



CATEGORY ARCHIVES: WHAT'S THE EVIDENCE? BEST PRACTICES FOR 4-H VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

## Week 6 & 7: What's the Evidence?

Posted on **August 3, 2015** by **Lauren Anne Dennis**

I apologize to my avid readers (if there are any of you out there) for the lack of exciting posts recently. But, after a few long weeks on collecting and analyzing sources, we have evidence! After I did the initial deletions from a set of 776, I put the remaining 64 in a huge Google Spreadsheet. Here's the general idea:

Author	Title	URL	Type of Study, method, year	Intervention/Program	Mechanism of Action	Outcomes
Agard, D. L., et al.	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)
... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)
... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)	... (text obscured)

But now that we finally have an idea of the content of every study, how confident are we in the quality? We know the theories, we know the results, but can we generalize it the 4H locations in Tioga & Chemung? Check back next week as I report the evidence quality to find out!

Posted in **What's the Evidence? Best Practices for 4-H Volunteer Recruitment and Retention**

## Week 4 & 5: What Do You Do With 776 Sources?

Posted on **July 27, 2015** by **Lauren Anne Dennis**

After running the search string from last week, I was left with 776 sources. Where do you even begin with that many journal articles? It's impossible to read that many articles and skimming that many articles isn't much better. However, after 2 weeks we managed to get down to 64! Here's how:

Step 1- Delete, Delete, DELETE

a. Anything not in English (duh) or that takes place in another country

b. Type of source (i.e. exclude newspapers)

c. Date (1998-)

Step 2- Content

Begin identifying the population, focus, and topic of each article. By simply skimming the abstracts of each article these factors are easily identifiable.

Step 3- Make a Spreadsheet

With the remaining articles make a spreadsheet to analyze the content.

\*As I finishing analyzing the spreadsheet this week I will finally share with you about our research and soon we'll have the answer to our question!

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## Week 3: Search Strings

Posted on **July 1, 2015** by **Lauren Anne Dennis**

When you have a huge research paper, how do you get started? What search engines do you use? What search terms do you create? How do you find PDFs? I'm sure most of you were like me a few weeks ago, that is you know the basics and can usually find what you think you're looking for. But I'm here to tell you that you are just at the tip of iceberg.

When doing translational research it is crucial that you get a comprehensive list of everything that is out there. You can easily introduce bias in the results you report through the search engines and search terms you use. However, once we ran our final search string, we were left with 776 references in Zotero and as we sift through it all, I am confident that we will have everything we need!

In this week's post I will walk you through how we created our search string and give you some tips to create your own:

1. Go to the <https://www.library.cornell.edu/>. One of the biggest advantages we get as students is access to every journal or book that Cornell does. So take advantage of it. Once you go to the library homepage you can either select "Catalog" to get access to the website of journal or reserve it at the library, "Article & Full Text" if you are looking for a specific reference, or "Database" to run a full search.

2. For our purposes we went to Database and searched PsycINFO. However we didn't stop there. At the top of the page, above the search field, select "Choose Database." For our purposes we also selected ERIC, Academic Search Premier, and Human Resource Abstracts. Because you can search all the EBSCO databases together, all results come in one search and all duplicates are removed!

3. Once we selected our databases we created our search string:

{first line} volunteer\* OR mentor\*

AND

{second line} motivat\* OR satisfaction OR retention OR turnover OR burnout OR "burn out" OR "burn-out" OR recruit\* OR attract\*

AND

{third line} "youth program\*" OR 4H OR "after-school program" OR "after school program" OR "big brother" OR "big sister" OR ymca OR "boy scouts" OR "girl scouts" OR club OR camp OR VFI OR "volunteer functions inventory"

Tips:

a) Using an \* will give you all forms of a word, for example: motivat\* will generate motivate, motivates, motivator, motivation, etc.

b) AND between two words or lines means that you want only articles that include both a AND b. On the other hand, an OR between two words or lines means that the article need only include a OR b.

c) Using quotes means that you are looking for a phrase and not just the words in the phrase, for example: I was interested in articles that used the "volunteer functions inventory" scale not articles that mentioned volunteers,

functions, or inventory.

d) Finally, be sure to think of possible synonyms for words or different spellings to ensure that you are getting every article.

Now these tips are just beyond the tip of iceberg and there are many many more options where these came from, but give them a shot and see how much easier your next research paper will be!

\*Additionally, we ran the same search in CAB Abstracts and a similar search in the Journal of Extension (JOE).

Posted in **What's the Evidence? Best Practices for 4-H Volunteer Recruitment and Retention**

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## Week 2: Generating a Research Question

Posted on **June 30, 2015** by **Lauren Anne Dennis**

As you have probably guessed from the title of my project: "What's the Evidence? Best Practices for 4-H Volunteer Recruitment and Retention" at the Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research we are looking for evidence. To do that, we run massive database searches and prepare a brief paper, similar to a systematic review, that investigates a problem or answers a question for researchers or practitioners. For information about the these synthesis projects and a sneak peak at what my brief will look like when it's complete, visit the bronfenbrenner center website:

<http://www.bctr.cornell.edu/projects/bctr-research-synthesis-project/>



The project that I am assisting on is partnering with the 4H programs in Tioga and Elmira counties. During my second week, we met with the state team, site leaders, and other 4H employees to understand the problems they were having with their volunteers. Because volunteers are essential to these programs and impact many people, there are many issues that could be addressed. Throughout the meetings there were many common themes and many potential questions. However, before our final meeting, I compiled all our notes and highlighted the most prevalent issues. After conducting a few scoping searches (scanning a few databases with basic keywords to get an idea of what was out there) we had a short list of potential research questions. In this final meeting we met with site coordinators who have the most 1-on-1 experience with volunteers and learned more about the various programs they run. After hearing their stories and inquiring about their biggest concerns we finally settled on a question. As I

head to the internet and the library to find out about what motivates volunteers and how to use these motivations to attract and retain volunteers, I must create a search string. In the next few days I will attempt to connect a few key words to find the few hundred relative resources amidst a sea of millions. Check back next week to see what I found and learn how to make a successful search string yourself! In the meantime, check out the links below and learn about the 4H communities neighboring Ithaca or how you can give back or get involved!

Chemung County: <http://chemung.cce.cornell.edu/>

Tioga County: <http://tioga.cce.cornell.edu/>

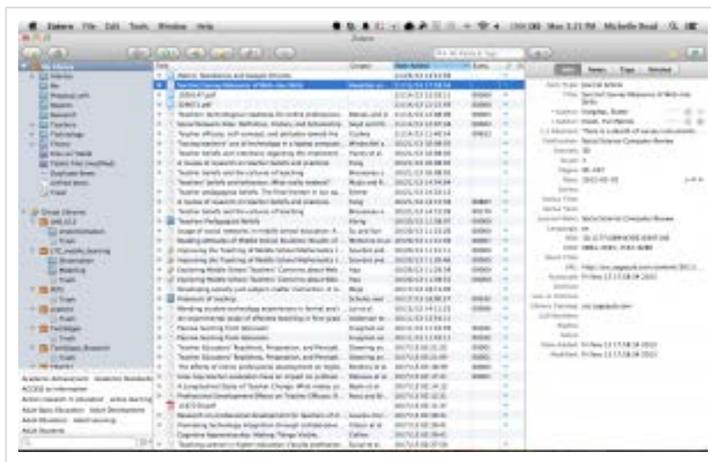
Posted in **What's the Evidence? Best Practices for 4-H Volunteer Recruitment and Retention**

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## **Week 1: Zotero**

Posted on **June 18, 2015** by **Lauren Anne Dennis**

Hi Everybody! My name is Lauren Dennis and I am a rising junior in the College of Human Ecology studying Human Development. After three short weeks away from campus, I have officially put Spring semester behind me and am back to begin my internship at the Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research (BCTR). I know what you're thinking, "What on Earth is Translational Research?!" but don't worry you're not alone. Most people I told about my internship this summer asked me the same thing, and those that didn't asked what language I'd be translating (FYI I took Latin in high school so I am a strictly English speaker, and luckily for me that's all I'll be needing). Truthfully, I wasn't even exactly sure what translational research was in the beginning either. But having questions is totally okay because that is how translational research starts: with a question. Throughout the first two weeks Mary Maley (the Extension Associate in the BCTR), Sarah Young (a department liaison from Mann Library), and I will be meeting with various 4H employees to define a question for this particular research project. In the meantime, I have been reading about systematic reviews, the ins-and-outs of database searching, and how to use Zotero. Bringing me to what I want to talk to you about today: Zotero.



For anyone out there actually reading my blog, this is for you. Zotero is a FREE online tool that helps you collect, organize, cite, and share your research sources. And did I mention it's free? Simply go online and download the application from <https://www.zotero.org/> and never make a bibliography again. That's right, never. Once Zotero is installed, with one simple click, any research source (journal articles, books, and even YouTube videos) are automatically saved into Zotero with their corresponding PDF and all the information needed for your works cited is extracted. Not only is it all there for you, it does it for you! That's right, never again lose points because of APA format. Never again look up the differences between citing a journal article vs. a book vs. a website, etc. Zotero does it all for you. All while keeping your sources organized and allowing you to share them with any other Zotero user. Thanks to Zotero I no longer have to fear the reserach aspect of a research paper (just the writing) and now, neither do you. To learn more about Zotero, head to Olin Library at 1PM on 6/23 and once you see all it can do, you'll be back to learn more of the advanced features on 7/29.

Hopefully this blog entry has taught you about a helpful new tool and stay tuned for next week's post to learn about our research project!

Posted in **What's the Evidence? Best Practices for 4-H Volunteer Recruitment and Retention**



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