

ACA CARE Research Agenda (2007-2011)

(Updated July 7, 2006)

OVERALL MISSION OF ACA RESEARCH

1. *Help camps evaluate and enhance program quality*
2. *Help camps determine and improve their place in the camp market*
3. *Contribute to the understanding of youth development and the value of the camp experience*
4. *Provide the association with data and results to enhance ACA's mission*

Ranking	Date Proposed	Goals	Strategies	ACA Research Staff/CARE Involvement			
				Internally Developed / Internally Implemented	Internally Developed / Externally Implemented	Externally Developed/ Internally Informed	Externally Developed / Externally Implemented
?	?	Coordinate university level camp-related evaluation and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a process and a structure engaging students and academics into camp-related research • Encourage other researchers to get involved in ACA research • Develop e-mail group of interested researchers • Provide other researchers with access to ACA data • Develop an endowment to provide funding for outstanding student research • Conduct a “camp research summit” in cooperation with an existing conference • Develop online research summary or journal • Link with students around their research and connect up students interested in research • Link ACA research needs with student interests by providing students with a web site that lists possible camp research topics 	X	X		
?	?	Enhance the internal capacity of ACA members to conduct camp evaluation and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify funding to support this initiative • Research existing web-based survey development systems and determine if an existing system can be purchased or if a new system needs to be developed • Develop or customize a survey development and data-entry system available to ACA (free) and non-ACA members (fee) • Pilot the system with selected camps • Implement the system 	X			

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop web-based tutorials and training modules available to ACA (free) and non-ACA members (fee) in the areas of (a) survey design, (b) evaluation process, (c) conducting interviews, (d) conducting focus groups, (e) etc. • Develop battery of research-based, easy-to-use-outcomes evaluation tools that can be accessed by camps • Develop youth development measurement tool to help camps improve their programs 				
?	?	Research demographic trends to better understand the camping market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the impact of changing demographics on camper enrollment, retention, etc. Link to the diversity initiatives of ACA • Continue to collect geo-mapping data • Explore why youth are/are not attending camp and why parents are/are not sending their children to camp • Collaborate with TRU Teen Research to provide current market data to members • Establish a system of data collection (with statement of compliance??) that would provide stronger enrollment data. 	?	?	?	?
?	?	Develop a research plan for camp marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint committee member with market research expertise • Develop plan for research and education on marketing in conjunction with educational arm of ACA 	?	?	?	?
?	?	Identify the elements of a quality camp experience and provide a research link to ACA accreditation standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct research on related constructs (quality, satisfaction, etc.) to identify a stronger research base for accreditation standards • Collaborate with High Scope to develop a camp-appropriate Youth Program Quality Assessment tool • Collaborate with Accreditation Department initiatives around quality 	?	?	?	?

?	?	Develop an ACA historic repository of camp research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify funding to support this initiative • Identify a system for the collection and management of camp-related studies, evaluation reports, etc. • Hire someone to digitize all camp research and evaluation resources • Hire someone to manage the system • Create an on-line searchable database of camp-related research and evaluation • Collaborate with University Libraries to coordinate resources 	X	X		
?	?	Integrate research into ACA committee work and into the Association broadly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate ACA CARE initiatives • Communicate the “levels of involvement” (see columns at right) • Identify opportunities for regular communication and involvement • Enhance the visibility of ACA research at national conferences • Enhance the visibility of ACA research at section meetings and events • Develop education and program tools from research results • Enhance the presence of research in Camping Magazine 	X			
	?	Establish systematic data-gathering on operational aspects of camps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop routine survey on annual topics such as salaries, budget ratios, camp programs and operations • Establish regular data gathering on enrollment trends including numbers and ethnic diversity 				
?	?	Address emerging societal issues that may impact the camp experience or the camp community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify an “emerging issues” working group of the ACA CARE committee to identify emerging issues, to make ACA aware of these issues, and to identify recommendations for responding to these issues (e.g., obesity, cultural competence, etc.) (Needs to be broader than CARE.) • Research camp policies as they are developed to deal with emerging issues • Collaborate with Sections to determine issues of significance for members 	?	?	?	?

?	?	Explore process and context questions that emerge from ACA research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify qualitative research projects to investigate some of our quantitative findings Conduct case studies and ethnographic research where appropriate to better understand special cases and specific research questions appropriate for these methods 	?	?	?	?
?	?	Strengthen relationships with other related youth development, camping, and research entities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify related groups Identify framework for involvement and collaboration Communicate with other related ACA committees Develop a plan for engagement and communication Continue active participation with the National collaboration for Youth's Research forum. Participate in other youth development forums. 	?	?	?	?
?	?	Enhance the marketing and dissemination of ACA research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write filler articles in outside journals like Parent magazines, etc Develop a resource list of speakers Seek and enhance collaborative dissemination of ACA research results in external publications – both juried and non-juried. 	?	?	?	?
?	?	Enhance the visibility of camp research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate ACA research Conduct a “camp research summit” in cooperation with an existing conference 	X	X		
?	?	Continue the “Program improvement Process” (PIP) research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benchmarks PIPs Best practices Establish means to broaden the impact of this effort with camps beyond the first 20. 	X	X		
?	?	Conduct longitudinal analysis of the camp experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the value of camp from the adult perspective 	?	?	?	?