time that they spent watching television at home.

Task Related Behaviors

The four participants watched hours of television on a daily basis: Beatriz watched five or more hours, Carly up to three hours, Jeanette one to two hours, and Jackie watched six hours. By limiting television viewing time Robinson (1999) found that children reduced their BMI, skin fold thickness, waist circumference, and waist-to-hip ratio. Additionally, by reducing television viewing time, the child may also be able to expend more energy which may lead to a reduction in BMI (Dietz & Gortmaker, 2001). Even though the participants watched an excessive amount of television on a daily basis, Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette were able to accomplish their tasks at home, which included chores around the house and homework.
Community Environment Personal Factors:

Self Efficacy

Beatriz, Carly, and Jeanette were not involved in any community activities, but they were involved in their local churches. Jackie took acting classes in the community but did not attend church. The three participants who attended church enjoyed attending services. It was generally a family event, as each participant went with various family members every Sunday morning. The church was influential in the lives of Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette, and Jackie said that she felt that she should attend church. Since the church is the primary source of community support than perhaps the church should be involved in health promotion within the Hispanic community.

Community Environment Behaviors:

Social Behaviors

Beatriz did not participate in any of the church’s activities. She attended mass and catechism classes. Carly participated in many church activities such as Fellowship night, vacation bible school, and the Halloween Jubilee. Carly’s mother wanted her to be active in the church, but, she jokingly admitted that Carly probably attended church for the sole purpose of going out to breakfast with her grandparents. Jeannette was moved by the services and was especially inspired by the Day of Glory Mass where she received all three sacraments: communion, confession, and baptism on the same day, in a very special ceremony when Jeannette was seven years old.

Family Behavior

According to Clutter and Nieto (2007), the church is an influence to the Hispanic family life and its community affairs, giving spiritual meaning to the Hispanic culture.
The four participants attended church services with their families. Beatriz attended the Catholic Mass every Sunday with her family: her mother, step-father, step-brother, and grandmother. They rotated between the services in Spanish and in English. Carly went with her grandparents to a local Christian church every week and they were occasionally joined by various family members, including her parents, cousins, aunts and uncles. Jeannette attended services with her immediate family every week; however, occasionally her father would have to work and was unable to go with the family. Jeannette’s family attended the services in Spanish.

*Task Related Behaviors*

Beatriz had to attend catechism classes during the weekdays in order for her to have her confirmation (a celebration becoming an adult in the Catholic Church) in the Spring. Carly went to Sunday school classes at her church while the adults attended services. Jeannette attended Sunday Mass with her family. She read the missal and listened to the services. The participants went to various religious classes that were held in conjunction with church services. If they attended these classes and also went to the services every Sunday, this was a significant source of support for them, and perhaps the church should be a supportive environment for the promotion of health, and could perhaps be used as a source for intervention.

*Differences*

*School Environment Personal Factors:*

*Personal Responsibility*

Within the in the academic school environment the four participants perceived themselves to be highly self-efficacious, had an overall positive attitude and high
personal expectations; however, Jackie was the only participant whose perceived self-efficacy and personal expectations did not align with her personal responsibility. She was frequently tardy to school and had many absences over the course of the first trimester. Jackie also declared that she never really knew what was going in class and had a hard time keeping up. She rarely did her homework, and when she did complete her assignments she would often lose them. She was extremely forgetful. In class, it was observed that Jackie talked non-stop and was frequently out of her seat roaming around the classroom. She was unorganized, unfocused, distracted and inattentive in class. While the teacher was talking she frequently interrupted with inane comments. She was inconsistent with completing assignments, and overall received bad grades (a cumulative 1.50 G.P.A.). Bandura (1986) stated that many factors may contribute to the misjudgments of one's self-efficacy, including effort expenditure and persistence. Jackie approached her learning tasks as a highly self-efficacious individual, and felt very little need to invest any preparatory effort towards the academic tasks required of her, for example not completing her homework or class work, and not pursuing after school tutoring.

School Environment Behaviors:

Family and Health Related Behaviors

Both Carly and Jeannette qualified for free lunch due to the economic situation of their family. The nation’s free lunch program is for families with incomes 185% or below the federal poverty line which is approximately a $38,000 annual income (California Food Policy Advocates, 2007). Beatriz and Jackie had to pay full price for their lunch. However, neither Carly nor Jackie were observed eating at school. Beatriz’
aunt received lunch at school and Beatriz would eat from her lunch as well as purchase snack items. Jeannette ate the free lunch on a daily basis.

For many obese children and adolescents, the most widespread consequences of obesity are psychosocial (Dietz, 1998). Obesity may be considered a social stigmatism. According to Puhl and Brownell (2003), a stigmatized person possesses some attribute or characteristic that conveys a social identity that is devalued in some particular social context, such as an obese person consuming food. The stigma of obesity is strong. The social stigmatization associated with obesity may lead to negative or undesirable mood states and a negative self image which leads to low self esteem (Puhl & Brownell, 2003).

Task Related Behaviors

Beatriz and Carly were Panther Pride Society Members. They demonstrated responsibility by achieving high G.P.A.'s, good test scores and good behavior. They both were able to complete their homework and class work with virtually no problems. Even though Jeannette was on her way to becoming a successful student, she still hadn’t achieved her goal. Her grades were still low, although they were improving; she was not a member of the Panther Pride Honor Society. Jackie’s grades were inconsistent. She received “A’s” in some class while she failed others. Her cumulative G.P.A. was a 1.50, and she had failed math throughout junior high school. Jackie also had a high rate of absences and tardies.

Home Environment Behaviors:

Social Behavior

Beatriz and Carly lived with extended family members. Carly lived with eight other family members in the home of her grandparents. Beatriz lived with fifteen extended
family members in her grandparent’s home. Both Jackie and Jeannette lived with their immediate family, and Jackie had two older sisters that were living on their own away from home. Within the home environment, Beatriz shared a room with her parents and her step-brother, Carly shared a room with her two brothers, Jeannette shared a room with her younger sister, and Jackie had a room of her own.

According to Bandura (1989), as a child’s world expands socially, peers begin to assume an increasingly important role in the development of their self-knowledge of their capabilities, creating different social references, other than the family, for comparative self efficacy appraisal. The four participants had strong family ties, but very different choices for best friends. Beatriz’ best friend was her aunt who both went to school and lived with her. Carly’s best friend did not attend her junior high school, and therefore Carly only saw her after school or on the weekends, and spent a limited amount of time with her. Jackie’s best friend was her mother and Jeannette did not have one single best friend, rather she had many friends.

Family Behavior

Beatriz and Carly’s mothers and fathers both worked outside of the home, and both of their mother’s worked the swing shift, leaving the girl’s alone in the afternoon to do their homework unassisted and to perform their chores. Both girls were responsible and generally accomplished both tasks. Both Jackie and Jeannette’s mothers were stay-at-home mothers and both of their fathers worked.

Beatriz was the only participant who visited her family out of state and out of the country during vacation time. Carly and Jackie’s families enjoyed their annual camping trips with extended family members in the local mountain areas. Jeannette and her
mother both spoke of local family gatherings which occurred every weekend. Additionally, Jeannette would often visit family in Los Angeles on the weekends, a thirty minute drive from her home.

Health Related Behavior

The four participants had limited physical activity at home, but Beatriz and Jackie were completely sedentary the majority of the time as they watched excessive amounts of television on a daily basis. Carly exercised minimally because she walked to her friends or cousins house in the afternoon. Jeannette would also exercise occasionally as she would walk around her neighborhood or ride her bicycle in front of her house.

Dinner was usually prepared at home for the four participants, and usually Mexican food dishes were prepared. However, in Beatriz’ home, her aunt did the cooking for the family. In Carly’s home, Carly assisted her grandmother with the meal preparation. Both Jackie and Jeannette’s mother’s prepared dinner for their families, and at times Jeannette would help her mother cook and/or clean the kitchen. All four of the participants claimed that they knew what nutritional foods were but only Jackie and Jeannette said that knew how to read the nutritional labels on food items.

Overview

This chapter examined the similarities and differences between the four cases in this study. Obesity among children, as well as adults, has been shown to have a multitude of complex causes. According to the Surgeon General (2001) the principle of energy balance suggests that when energy intake is higher than energy expended, weight gain is the result. Although energy intake depends solely on dietary consumption, energy
expenditure is dependent on several components, namely physical activity. The participants in this study demonstrated a sedentary lifestyle, showing a dramatic decrease in physical activity that was shown to be influenced by cultural, environmental and lifestyle influences. The following chapter will discuss the data interpretation.
CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS

Utilizing the Social Cognitive Theory, the purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of four 13 year old 8th grade Hispanic females who were at risk of becoming overweight. The reciprocal interaction of the relationship between the environment, personal factors and individual behaviors as they relate to their health status were studied. A review of the relevant literature on childhood obesity and physical activity, as well as an overview of the Social Cognitive Theory advanced understanding and summarized the research pertaining to overweight and obese adolescents.

The four Hispanic females who met the criteria for this study, were identified in the “Fit for Life” physical education intervention class. Document collection (gathering information from participants’ cumulative files), a questionnaire, participant observation in certain contexts, and a series of interviews were conducted. Methodological triangulation, the convergence of data from the multiple data collection sources, was utilized in order to examine the research question from various angles, allowing for a comprehensive overview of the overweight and obese participants. The accumulated data were presented in four separate case studies, which examined the life perspectives of each participant. A componential analysis, a methodical search for attributes associated with cultural categories (Spradley, 1980) was used to interpret the data. The domain of the
componential analysis was the environment whereas the personal factors and behaviors of each individual were the attributes associated with the environment.

The interpretation of the componential analysis explained individual characteristics across each of the case studies, treating the data of each case independently as a comprehensive case. Following the within-case analysis, a cross-case analysis was conducted. Each individual case was examined carefully in order to determine the pattern of variables that transcended the cases. The similarities found were examined in the cross-case analysis. In addition, the differences that were found in the cases were also studied in the cross-case analysis.

This chapter presents conclusions regarding the implications of the influences of the school, home, and community environments on the personal factors and behaviors of the four overweight female Hispanic participants in this study. The chapter begins with how the school, home, and community environments were found to be influential on the personal factors and behaviors of the four participants and will conclude with recommendations for future research.

Research Conclusions

School Environment

The participants perceived themselves to be highly efficacious in the school environment and expected to do well academically. With the exception of Jackie, all four of the participants experienced academic success, thereby meeting their outcome expectations. Jackie was academically successful in elementary school, but had a difficult time acclimating to junior high school. Jackie's efficacy beliefs were shown to
not coincide with her outcome expectations. According to Bandura (1986) people who grossly overestimate their capabilities generally undertake activities that are beyond their reach, resulting in needless failure, which may be the case with Jackie. Bandura (1986) further elaborated that many factors can contribute to the misjudgments of one’s self-efficacy, including effort expenditure and persistence. Accordingly, when Jackie approached her learning tasks as a highly self-efficacious individual, she felt very little need to invest any preparatory effort towards the task, for example not completing her homework and class work. Bandura (1986) also described one’s thought patterns and emotional reactions as having an effect on people’s judgments of their capabilities. In Jackie’s case, she perceived herself as highly efficacious and was therefore able to attribute her failures to insufficient effort. She had her teacher’s believing that her failures were due to lack of effort. Self-efficacy will be misjudged when ones personal factors interfere with ones self-evaluation (Bandura, 1986). Jackie truly thought that she would do well in school, in fact, she expected to do well, but did not. In Jackie’s case it was unclear where the distortions in her perceived self-efficacy occurred as these distortions may have occurred at the level of perception during cognitive processing, or during recall of efficacy-relevant experiences, or possibly by how she cognitively selected, combined and weighed the information available. Faulty self-efficacy may also have occurred when she distorted the memory of efficacy-relevant experiences and the circumstances under which they occurred.

Bandura (1989) stated that perceived self-efficacy is influential in the exercise of personal control over motivation. Membership in the Panther Pride Honor Society motivated Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette to do well in school. The participants, with the
exception of Jackie, were influenced by the personal challenge of gaining or maintaining membership into the Panther Pride Honor Society, providing them with motivation and self-directedness to attain the goal. Bandura, (1989) described motivation based on aspirational standards as a process of cognitive comparison between internal standards and personal attainments. Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette experienced individual mastery experiences academically. Further, the participants all stated that they enjoyed school and all of the participants, with the exception of Jackie, were involved in school activities. The four participants had many friends at school, and were extremely social in class. All of the participant’s were highly efficacious in the school environment, including their physical education environment.

Health and Physical Activity

In the physical education environment the students were not physically active rather they were socially active. The Panther Pride Honor Society provided an overall goal for academic achievement, and the participants could still attain or maintain membership without doing well in physical education. Additionally, within the class environment, goal setting opportunities were not available for the participants. Therefore, there were no external motivators available in the class, leading to low achievement grades and physical inactivity for the participants. Jackie thought she could do the physical activities required in physical education, but she couldn’t always perform them. Jackie’s own self-evaluation was a misjudgment by Jackie based on her personal factors.

The “Fit for Life” class was designed for 12 and 13 year old 7th and 8th grade overweight and obese students who had serious physical, social, and cognitive problems. Some of the students enrolled in “Fit for Life” did not or could not participate in the
physical activities offered in the class. As a whole, they minimally participated, doing just enough to pass the class, but not enough to achieve a training heart rate, or to become physically fit. Within the physical education class, grades were based on the responsibilities and capabilities of each student in relation to attendance, tardies, dressing out for class and class participation. Participation grades also considered the personal limitations of each individual. For example, Jackie’s asthma, Jeannette’s condition with her flat feet, and Carly’s inability to move due to her weight may have affected their ability to run or perform other activities in the class.

Their perceptions of the four participants in relation to their health did not equate being healthy with physical activity or with overweight/obesity. When asked in the second interview “How is your Health?” followed by “Do you have any health problems,” the participants all said that they were healthy and that they did not have any health problems. When the parents of the participants were asked relatively the same question in their interviews: “How is your child’s health?” followed by “Does she have any health problems,” Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette’s mothers stated that their children were healthy and that they did not have any health problems. Jackie’s mother claimed that Jackie was healthy, but that she had a history of asthma. Neither the participants nor their parents mentioned overweight or obesity as a health concern. Moreover, the parents did not mention whether or not the doctor’s of the participants had addressed the weight issue of their children. Therefore, the perceptions of health, by both the participants and their parents did not coincide with their overweight/obesity and the participants did not see that their sedentary behaviors and their dietary patterns were problematic and needed to be changed.
According to Bandura (1998), within SCT, behavior that gains acceptance and approval gains positive social reactions, such as the acceptance by family and peers of the participants’ behaviors. Moreover, these social norms advocate behavioral standards which create one's self-regulatory system which operates through self-sanctions. Behavior is therefore regulated by self-evaluative reactions. Further, self-sanction evaluation is one of the more influential regulators of human behavior, giving individuals self-satisfaction and self-worth. The participants in the study believed that they did not have to change their behaviors. These beliefs were found to be based on the acceptance of current behaviors as social norms.

Social Activity

Through observations and interviews, the findings indicated that within the school environment, social behaviors were shown to be influential on the health status of the participants due to the participants’ selection of friends. During school lunch time the participants interacted with other classmates, friends, and with one another. Many friends of the participants were overweight and also happened to be students in the “Fit for Life” class. Bandura, (1989) declared that people tend to choose peers who share similar interests and values. Further, he stated that peers were a major agency for the development and validation of self-efficacy. Following Bandura’s assertions, the participants were seeking others who were like-minded, and it was observed that they were also of like physical stature; overweight. During lunch time and classroom observations, the overweight issue was not addressed by the participants or their friends, classmates, or school personnel. Additionally, the participants did not mention any issues regarding overweight or obesity in the formal or informal interviews. Therefore, the
participants did not acknowledge the fact that they were overweight. Consequently, they had no desire to change as they had no recognition that overweight/obesity could lead to serious health issues including diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and as such may lead to a shortened life (Barlow, Trowbridge, et al, 2002, Committee on Nutrition, 2003, Dietz, 2004).

Bandura (1986) stated that expectations, beliefs, emotional and cognitive competencies are developed and modified by social influences through modeling. The first formal interview revealed that the four participants had modeling influences in their school environment as they looked up to successful students at school and wanted to emulate the behaviors of the successful individuals. They did not look up to the popular people, and at times were disgusted with their loud, boorish behaviors that allowed them to become popular. The four participants felt that they wanted to be successful in their lives, and therefore, perceived the people who were academically successful to be models of the behaviors that they wanted to imitate.

The elements of perceived high self-efficacy, motivation, and goal setting show that the school environment was influential to the participants. The Social Cognitive Theory suggests that self-efficacy beliefs work together with cognized goals, outcome expectations, and perceived environmental barriers and facilitators in the regulation of motivation, action, and personal well-being. Additionally, the social behaviors of the participants were shown to be influential on the health status of the participants within the school environment. The peer and the school staff and faculty relationships incurred by the participants did not foster feedback or communication regarding the weight status of the participants, thereby showing that the social support regarding the health status of the
participants was negligible. According to Bandura (1998), perceived self-efficacy and social support strengthen one another in a bi-directional manner; social support builds relationships and enhances personal efficacy. Consequently, the behaviors of the participants were reinforced when they did not receive feedback from their social support systems at school.

Home Environment

Bandura (2001) asserts that within the SCT, family structures affect behavior mainly through their impact on the aspirations of the individual, his/her sense of efficacy, personal standards, affective states, and other self-regulatory influences, rather than directly. All four of the participants were supported in their academic endeavors by their parents and families. Carly’s parents were adamant about Carly attending college, and encouraged her do well academically. Jeannette’s mother attended all of Jeannette’s IEP meetings, and was very supportive of her in school. However, Jackie’s mother did not know how Jackie was doing academically, and Jackie professed that she had told her parents she was doing fine in school and her mother believed that she was. However, she was close to failing the eighth grade.

The main influences on the health status of the participants were their families. The family had both direct and indirect influences in regard to encouragement with rules, homework, chores, church, and physical and social activities. The participants were extremely family oriented, and did most everything together, including shopping, traveling, and various social events. Family was the most important thing in their lives. Carly’s father taught her that family came first, and through interviews with the other
participants, it was evident that they all felt and acted the same. Traditionally, for the Hispanic culture, family is the most important social unit (Clutter & Nieto, 2007).

Rules

The participants typically came home right after school and usually ate a snack or lunch. After they ate, they would have to do chores and homework. The rules were the same for all four of the participants. However, after these tasks were completed, the participants generally watched television, and were sedentary from the time they come home from school until the time they went to bed. The participants, with the exception of Jackie, were able to follow these simple rules at home. Jackie did not complete homework or do her chores on a daily basis. Jackie existed primarily on her own, floundering and faltering in a day to day existence. Research has shown (Eamon, 2005; Lopez, Ehly, & Garcia, 2002) that the academic success of the Hispanic adolescent is directly related to the home environment, with the most stable home (i.e. positive familial involvement) promoting academic achievement (improved school attendance, better grades and reduced dropout rates). Therefore, the lack of success in junior high school for Jackie may in part be due the inconsistency in her home environment.

Homework

Beatriz and Carly were left on their own everyday to complete their homework as their parents worked in the afternoon. However, both Carly and Beatriz were able to motivate themselves to do well in school. According to Bandura (1989), the ability to influence oneself by personal challenge and evaluative reaction to one's attainments provides a major cognitive instrument of motivation and self-directedness. Both Carly and Beatriz were motivated to complete homework because they valued their
membership in the Panther Pride Honor Society, had high self efficacy in the school environment, high outcome expectations and were able to adjust their personal standards, keeping them within attainable bounds. They were motivated to do well.

Jeannette, although not a member of the Panther Pride Honor Society, had the attainable goal of becoming a member. She was highly efficacious in the school environment and was beginning to do well in school academically, after years of being unsuccessful in elementary school. She had only recently begun to do homework and was currently enlisting the help of her brother and her sister to help her study. Within the Social Cognitive Theory, if people believe that they can manage and perform the courses of action required to attain certain outcomes and goals then people will become resilient to obstacles, failed experiences and adversity. Jeannette was motivated to do well in school, and was beginning to self-regulate her behaviors regarding her homework.

All of the participants with the exception of Jackie were motivated and self-directed with completing their homework. Jackie’s mother told Jackie to do her homework, but she did not check to see if it was finished or not. Consequently, when Jackie returned to class, she often had incomplete homework or missing homework. Additionally, Jackie was observed trying to complete her homework during lunch time at school, which reinforced the fact that the rules of Jackie’s home environment were not enforced or followed by Jackie.

Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette were able to motivate and self-regulate their behaviors because of their positive, supportive home environment. Beatriz’ mother spoke with Beatriz about the importance of education, and about taking advantage of the opportunities that were out there, thereby supporting Beatriz’ future goals of becoming a
pediatrician. Additionally, Beatriz’ mother went back to college to earn a degree, and was both supporting the family and attending classes, which provided Beatriz with a positive model that Beatriz could emulate. Carly’s family also valued education, and began as early as Carly’s fifth grade year preparing Carly for college. Jeannette’s family was supportive of her education. Her mother attended all of her IEP meetings, her brother and sister helped her study, and her brother guided her when it came time to choose classes at school. Therefore, Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette were encouraged and influenced by their parents and were able to adopt behavioral standards through social and self-sanctions, creating self-regulatory systems that operated through their self-sanctions. The parents encouraged their children to perform well academically and thereby influenced their children’s academic self-regulatory development, which supported Zimmerman, Bandura and Martinez-Pons (1992) research that parents are social models for their children which allows their children to develop academic self-regulatory skills.

Chores

At home, the participants were encouraged to perform chores that benefited the family. The four participants were responsible for helping to clean the house with other family members on the weekends. During the week, the participants were responsible for keeping their rooms clean and performing various other chores to assist the family. Carly helped prepare dinner, Beatriz did the dishes after dinner, and Jeannette helped with the cooking, cleaning, and putting things away. Jackie’s family did not encourage her to perform her chores at home. She was not made to do anything and she claimed it was because she did not have a set schedule outlining when to do her chores, thereby,
diffusing responsibility for her behavior, and placing blame on her mother. According to Bandura (1989), although parental guidance and sanctions influence a child's socialization process, the parents gradually allow the child to internally control and direct their external sanctions. However, Jackie was not internally controlling or directing her behaviors, nor was she receiving parental guidance. Bandura (1986) further elaborated that the link between one's conduct and its consequences is masked by diffusion of responsibility for culpable behavior, weakening the power of self-sanctions. Therefore, Jackie's behaviors were not like the other participant's behaviors, she was not capable of self-direction whereas the others were self-directing their behaviors in a positive manner.

From the perspective of the Social Cognitive Theory, motivation and self-regulatory behaviors influence health-related behavior through the sociostructural and personal determinants of health (Bandura, 1998). Further, within the Social Cognitive Theory, self-efficacy beliefs operate in conjunction with cognized goals, outcome expectations, and perceived environmental barriers and are facilitators in the regulation of human motivation, action, and well-being. These factors have a direct effect on the acquisition of competencies that affect the physical and emotional well-being as well as the self-regulation of health habits.

**Physical Activity**

The participants were not physically active at home, although Jackie claimed that she liked to play basketball with the neighbor, and Jeannette's mother said that Jeannette would occasionally ride bikes in front of their house. However, Jackie and Jeannette did not perform enough physical activity to burn calories or reduce body fat. Overall, the participants were inactive, as were their parents. When asked in an interview about what
types of activities they did with their family, Carly and Jackie’s parents said that the family took annual camping trips, whereas Beatriz and Jeannette’s parents spoke of weekend family gatherings that usually centered on food. The parents did not mention any physical activities that they did alone or with their family. Children whose parents were physically active were shown to be five times as likely to be active than children whose parents were inactive (Moore, Lombardi, White, Campbell, Oliveria, & Ellison, 1991). Therefore, the parents did influence the participant’s activity levels by not being active themselves. Young children learn from the behavioral modeling that encompasses their daily lives (Bandura, 1986).

The four participants did not walk to school; their parents or other family members picked them up from school even though they lived a fairly short distance away. The parents did not indicate whether they perceived the area to be unsafe; however Jackie said that her mother did not let her walk because she was afraid that she would be run over. Therefore, the parents once again influenced the activity levels of the participants as research has found that walking to school may increase a child’s activity level (Fox, 2004).

The family member’s of the participants did not encourage them to be physically active. No one supported the idea of going outside and playing, visiting friends, or engaging in any type of activity. When the participants completed their chores and homework they watched television. The amount of television time that the participants were allowed to watch was not governed by anyone. Jackie watched the most television of the four participants, up to six hours per day. Dietz & Gortmaker (2001) suggest that the family may influence the child’s energy expenditure by various behavioral patterns,
such as the allowable amount of television viewing time. Therefore, the family was influential in promoting a sedentary lifestyle by allowing the participants to watch unlimited hours of television per day.

Social Activities

Krahnstoever-Davison & Schmalz (2006) studied youth at risk for physical inactivity and found that support from all sources, parents, peers, and friends were linked to higher levels of physical activity among adolescents. These findings indicated that peers may be a critical source of support for adolescents. However, through interviews, the participants said that they were not physically active with friends and they had limited social interaction with their peers at home. At times Jeannette would chat on the internet with friends, but she never went places together with them. Carly said that a typical activity with her friends was to walk to the movies and then go to Carl’s Jr. afterwards. However, Carly’s mother claimed that although Carly had friends, there was no going to the movies, or places with them. She further elaborated that Carly’s cousins were her friends and that Carly “hung out” with them. She had only dropped Carly off at a friends’ house twice and had only met two of her friends. Jackie’s mother said that Jackie did not have many friends. She said that sometimes Jackie and one or two friends would go to the mall and take pictures, or go the movies on Sunday’s. Her mother said that Jackie didn’t really like to do many activities except for watching television and playing on the computer. Sometimes Beatriz would go the movies with her friends and after the movies they would just hang out until their parents came to pick them up. Beatriz’ mother felt that Beatriz liked to go out with her friends, especially to the movies.
The parents, peers, and friends of the participants did not provide social support for engaging in physical activity and thereby influenced inactivity in the participants, promoting a sedentary lifestyle. The participants had limited social interactions with friends outside of school, especially Carly and Jeannette who did not have any contact with friends once they left the school environment. The social interactions of the participants were primarily centered around family gatherings that generally involved eating Mexican food that was cooked by the matriarchs of the family.

Jeannette’s family referred to them as a “recalentada”, a renewing of the party. “Recalentada” actually meant to warm-up food, i.e. in a microwave, therefore, even the familial name given to their party reinforced the fact that food would be served.

Food

Family life has traditionally occupied a central place in Hispanic culture, and this has influenced dietary behaviors through home preparation of meals and the practice of families eating together (Clutter & Nieto, 2007). The core elements of the traditional Hispanic diet, includes grains and beans as well as fresh fruits and vegetables. However, based on a survey conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture (1999), 46% of the Mexican-American diet consisted of sugars and candy, and 36.9% of the Mexican-American diet consisted of fats and oil. Based on the favorite foods listed by the participants: chicken tenders, hamburgers, orange chicken, pizza, lasagna, tuna fillet, fruit, and Mexican food, their diet is consistent with the core elements of the Hispanic diet when they discuss eating Mexican food and with the survey conducted by the Department of Agriculture. However, many of their favorite foods are American foods that are also high in fat and sugar. Aldrich & Variyam, (2000) attribute the acculturation
of Hispanics to the United States as a reason for the decline in the health behaviors of Hispanics. Further, they contend that Hispanics are undergoing a transition away from their traditional values and customs and are adopting the values and behaviors of the United States, such as consuming fast foods and watching television which has led to a change in dietary patterns as well as a more sedentary lifestyle. Beatriz’ stepfather was born in Mexico while her mother was the first generation to be born in the United States; Carly’s parents were also the first generation to be born in the United States. Both Jackie’s parents and Jeannette’s parents were born in Mexico. Therefore, perhaps the gradual changes that are taking place within the homes of the participants as they acculturate to the United States is greatly affecting their food intake as well as their activity levels.

Community

According to their parents, both Carly and Jackie were involved in activities outside of the home and school environments. During an interview with Carly’s mother, she mentioned that Carly was enrolled in a poetry class at the local library, but Carly did not mention the program at all in the many formal and informal interviews that were conducted. In the interviews with both Jackie and her mother, they both mentioned that Jackie’s mother drove her to the other side of town once per week to take an acting class. However, it was not apart of the any community programs, rather it was a privately owned business.

The four participants were not involved in any community activities, although there were various programs available for them. Many of the models and ideas for promoting physical activity advocate community based programs. The Guidelines for school and

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community programs to promote lifelong physical activity among young people (1997), were developed by the CDC utilizing research, theory, and consultation with experts on the national and federal levels, and it was determined that the schools as well as the community should be targeted to promote physical activity. Recommendations for the community programs included providing a range of developmentally appropriate community sports and recreation programs that would be attractive to all young people outside of the school setting. The guidelines also stated that the activities should promote physical activity, complement the school programs by providing opportunities to engage in activities that may not be offered in school, provide a sports and recreation program for people of all levels of ability and the community should provide access to the programs, eliminating the need for transportation, fees, or special equipment.

The participants had access to park and recreation activities including youth sports, a supervised free community center, three parks within a mile radius of the school, and a free after school program which involved tutoring and activities on the school campus. Also available were a local YMCA center with a complete weight room and a youth sports program. Even though the community programs promoted physical activity, were accessible and were free or of little cost, the participants did not participate in the programs, in fact, they didn’t really know that these programs existed. When asked in interviews if they participated in park and recreation programs the participants either shrugged their shoulders or gave a blank stare. Perhaps the community needed to reach out further to the schools to promote their programs and activities as the participants had no knowledge of a community based programs.
Church

Even though the participants were not involved with community programs, the participants, with the exception of Jackie attended church within the community. For Beatriz, Carly, and Jeannette attending church was a family event. In the Hispanic culture, church influences family life and community affairs, giving meaning to their culture (Clutter & Nieto, 2007). After the church services, the participants gathered with family members to eat, play, and spend time together. Even though Jackie did not attend church, her family still had a gathering every Sunday afternoon. Family gatherings were important to the four participants as well as to their families. Jeannette’s mother professed during her interview that family was everything to her, and in subsequent interviews, the other parents and participants echoed her feelings. Research (Vandewater & Lansford, 1998) has shown that the structure of the family is influential in promoting adolescent prosocial behavior and positive mental health, with family structure being the most influential.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study contributes to research on the health status of overweight and/or obese adolescents. The study utilized the constructs of the Social Cognitive Theory and studied the affects of the behavioral, environmental, and personal influences on the health status of four overweight and/or obese adolescents. A componential analysis interpreted the data using the environment as the domain and the personal factors and behaviors of each individual as the attributes associated with the environment. The
school, home, and community environments were found to be influential to the health status of the four overweight Hispanic participants.

Within the school environment it was found that there were no sources of modeling, no school norms, and a limited amount of education on health and physical activity. The only source of information regarding children's health was a 50 minute block of daily physical education, where there were actually 25 minutes of activity. Every trimester during physical education class, the participants received 30 minutes of health education, centered solely on nutrition.

While observing the participants, they did not exhibit healthy behaviors at school. Carly and Jackie were never observed eating and Beatriz ate mainly junk food. Jeannette ate the school lunch, which was far from nutritious, and always had a bag of hot Cheetos when she left the lunch area. The participants did not perform physical education activities consistently and did not take part in after school programs.

The parents and the family of the participants were the primary source of influence on their health status. The behaviors of the participants were being reinforced and perpetuated by the family. During the interviews the participants stated that they were aware of nutritional foods, were concerned about their BMI, and felt that they did not eat a lot. The parents, during their interviews supported what their children said and felt that they provided nutritious foods for their children. The parents did not mention that their teenager had a weight or food issue. They seemed to believe that their child was healthy and happy. The parents did not recognize that their adolescent was overweight, and therefore, reinforced their sedentary lifestyle and their consumption of foods that were high in fat and sugar, perpetuating the problem.
The participants did not participate in any community programs as they had no knowledge that the programs existed. Therefore, the community indirectly influenced the health behaviors of the participants as the subjects did not participate in any of the programs, thereby increasing the amount of sedentary time they had on a daily basis.

The school, home, and community environments were found to be influential to the health status of the four overweight Hispanic participants. The school provided a limited amount of time for physical activity, and did not provide a health education class. Nutrition education was not discussed or encouraged at school. The family was found to be the primary source of influence on the health status of the participants. The diets of the participants were not controlled by the family, and family gatherings and meal times were huge social events for the participants and the consumption of food was encouraged. Additionally, the sedentary behaviors of the participants were being reinforced and perpetuated by the family, and unlimited television viewing time was a contributor to the inactivity of the participants. The participants did not participate in any community programs as they had no knowledge that the programs existed. The health related behaviors of the participants were not perceived to be a problem by the peers and family members, therefore, the participants were unaware that they needed to change their behavior.

*Future Research*

SCT provides a basis for constructing health promotion programs that integrate the family, school, and the community in a reciprocally influencing manner, addressing the personal and environmental determinants of health behavior. Therefore, SCT should be
utilized in order to determine how health promotion programs could be implemented and sustained that involve the family, school and the community.

Considering that many of the lifelong health habits are formed during childhood and adolescence and are rooted in familial practices, the family should be studied as an influential factor in the health related behaviors of adolescents. Cultural patterns should be examined in order to fully understand the influences that culture plays on the family environment.

The expected outcomes of finding overweight adolescents to have low self esteem, low self-efficacy, and to be a social outcast due to their weight issues was not found in this study. All of the participants appeared to have high self-esteem as they did not want to change anything about themselves in the near future that had anything to do with health related behaviors. They had a positive self-image that was observed during the interviews and while they were on campus. They had high-self efficacy in school and at home. They were extremely social at school and at home. Perhaps because the participants were young adolescents the issues of self esteem and body image may become more of a social concern when they enter high school. However, the participants, overall seemed to at ease with who they were as people.
APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENTS

UNLV
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS

PARENT INFORMED CONSENT
Department of Sports Education and Leadership

TITLE OF STUDY: Life as an Adolescent
INVESTIGATOR(S): Monica Lounsbery, PhD and Wanda Rhodes
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: 702-895-4629

Purpose of the Study
Your child is invited to participate in a health related research study. The purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of adolescents and their health status by learning about the relationship between the environment, individual behaviors and other personal factors.

Participants
Your child is being asked to participate in the study because he/she is a student enrolled in the “Fit for Life” class.

Procedures
If your child volunteers to participate in this study, and is called to be a participant in the study, he/she will continue as a student in the “Fit for Life” class. As function of the class your child’s BMI will be calculated. Your child will also complete a questionnaire that focuses on his or her perceptions in terms of attributes, beliefs, and behaviors. Additionally, your child will participate in three separate thirty to forty minute audio recorded interviews during school hours. The purpose of the first interview will be to discuss your child’s likes, dislikes, and hobbies as well as his or her attitudes and feelings about the school environment. The second interview will focus on the family and the community, while the third interview will focus on how your child perceives his or her future. Lastly, your child will be observed during class and lunch time. Observations will be utilized to assess the class participation, social interaction during class and at lunch, and academic progress of your child.
TITLE OF STUDY: Life as an Adolescent
INVESTIGATOR(S): Monica Lounsbery, PhD and Wanda Rhodes
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: 702-895-4629

Benefits of Participation
There may not be direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, we hope to learn about the lives of adolescents and the roles that family, friends, peers, play in shaping their health status. The information from this study may lead to possible health intervention programs for adolescents.

Risks of Participation
There are risks involved in all research studies. However the risks in this study are minimal and consist of taking thirty to forty minutes to complete an interview on three separate occasions. In addition, your student may become uncomfortable when answering questions.

Cost/Compensation
There will not be a financial cost to your child to participate in this study. The study will take 90-100 minutes of your time during the course of the first trimester, which includes three separate 30-40 minute interviews. Your child will not be compensated.

Contact Information
If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Dr. Monica Lounsbery at 702-895-4629. For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact the UNLV Office for the Protection of Research Subjects at 702-895-2794.

Voluntary Participation
Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with the university. You are encouraged to ask questions about at the beginning or any time during the research study.
PARENT INFORMED CONSENT
Department of Sports Education and Leadership

TITLE OF STUDY: Life as an Adolescent
INVESTIGATOR(S): Monica Lounsbury, PhD and Wanda Rhodes
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: 702-895-4629

Confidentiality
All information gathered in this study will be kept completely confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for at least 3 years after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be destroyed.

Participant Consent:
I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

__________________________________________
Parent’s Signature
__________________________________________
Parent Name (Please Print)

__________________________________________
Child’s Name (Please Print)

__________________________________________
Date
PARENT INFORMED CONSENT

Department of Sports Education and Leadership

TITLE OF STUDY: Life as an Adolescent
INVESTIGATOR(S): Monica Lounsbery, PhD and Wanda Rhodes
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: 702-895-4629

Participant Consent for Audio Taping Interviews
I have read the above information and agree to the audio taping of three separate interviews. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

______________________________
Parent’s Signature
Print

______________________________
Parent Name (Please Print)

______________________________
Child’s Name (Please Print)

______________________________
Date

Participant Note: Please do not sign this document if the Approval Stamp is missing or is expired.

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APPENDIX B

Questionnaire

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. Where were you born?
4. I live with: (list their names and ages).
5. How far away do you live from school?
6. How do you get to school everyday?
7. How do you get home everyday?
8. Describe how you see yourself.
9. Describe how other people see you.
10. List your class schedule and your teachers.
11. Who is your favorite teacher? Why?
12. What is your favorite subject in school? Why?
13. My favorite thing to do is: ______________ , because:
14. I get to do my favorite thing when ______
15. What do you do in your free time?
16. My favorite food is:
17. Describe nutritional foods.
18. Describe your worst experience: ________________.
19. Describe your best experience: ________________________.

20. The thing I do best is: ________________________.

21. I am not very good at doing: ________________, because:

22. Are you aware of any health related problems that you or your family may have? If so, please describe the problem(s).

23. Are you concerned about your weight or your BMI?

24. Are you interested in learning about nutrition?
APPENDIX C

Student Interview #1

1. Describe your school.

2. Describe your typical day at school.

3. Describe an ideal day at school.


5. Describe physical education class.

6. What do you do in your physical education class? What is your role? (leader, trouble maker, participant, etc).

7. Describe how you feel about your role.

8. What is your favorite part of physical education?
   Why:

9. What is your favorite subject in school?
   Why:

10. How do you prepare for a test?

11. How do you feel when you get a good grade on a test or a paper?

12. Describe your favorite teacher. How does he/she make you feel?

13. How do you feel around your teachers?
14. How do you act around your teachers?

15. What is your favorite activity or hobby?

16. When and where do you get to participate in your favorite activity or hobby?

17. What do you like to do in your free time?

18. How much free time do you have on a daily basis?

19. Do you eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner? Do you eat snacks?

20. Do you eat when you are happy? Sad? Depressed?

21. What are some of your favorite foods?

22. Describe your relationship with your friends.

23. Who is your best friend? Why?

24. How does he/she make you feel?

25. What types of activities do you do with your friends?

26. How do you feel about your friends?

27. How do you think that your friends influence you?

28. How do you perceive your relationships with your friends? Are you a good friend?

29. Do you eat with your friends?

30. What types of food do you eat with your friends?

31. Do you and your friends ever discuss diet and exercise?

32. Describe a typical activity that you and your friends might do (movies, i'm's etc.).
33. Do you and your friends participate in physical activities (i.e. team sports, skateboarding, etc?)
34. Do you like your classmates?
35. How do you treat your classmates?
36. How do your classmates treat you?
37. Who is the most popular kid in your class?
38. Why do you think he/she is popular?
39. Do you look-up to him/her?
40. Describe a successful student at your school.
41. Do you look-up to him/her?
42. What do you like about your classmates?
43. What do you dislike about your classmates?
44. How do your classmates make you feel during classes?
45. How do your classmates make you feel during lunch?
46. Describe a typical day at school with your classmates?
47. Describe a typical day after school with your classmates?
48. Are you comfortable or uncomfortable with your classmates?
49. How does it make you feel when they tease you?
50. Do you tease your classmates?
51. Describe your relationship with your friends.
52. Who is your best friend? Why?
53. How does he/she make you feel?

54. What types of activities do you do with your friends?

55. How do you feel about your friends?

56. How do you think that your friends influence you?

57. How do you perceive your relationships with your friends? Are you a good friend?
APPENDIX D

Student Interview #2

1. Describe the family that you live with.
2. Describe other members of your family.
3. What does your family mean to you?
4. What types of activities do you do with your family?
5. When do you do participate in these activities?
6. How do you think that your family influences your decisions with school? With friends? With your life?
7. Describe your daily routine when you get home from school.
8. Describe your responsibilities at home (i.e. chores, homework, etc.).
9. Describe a typical dinner at your house. What do you eat? Where do you eat? How do you eat (fast, slow, etc.)?
10. Who does the grocery shopping for your family?
11. Do you have any influence over the food that is purchased?
12. If you were to go grocery shopping, what types of food would you buy?
13. Are you aware of how to read the nutritional information on food items?
14. Describe a typical day at home: during the week, on a weekend.
15. When was your last visit to the doctor?
16. Do you and your family visit the doctor regularly?
17. How is your health? Do you have any health problems?

18. How is the health of your mom/dad/siblings/grandparents?

19. Are you aware of your family’s health history? Are there any health concerns such as heart disease, diabetes, or any other problems that you are aware?

20. Describe your church.

21. Is there anyone at your church that has had an impact on your life?

22. Do you participate in church activities?

23. What do you do in church? What is your role? (leader, follower, etc).

24. Describe how you feel about your role.

25. What is your favorite part of being involved with the community of your church (teen night, activities, sermon, time, place of services, etc.?)

Why:

26. Describe the park and recreation programs in your community.

27. Do you participate in park and recreation activities?

28. Is there anyone at your park and recreation program that has had an impact on your life: a coach, a friend, etc.?

29. What activities are you involved in at park and recreation?

30. What is your role during these activities? (leader, follower, etc).

31. Describe how you feel about your role.

32. What is your favorite part of park and recreation?

Why:
33. Describe any other programs/organizations in which you are involved (girl scouts, volunteer, choir, etc.).

34. Is there anyone at the other program/organization that has had an impact on your life?

35. What do you do in the other program? What is your role? (leader, follower, etc).

36. Describe how you feel about your role.

37. What is your favorite part of participating in the other program?
APPENDIX E

Student Interview #3

1. Do you see yourself making any personal changes in the near future?
2. Do you see yourself making changes academically? Socially? Physically?
3. Where do you see yourself in the future?
4. What do you think high school will be like?
5. What do you think you need to do to be successful in high school?
6. Do you see yourself attending college?
7. What type of college do you see yourself attending?
8. Will your family be supportive of your future goals?
9. Is your family supportive of your school activities? How? In what way?
10. Describe an ideal day.
11. Describe an ideal reward (for behavior, panther pride, etc.)
12. Describe an ideal activity.
13. How is success important to you?
14. What do you want to be when you grow-up?
15. What are you doing to accomplish your goals?
16. What can you do to accomplish your goals?
17. Where do you see yourself in 10 years? 20 years?
18. What will you look like in 10 years? In 20 years?
APPENDIX F

Parent Interview

1. Describe the family that you live with.

2. Describe other members of your family.

3. What does your family mean to your child?

4. What types of activities do you do with your family?

5. When do you do participate in these activities?

6. How do you think that your family influences your child’s decisions with school?
   With friends? With his/her life?

7. Describe your child’s daily routine when he/she gets home from school.

8. Describe your child’s responsibilities at home (i.e. chores, homework, etc.).

9. Describe a typical dinner at your house. What do you eat? Where do you eat?
   How do you eat (fast, slow, etc.)?

10. Who does the grocery shopping for your family?

11. Does your child have any influence over the food that is purchased?

12. If you were to go grocery shopping, what types of food would you buy?

13. Are you or your child aware of how to read the nutritional information on food items?

14. Describe a typical day at home for your child: during the week, on a weekend.

15. When was your child’s last visit to the doctor?
16. Does your family visit the doctor regularly?

17. How is your child’s health? Does he/she have any health problems?

18. How is your health? How is the health of your mom/dad/siblings/other children?

19. Is your child aware of your family’s health history? Are there any health concerns such as heart disease, diabetes, or any other problems that you are aware?

20. Describe your church.

21. Is there anyone at your church that has had an impact on your child’s life?

22. Does your child participate in church activities?

23. What does your child do in church? What is his/her role? (leader, follower, etc).

24. Describe how your child feels about your role.

25. What is his/her favorite part of church? Why:

26. Describe your park and recreation programs.

27. Is there anyone at your park and recreation program that has had an impact on your child’s life: a coach, a friend, etc.?

28. Does your child participate in park and recreation activities?

29. What activities is he/she involved in at park and recreation?

30. What is his/her role during these activities? (leader, follower, etc).

31. Describe how your child feels about your role.

32. What is his/her favorite part of park and recreation? Why:

33. Describe any other programs/organizations in which your child is involved.
34. Is there anyone at the other program/organization that has had an impact on your child’s life?

35. What does your child do in the other program? What is his/her role? (leader, follower, etc).

36. Describe how your child feels about his/her role.

37. What is your child’s favorite part of participating in the other program?

38. How is your child’s health?

39. Describe your child’s attitude about school.

40. Describe your child’s attitude about activity.

41. How is your son/daughter doing academically? What is his/her academic history?

42. Describe your son or daughter’s social activities. Does he/she have a lot of friends?

43. What types of activities does he/she like?

44. Has he/she been teased because of his weight?

45. What is your child’s diet like?

46. What are your child’s strengths?

47. What does your child want to be when he grows up?

48. How can you and your family help him to be a successful adult?
Teacher Interview

1. How does ________ get along with you?
2. How does ________ get along with other classmates?
3. How does ________ respond in a group setting?
4. What kind of collaborative assignments do you do?
5. How does ________ do in a one on one situation with a peer?
6. How does ________ do in class academically?
7. Describe how other people perceive ________.
8. What is ________’s favorite subject in school? Why?
9. Do ________ like his/her classmates?
10. How does ________ treat his/her classmates?
11. How does ________’s classmates treat him/her?
10. Who is the most popular student in school?
12. Why do you think he/she is popular?
13. Do you think that ________ looks-up to him/her?
14. Describe how ________ would describe a successful student at your school.
15. Do you think that ________ looks-up to him/her?
16. What does ________________ like about his/her classmates?

17. What does ________________ dislike about his/her classmates?

18. How does ________________’s classmates make him/her feel during classes?

19. Describe a typical day at school for ________________ with his/her classmates?

20. Is ________________ comfortable or uncomfortable with his/her classmates?

23. Is ________________ teased by his/her classmates?

24. Does ________________ tease his/her classmates?

25. Where do you see ________________ in the future?

26. What do you think high school will be like for ________________?

27. What do you think ________________ needs to do to be successful in high school?

28. Do you see ________________ attending college?

29. What type of college do you see ________________ attending?

30. Will ________________ family be supportive of his/her future goals?

31. Is ________________’s family supportive of his/her school activities? How? In what way?

32. Describe an ideal day for ________________.

33. Describe an ideal reward (for behavior, panther pride, etc.) for ________________.

34. How is success important to ________________?

35. What does ________________ want to be when he/she grows-up?

36. What is ________________ doing to accomplish his/her goals?
37. What can _______________ do to accomplish his/her goals?

38. Where do you see _______________ in 10 years? 20 years?

39. What will _______________ look like in 10 years? In 20 years?
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Education Code


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