

Report for Lutheran Social Services on

2003-2008 project

University Project Title:

“Agency Factors and Structures Which Increase Successful Outcomes in

Community Participation and Socially Valued Roles”

(“Friends Project”)



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Executive Summary of Project Results

Lutheran Social Services participated in a five-year project from 2003-2008 conducted by the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota, which was funded by the federal National Institute on Disability Research and Rehabilitation. The purpose of the study was to determine what agency factors affected residents' friendships and relationships with ordinary community members and their community membership. LSS's commitment to participate was based on the belief that the project would support, supplement and strengthen the agency's efforts to be certified by the Council on Quality and Leadership, especially in the arena of promoting social capital. The intended outcomes of the project were very much related to personal outcomes for individuals such as having friends and different social roles. According to the Council, these two areas of personal outcomes have often been challenging to agencies using this accreditation process to determine the quality of services provided.

Forty-nine individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities living in LSS group homes in different parts of Minnesota began the project, with 42 still at the agency by project end. Of these 42, outcome data was collected on 39. Over the four years of project activity, information was gathered from annual surveys, staff meetings, and interviews with the staff involved.

RESULTS

Results of the project revealed that project individuals benefited from the project in several ways:

Community Friendships

17% of the 42 project individuals had community friendships before the project was implemented. During the project period, 55% had friendships with community members and 52% had these community friendships continuing at project end.

Community Group Membership

At the time the project started, 12% of project individuals were already members of a community group, club, or association. During the course of the project, 52% of project individuals were members of some type of organization, and 50% of all project individuals had these memberships continuing at project end.

Community Social Roles

No project individuals were reported to have community social roles prior to the project compared to 26% of project individuals during the time of project implementation. All of these roles were continuing at project end.

Additionally, for 29% of the project individuals, other types of increased contact with community members were reported and 12% of individuals reported increased family contact.

Of individuals who were not project participants, staff reported at meetings that another 13 people developed community friendships, nine joined groups and associations, and 21 had new social roles.

Overall, 90% of the individuals on whom data was collected, and 83% of the individuals still with the agency at project end, had a positive result during the project. In summary, when staff dedicate effort to these goals, in a focused project such as this one, they can be very successful. By staff report, project activities were definitely supportive of other agency efforts toward promoting social capital.

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

2003-2008 project

Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota

University Project Title: "Agency Factors and Structures Which Increase Successful Outcomes in Community Participation and Socially Valued Roles"

Lutheran Social Services (LSS) participated in a five-year study conducted by the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota from 2003-2008. The project was funded by the federal National Institute on Disability Research and Rehabilitation (NIDRR) and the formal research title of the project was "Agency Factors and Structures Which Increase Successful Outcomes in Community Participation and Socially Valued Roles." Internally during the project, LSS staff referred to the project as the "Friends project" or "Friendship project."

At the time that LSS was invited to participate in the project, the agency had begun efforts toward accreditation by the Council on Quality and Leadership. Part of LSS commitment to participate in this friendship project was the belief that project efforts would add to and strengthen efforts already underway for accreditation, especially in promoting social capital. The intended outcomes of the project were very much related to the Council's measures of personal outcomes for individuals, especially the outcomes related to people having friends and performing different social roles. The Council reports that these two particular outcomes (friends and different social roles) have been some of the most challenging for agencies which have used the accreditation process to determine the quality of services provided.

One of the fundamental intentions of the project was to support relationships between individuals who receive services and ordinary community members. The majority of social relationships for most individuals who receive services are family, staff, and other people with disabilities. To have fully inclusive communities, efforts to connect individuals who receive services with other community members must also be undertaken, and those efforts typically require different skills and practices on the part of agency staff. This vision for community relationships is consistent with and fundamental to the Council's values inherent in the personal outcomes system.

This report provides a summary of the project and the outcomes for the individuals selected to participate in the project, and also information on other individuals served by LSS who were reported on during project meetings but who were not project individuals.

I. PROJECT DESIGN AND ACTIVITIES

The project began in the fall of 2003 with the selection process and consent procedures. At the start of the project, 35 homes in different Minnesota communities were selected to participate (listed in Appendix A). A wide variety of living situations were represented, including in-home support, semi-independent living services, 4-bed and other group homes, and the large Intermediate Care Facility VASA.

Forty-nine individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities were initially selected to participate in this study. Seven of these individuals passed away or left the agency at some point during the project and/or someone else was substituted in their place. By project end, 42 of the individuals were still supported by the agency. Outcome data was able to be collected on 39 of the initial 49 individuals.

Focus individuals for the project were selected in clusters of three. A “well-connected” individual was identified, who had some community friendships or community group membership. For each of these well-connected individuals, a matching individual of similar demographic characteristics from the same home or similar nearby-home but who was not well-connected was identified. In addition, a not-well-connected individual with similar demographic characteristics from another similar home in the same geographic area was selected.

One-day trainings were held in 2004 and early 2005 and initial “baseline” interviews were held in each home about current community connecting efforts and staff attitudes toward community connecting. During the initial interviews with each home, staff were asked what were the sources or reasons for each of the selected individuals being well-connected or not well-connected, and about current connecting efforts undertaken in that home.

The initial one-day training consisted of presentation of reasons why relationships are important, seven strategies about connecting, real examples of friendships between individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and community members, brain-storming exercises for specific individuals the staff supported, and determining next actions to take. Subsequent training meetings were held approximately quarterly, in either individual homes or clusters of homes in the same area. Quarterly training activities consisted of staff members reporting on their activities, successes, and barriers to increasing residents’ friendships and community participation; brain-storming and exercises about dealing with barriers, generating new ideas, and making introductions to community members; the relationship of project activities to other agency efforts about promoting social capital; and setting new goals for the next quarter. Frequently staff attended from other homes also, not just the project homes. Part of the intention of the training was that staff would also develop capacities and competencies that would affect other individuals served by LSS, not just the project individuals, and that the whole effort would empower agency efforts in promoting social capital.

The geographic areas which started in the project included: Twin Cities, Redwing, Lake City/Winona, Grand Rapids/Ada, Baxter, Fergus Falls, and Bemidji. After the initial training in Bemidji (which was attended by staff from many homes throughout the Northwest), the project homes in that area decided to not continue to participate in project activities. After the initial training in Little Falls, the group homes in that area did not participate in subsequent quarterly meetings, although the in-home support staff did. Some quarterly training meetings were held in the following areas for a year or two: Grand Rapids and Ada, Baxter, Lake City and Winona, but the meetings in these areas did not continue until the end of the project period. The reasons why some areas stopped participating almost always had to do with turnover. In some cases the supervisor who had initially participated in the project had left the agency or their position. In other cases there was a large turnover in the direct support staff and the supervisors or lead staff had to do a significant amount of training in other topics. In other situations, there was turnover in project residents, which was especially true at VASA.

The areas which continued to participate until the end of the project were Fergus Falls, some of the homes in the metro area, Little falls in-home support, and Red Wing.

Staff filled out an annual survey on each participating resident concerning their community activities and relationships. Concluding interview meetings were held at the end of the project in 2008. Lead staff, directors, and supervisors also filled out a “coordinator” survey in the last year of the project.

II. PROJECT RESULTS

Below is a summary of the project outcomes for the 42 individuals still with the agency at project end, gathered from the annual surveys, the quarterly training meetings, and the interviews conducted upon completion of the project, as well as additional individuals reported on during the project period.

We also compared the information gathered during project activities with data which LSS had collected regarding social capital. There was some social capital information available for 15 of the 42 project individuals for one or two years of the project period. For 3 of these 15 individuals, the social capital information was the only outcome information available (their homes were no longer participating in project activities). For the remaining 12, the social capital information was similar and complementary to the information gathered during project meetings.

A. FRIENDSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Of the 42 project individuals, seven project individuals (17%) had friends in the community before the project started, and still did at the time of project completion. Fifteen people (36%) started new friendships with community members since initiation of the project and were continuing those friendships at the time of project completion in Spring of 2008. One project individual (2%) started a new friendship but that relationship was not continuing at the time of the project end.

Other individuals who staff reported on at meetings included three “other” (non-project) individuals that had friendships with community members before the time the project started. Twelve others,

who were not actual project participants but who were reported on during the project period, also started and maintained new friendships. One “other” resident found a community friend during the project, but did not maintain that friendship by project end.

These outcomes indicate that the percentage of project individuals who had community friendships went from 17% before the project started to 55%, 52% of whom still had those friendships at the time of project completion.

Individuals reported the following types of friendships and/or ways of meeting friends:

- Staff members connected their own friends/significant others/family members to the residents
- At local senior center
- Ex - staff members
- At local churches
- At band gigs in the community
- Neighbors
- Best Buddies program
- At local fitness center
- At women’s center
- Lunch outings with hairdresser

B. COMMUNITY GROUP/ASSOCIATION/CLUB MEMBERSHIPS

“Community” groups are groups which ordinary community members join, not groups for people with disabilities. Five project individuals (12%) were a member of a community group, association or club before the project started, and still were in the spring of 2008 at the time of the project end. Sixteen project individuals (38%) joined a group, association or club during the project, and were still members at the time of project completion. One project individual (2%) joined a community group during the project but was no longer a member when the project ended.

One “other” non-project individual was reported on that was a member of a community group at the time the project started and still was at the end of the project. Four “other” non-project individuals joined a community group, association or club during the project and still were members at project end. Five “others” joined a club, organization or group and were not members at the time the project ended.

These results indicate that 12% of project individuals were members of a community group, association, or club, prior to project initiation, compared to 52% of project individuals at some point during the project, with 50% still members at the end of the project.

The community groups, associations, and clubs which individuals joined included:

- Bible study group
- Bingo club at apartment house
- Women’s group

- Choir group
- Church group
- Boy Scouts
- TOPS (Taking Off Pounds Sensibly)
- Softball fan club
- Scrapbooking club
- Softball league
- Bowling league

Individuals also joined the People First organization and Best Buddies.

C. NEW COMMUNITY SOCIAL ROLES

At the time the project started, no project individuals had community social roles reported. During the project period, eleven project individuals (26%) started a new community social role and all of these roles were continuing at the time of project end.

Of “other” non-project individuals, fourteen other people were reported on that had developed new community social roles during the project period and these were continuing at project end. Seven “other” residents developed a new community social role during the project but were no longer continuing that role at project end.

The community social roles which individuals developed during the project period included:

- President of People First organization
- Hall Monitor
- Volunteer at food bank
- Volunteer at nursing home
- Volunteer at daycare
- Led an agency human rights committee
- Volunteer at National Night Out
- Cleaning parks
- Volunteer at the church ‘fish fry’
- Helped leader of TOPS (weight-loss) group
- Volunteer at church nursery
- Volunteer at soup supper
- Delivering flowers and Meals on Wheels
- Helped with church garage sale
- Volunteer at animal shelter, Humane Society
- Helped out at football/baseball games

D. OTHER CHANGES IN CONTACTS/ASSOCIATIONS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Twelve project individuals (29%) and 8 “others” had other types of increased contacts/associations with community members during the project period, such as being a regular customer and knowing employees at restaurants or convenience stores, more connections with fellow church members, etc. Some of these additional connections were for individuals who also experienced results in the other categories above.

It was also mentioned during meetings that attempts were made to support relationships, memberships, or community social roles for 11 “other” residents, but that whatever had been tried had not worked out.

Seven project individuals (12%) and two “other” residents increased their level of physical (versus social) integration into the community since the start of the project. That is, the number of community places where they went increased, although they did not start relationships with community members at those places.

It was reported that four project individuals (10%) had the same degree of physical/social integration and contact at the time of project completion as before the project was implemented. Three project individuals (7%) had decreased levels of physical and social integration at some point during the course of the project, in each case due to health and/or medication issues; however, these same three individuals also had positive outcomes at other points during the project.

Overall, there was data collected on 39 of the 49 individuals who had started the project. Of these 39 individuals, 35 had some positive result. This represents 90% of the 42 individuals on whom data was available, and 83% of the 42 individuals still with the agency at project end.

E. FAMILY CONTACT

Five project individuals (12%) and four “other” mentioned residents had increased family contact since project implementation, and one project individual had decreased family contact since the project started. No decreased family contact was reported for “other” residents (it may have decreased, but was not mentioned during meetings).

OUTCOME SUMMARIES

The tables below show the outcomes reported. Table 1 shows results for project individuals and Table 2 shows information for “other” non-project individuals.

Table 1. Project outcomes for project individuals (N = 42)

Variable	N	%
FRIENDSHIPS		
a. New friendships, continuing	15	36
b. New friendships, discontinued	1	2
c. Already had friendships, prior to project, continuing	7	17
GROUPS/ASSOCIATIONS/CLUB MEMBERSHIPS		
a. New members, continuing	16	38
b. New members, discontinued	1	2
c. Already a member, prior to project, continuing	5	12
COMMUNITY SOCIAL ROLE		
a. New social role, continuing	11	26
b. New social role, discontinued	0	0
c. Already had a social role, prior to project, continuing	0	0
CONTACTS/ ASSOCIATIONS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS		
a. New contacts	12	29
PHYSICAL INTEGRATION		
a. Increased levels of physical integration	7	17
PHYSICAL/SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND CONTACT		
a. Same degree of physical/social integration	4	10
b. Lesser degree of physical/social integration (at some point)	3	7
FAMILY CONTACT		
a. Increased amounts of family contact	5	12
b. Less amounts of family contact	1	2

Table 2. Project outcomes for other (non-project) residents living in the homes, mentioned during meetings

Variable	N
FRIENDSHIPS	
a. New friendships, continuing	12
b. New friendships, discontinued	1
c. Already had friendships prior to project, continuing	3
GROUPS/ASSOCIATIONS/CLUB MEMBERSHIPS	
a. New members, continuing	4
b. New members, discontinued	5
c. Already a member prior to project, continuing	1
COMMUNITY SOCIAL ROLE	
a. New social role, continuing	14
b. New social role, discontinued	7
c. Already had a social role prior to project, continuing	2
CONTACTS/ ASSOCIATIONS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS	
a. New contacts	8
PHYSICAL INTEGRATION	
a. Increased levels of physical integration	2
PHYSICAL/SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND CONTACT	
a. Same degree of physical/social integration	0
b. Lesser degree of physical/social integration	0
FAMILY CONTACT	
a. Increased amounts of family contact	4
b. Less amounts of family contact	0
TRIED SOMETHING/DIDN'T WORK	11

The following bar graphs show project results in another format.

Figure 1

Percentage of project individuals with friendships at the start, during, and at project end (N=42).

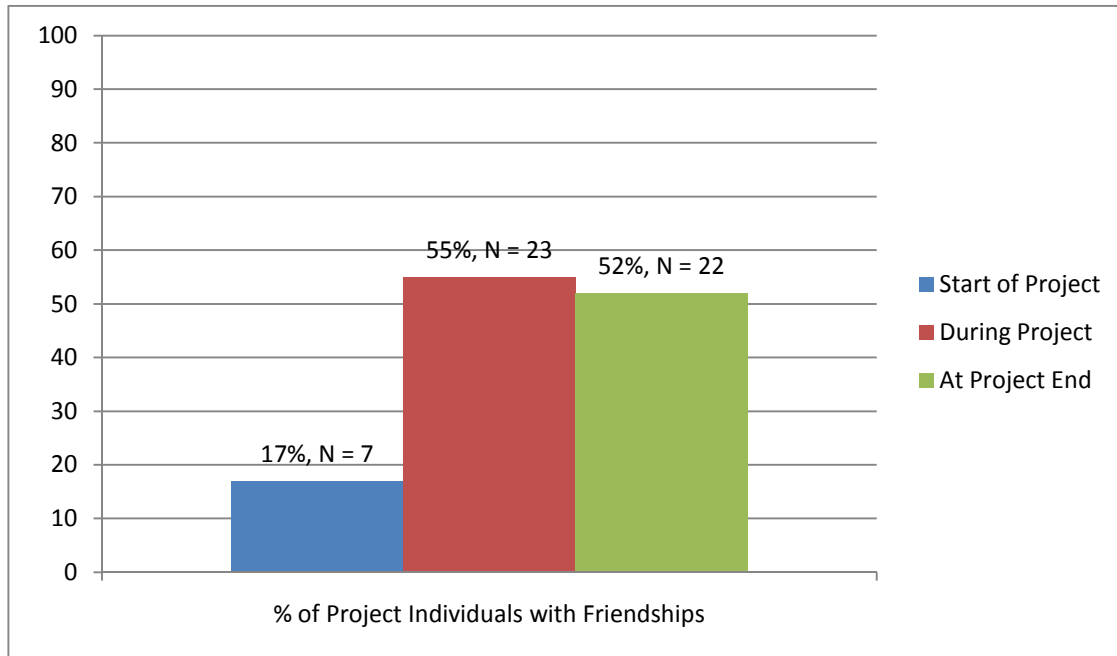


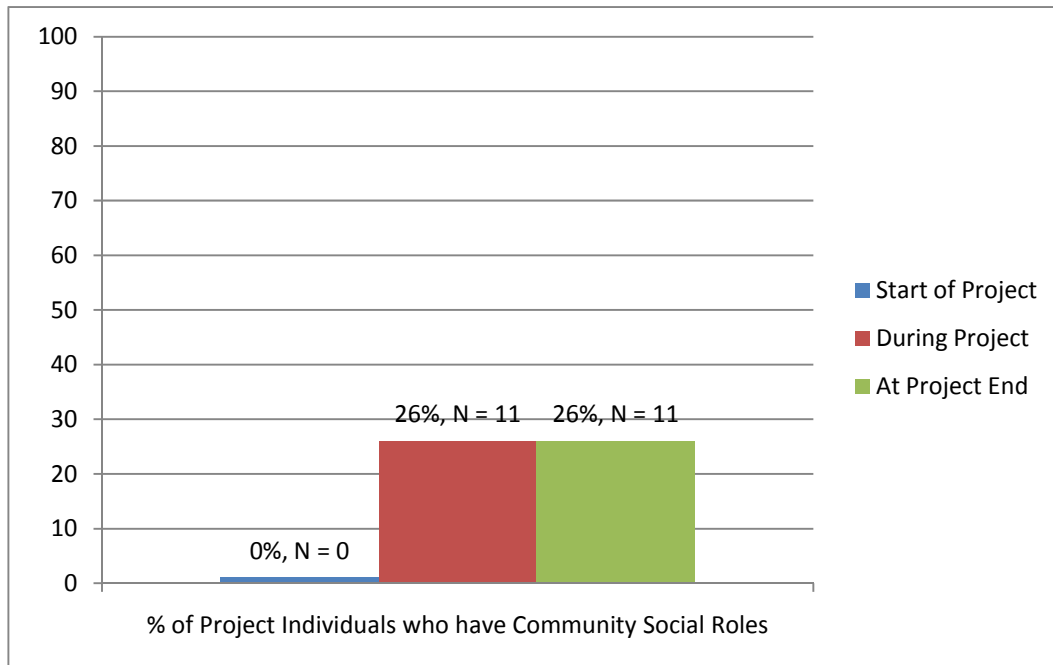
Figure 2

Percentage of project individuals who were members of community groups and organizations at the start, during, and at project end (N=42).



Figure 3

Percentage of project individuals who had community social roles at the start, during, and at project end (N = 42).



III. OTHER DATA ANALYSIS

An annual survey was filled out for each project participant, concerning community activities and relationships. Consistent survey information was collected for 33 individuals over four years. In the last year of the project, a coordinator survey was filled out by managers, supervisors, and lead staff person in each home. Information from surveys was statistically compared.

Individual Characteristics

During initial baseline interviews with staff members at the start of the project, one question during the interview was why the Individual who was classified as “well-connected” (i.e., already had a community friend, belonged to a community group, etc.) was connected and why the “not-well-connected” matching individuals were not connected.

The staff in virtually every case attributed the reason to personal characteristics of the individuals -- that is, the “well-connected” person was more friendly, more capable, could talk better, was more outgoing or some other personal characteristic; and/or the “not well connected” person had behavior problems, couldn’t talk as well, etc. However, analysis of all demographic data on the surveys

(including IQ level, degree of physical impairment, degree of communicative ability, behavior, etc.) did not indicate that ANY individual characteristic was predictive of degree of connection with community members.

Project results themselves indicate that staff could indeed be successful in connecting even more challenging individuals. Individuals in the “not well-connected” groups experienced statistically significant differences by project end in overall friendships and relationships with non-disabled community members.

Staff ratios

One agency factor that theoretically could be predictive of better community connections was staff ratio. That is, theoretically, if there were more staff, more individual activities could take place in the community. Staff ratio was slightly predictive of better connections, but not at a statistically significant level.

Number of meetings attended

One factor that was found to be predictive of more community relationships for a given individual by project end was the number of project training meetings which were attended by some or any staff from the house of that individual. That is, if staff from a given house attended more meetings, the individual from that house was more likely to have a positive result by project end. Staff attendance at meetings might be reflective of other contributing factors, such as director, supervisor, or lead staff commitment to the project connecting efforts, or some other factor.

Coordinator Surveys

Thirty-one directors, supervisors and lead workers filled out a survey about attitudes toward overall project efforts, and both facilitating factors and barriers they saw about these efforts to connect with community members.

One set of questions asked about what respondents saw as the major barriers to friendship-building goals. As reflected in Table 3 below, the major barriers to these were seen as participant’s reluctance to try new things, attitude of people in the local community, and reluctance of people in the local community to give their time and support.

Table 3. Coordinator Survey: Barriers to Friendship - Building Goals. (N = 31)

Barrier	Not at all	A Little	A Lot
1. Participant's lack of money	4 (13%)	27 (87%)	0 (0%)
2. Participant's problems with transport	11 (36%)	13 (42%)	7 (23%)
3. Participant's reluctance to try new things	3 (10%)	8 (26%)	20 (65%)
4. Participant's ill health	22 (71%)	9 (29%)	0 (0%)
5. Location of participant's home	23 (74%)	3 (10%)	5 (16%)
6. Lack of staff time to support participant in these goals	12 (39%)	9 (29%)	10 (32%)
7. Failure of agency to give staff time to plan and implement	16 (52%)	11 (36%)	4 (13%)
8. Low priority	18 (58%)	13 (42%)	0 (0%)
9. Support staff not doing what they are supposed to do	9 (29%)	22 (71%)	0 (0%)
10. Support staff reluctance to try new things	15 (48%)	15 (48%)	1 (3%)
11. Lack of suitably trained staff	25 (81%)	6 (19%)	0 (0%)
12. Lack of accessible activities in the community	15 (48%)	9 (29%)	7 (23%)
13. Reluctance of people in the community to give their time and support	8 (26%)	10 (32%)	13 (42%)
14. Health problems of other people in the home	25 (81%)	6 (19%)	0 (0%)
15. Behavior problems of other people in the homers	12 (39%)	10 (32%)	9 (29%)
16. Attitude of people in local community	8 (26%)	10 (32%)	13 (42%)
17. Unrealistic goals set	10 (32%)	16 (52%)	5 (16%)
18. Goals did not reflect what participant really wants	15 (50%)	7 (23%)	8 (27%)

Survey respondents were also asked what they saw as the main organizational barriers to promoting friendship with community members. As shown in Table 4, the major organizational barriers (combining responses for “a lot” and “a little” perceptions of barriers) were seen as (1) lack of funding, (2) lack of training for staff, and (3) lack of staff who are trained and committed to these efforts.

The items which were least likely to be seen as barriers by respondents were lack of commitment by the agency and agency reluctance to try new ways of working.

Table 4. Coordinator Survey: Organizational Barriers to Promoting Friendship with Community Members. (N = 31)

Organizational Barrier	Not at all	A Little	A Lot
1. Lack of commitment by agency	22 (71%)	9 (29%)	0 (0%)
2. Lack of commitment by other agencies	12 (39%)	17 (55%)	2 (7%)
3. Lack of funding	8 (26%)	14 (45%)	9 (29%)
4. Lack of training for staff	8 (26%)	19 (61%)	4 (13%)
5. Agency reluctance to try new ways of working	26 (84%)	5 (16%)	0 (0%)
6. Lack of staff who are trained and committed to these efforts	13 (42%)	18 (58%)	0 (0%)
7. Lack of ongoing support for these efforts	15 (48%)	13 (42%)	3 (10%)
8. Lack of cooperation between different agencies	16 (52%)	11 (36%)	4 (13%)

The staff who filled out the surveys did reflect commitment to the values of the project, as reflected in Table 5. Important questions about personal attitudes toward project efforts include:

Question 4: “I am dedicated to implementing these efforts in this agency”

93% of respondents gave this item a 4, 5 or 6 rating on a 6-point scale of agreement.

Question 8: “I feel it is my duty to help this agency implement these efforts”

97% of respondents rated this item with 4, 5 or 6 on the 6-point scale of agreement.

Question 15: “I am happy to implement these efforts to the extent that it improves the lives of people with disabilities”

90% rated this item 4, 5, or 6 on the 6-point scale of agreement.

Table 5. Feelings about Implementation (N = 31)

Item	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. I will give my best efforts to promoting friendships if I know it will be seen by the 'right people'	12 (40%)	1 (3%)	8 (27%)	5 (17%)	4 (13%)	0 (0%)
2. Sometimes I wish this agency would not bother with promoting friendship	18 (58%)	13 (42%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
3. I support efforts to promote friendships if they work	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	3 (10%)	13 (43%)	6 (20%)	5 (17%)
4. I am dedicated to implementing these efforts in this agency	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (7%)	10 (32%)	9 (29%)	10 (32%)
5. I will get most involved if I'll receive recognition for it	17 (55%)	6 (19%)	2 (7%)	5 (17%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
6. I get angry when I think about this agency implementing these efforts	21 (68%)	7 (23%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
7. I will reserve judgment until I've seen more action	6 (19%)	3 (10%)	8 (26%)	4 (13%)	4 (13%)	5 (17%)
8. I feel it is my duty to help this agency implement these efforts	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	15 (48%)	9 (29%)	6 (19%)
9. I would be more motivated if I got personal rewards from this agency for implementing it	24 (80%)	1 (3%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)
10. I feel trapped into implementing these efforts here	11 (37%)	6 (20%)	0 (0%)	7 (23%)	3 (10%)	3 (10%)
11. If these efforts do not work in this agency they should be discontinued	11 (37%)	14 (47%)	2 (7%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
12. I will put effort into implementing these efforts to the extent that I get something in return for it	22 (73%)	3 (10%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)
13. Implementing these efforts in this agency will make no difference	16 (53%)	9 (30%)	5 (16%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
14. I am happy to implement these efforts to the extent that it improves the lives of people with disabilities	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (7%)	15 (50%)	10 (33%)
15. I get upset when people in this agency say bad things about promoting friendship	0 (0%)	11 (37%)	7 (23%)	3 (10%)	8 (27%)	1 (3%)

Two questions on this survey addressed whether or not staff understood the relationship between this project and promoting social capital. The majority of staff did indicate they understood this, although there were a few staff that did not. Thus, it is possible that some ratings on the coordinator surveys would have been higher, but some directors, supervisors, and lead workers were not clear about the relationship of efforts in this project to agency efforts to promote social capital according to the Council training.

It is to be noted that the 31 coordinator surveys which were returned were filled out by directors, supervisors and lead workers who were the most involved in project efforts. The staff who were committed to the values and goals of the project and also had sufficient personnel stability in their homes for project participation, were likely the most successful. There were some directors, supervisors and leads who were committed to the values and goals of the project but had too much staff turnover to be able to fully participate in project efforts.

RELATIONSHIP TO COUNCIL ACCREDITATION

Again, this project occurred at the same time as other agency efforts to promote social capital and be accredited by the Council on Quality and Leadership. Therefore, it is hard to say what results would have happened for the participating individuals without this project. For example, if the agency had only undertaken accreditation efforts without also undertaking this project, it is not possible to statistically say if the same, better, or worse results would have occurred in the areas of friendship, community membership, and community social roles.

However, besides the two survey questions about understanding the relationship of this project to promoting social capital, some staff did self-report their own perceptions about the relationship of project efforts to Council accreditation processes. During meetings, several staff spontaneously remarked that this project promoted more one-to-one individual friendships with community members, while the agency efforts to promote social capital were more focused on volunteering and similar involvement (such as those described above in community social roles).

Numerous staff rated the training as very helpful, and reflected in the completing interviews that the quarterly meetings and the project had been helpful in supplementing the Council training regarding the values of the accreditation process and in understanding how to promote more individual relationships. For other staff, there was a sense that just working with the accreditation process was enough to deal with at the time and this project had been seen as just "one more thing to do."

It was intended that activities in this project have a bearing on staff's competencies and effectiveness in the personal outcome areas of "People have friends," "People participate in the life of the community" and "People perform different social roles." Several key supervisors and directors were quite positive about the results produced during the project, and can be resources regarding future agency efforts in these outcome areas.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the project resulted in very positive results in the three main areas of increasing friendships with community members, membership in community groups and organizations, and new community social roles. In a focused project such as this one, staff who were committed to these goals and who had sufficient stability in supervisors, direct support staff, and residents were very successful in using the training and technical assistance efforts to increase relationships with community members, even for individuals with severe challenges.

APPENDIX A

HOMES PARTICIPATING:

METRO AREA:

Amble Rd.

Autumn

Bloomington

Bronstein

Coon Rapids

Grand Place

Residence I and II

Stillwater

Sunrise

FERGUS FALLS

Terrace

Excel

LITTLE FALLS AND FOSTON

Little Falls:

8th St.

11th St.

Gayle Dr.

Riverwood

Fosston:

8th St.

9th St.

NORTHERN REGION

Ada:

6th St.

2431 State Highway

Baxter:

Birch Dr.

Cedardale Lane

Bemidji:

Mississippi

26th St.

Grand Rapids:

First Avenue

Steinhart Circle

SOUTHEAST:

Lake City:

6h St.

7th St.

Red Wing Area:

Bayside

Eagles Nest

Goodhue SILS

River City

Residence I

VASA

Winona area: Grand St.