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**GRAPPLING WITH THE THEORETICAL AND MEASUREMENT ISSUES
INVOLVED IN ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF A COMBINED ADVENTURE/
SOCIAL-COGNITIVE PREVENTION PROGRAM ON VIOLENT BEHAVIOR**

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About ten years ago, two simultaneous “calls for future research” intrigued me greatly because of their immense potential for promoting positive adolescent development. The first was the Healthy People 2000 document, published by the United States federal government, which called for the development of effective violence prevention programs. The second was a theme that ran through outdoor adventure research literature calling for the examination of adventure education on social problems of youth. Since that time, I have been immersed in an action research process with colleagues aimed to develop effective school-based violence prevention programs (Meyer & Farrell, 1998), a process which recently resulted in our program, Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (RiPP), being identified as a Model program for dissemination by the US Department of Health and Human Services. Parallel to that process, I have worked with colleagues in the adventure field to brainstorm ideas for how to bridge violence preven-

tion with outdoor adventure, and recently received funding for a small pilot that would examine the impact of a combined outdoor adventure/social cognitive program on violent behavior. The Crossing the Bridge pilot began in January. The focus of this presentation is to outline the issues we have been grappling with on the journey from developmental psychology toward the field of outdoor education, and to invite practitioners in outdoor adventure to join in this walk for the purpose of seeing how we might be able to collaboratively prevent youth violence and promote positive development. Examples for highlighting these issues are drawn from the action-research process used to develop, evaluate, and improve the RiPP program in urban and rural communities, as well as how that led to the current action-research process of developing the theoretical framework, program curriculum and research design for the Crossing the Bridge pilot.