

# Giving children a chance to be children: Care, Memory and Identity in the Countryside

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Submitted by Tea Marika Tverin to the University  
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of Philosophy in Geography in October 2014

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## **Abstract**

Care has seldom been linked with memory and the natural environment. Moreover young people have been largely absent from geographical explorations of memory and memories. This research seeks, in part, to fill these gaps by examining young people's memories and memory formation within frameworks of care and the natural environment. More specifically this research provides insights into socially and economically marginalised young peoples' memory processes as well as the multiple emotional geographies that are created in an affective web of care, other people and the natural environment. This thesis provides an original, critical examination of a third sector charitable organisation Country Holidays for Inner City Kids (CHICKS) and their respite breaks for disadvantaged young people between 8-15 years of age. 26 young people who attended CHICKS were interviewed in addition to multiple staff members, volunteers and referral agents. Additionally exhaustive observations were carried out on 17 different respite breaks.

This thesis has three research aims. Firstly it sets out to examine how care experiences shape memory formation at CHICKS. Secondly, it explores how care produces space, particularly in the natural environment. And thirdly it examines what kind of emotional geographies does care produce. First and foremost this thesis contributes into geographies of care. Furthermore, it ties care into other scholarly niches. It offers a somewhat novel conceptualisation of nature as a space of care: a therapeutic landscape that extends beyond literal connections between the physical environment and feelings of well-being. This research also contributes to the geographical research on care and memory by integrating young people in such research, as well as by suggesting that memories can become a vessel for well-being. Overall, the unique research arena makes this an original piece of work thus adding knowledge to geographies of care on affective, methodological and theoretical levels.

This research demonstrates flat ontology of care, fun, geographies of love and the natural environment can open up transformative spaces where identity processes and the self can be processed and re-processed. Ultimately, this all makes it possible for memory and memories to become an intervention; a tool against adversity that allows the young person to go to a better mental and emotional place.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

In this chapter I will set the scene for the thesis and introduce some of the background as well as the theoretical registers that guided the research. Furthermore, in this chapter I explain the thesis structure and outline the multiple themes to which this thesis contributes. I will start by introducing the broader research context to the project. In so doing, I will discuss the state of child well-being in the United Kingdom as well as briefly outline the role of both the public social care system and third sector organisations. I will then state the rationale and importance of this research and list the research questions. This chapter concludes with the thesis structure outline.

### 1.1. Research arena

This first section broadly introduces the main research arena: third sector social care of disadvantaged young people. This section is purposefully brief since the next chapter, the Literature Review, will expand on the specific themes that were the main focus points within this research. The purpose of this section is to highlight current issues and challenges in child well-being and the care system in the United Kingdom (UK).

Childhood is generally perceived as a time of fun, play, innocence and happy memories. Unfortunately, not all children get to enjoy such a childhood. We might be used to the reports from the developing world on child poverty and hardship, but these issues are by no means solely a problem that only the poorer parts of the world are struggling with. For example in the UK, after a decade of decreasing figures, the number of children and young people in care is presently on the rise and has steadily increased over the last few years (NSPCC, 2013). In 2012 there were 91,000 children and young people in care. In over half of these cases the reason was either abuse or neglect or often a combination of both. Additionally, many children live in poverty. UK child poverty rates from 2011/2012 reveal that 2.3 million (17%) children in the UK live in families earning below the poverty line (UK Government, 2012). That number rises further to 3.5 million (27%) when

housing costs are subtracted from the income. Another group of children and young people that often do not get to enjoy a carefree childhood are young carers. In the UK there are nearly a quarter of million (244,000) children and young people under the age of 19 who are the primary caregiver for a family member (National Statistics, 2011).

There are a variety of difficulties these families face but they hold one thing in common: whatever the difficulties they do not come without a cost. Although there is research to suggest that children in care can have positive care experiences – one such example being a meta-analysis by Reddy and Pfeiffer (1997) that showed that whilst in care there was a reduction in behavioural problems as well as improved rates of psychological adjustment – there is also a significant body of research stating that those who grew up in the care system generally tend to be worse off later in life than those who were brought up at home (e.g. Mendes and Moslehuddin; 2006; Stein, 2006; Courtney and Dworsky, 2006). Furthermore, BBC News reported in May 2013 that young carers had significantly lower GCSE scores and were more likely than the national average not to be in education or employment aged 16-19. In addition it has been extensively shown that those with lower social economic status tend to suffer more from both physical and mental ill health (e.g. Marmot et al., 1991; Case et al., 2001). Although this thesis does not examine the outcomes of poverty or other effects of adversity on the lives of young people, it is important to highlight the possible future difficulties the children of these families could face in order to understand the significance of the intervention that organisations like CHICKS (Country Holidays for Inner City Kids) try to undertake.

Personal and emotional cost aside, there are also the economic consequences. For example having many children and families that are, or could be, at risk puts a huge strain on the social and health services. Adult social care in 2012-2013 in England alone cost the economy an eye-watering £17.1 billion (UK Government, 2013a). It has to be mentioned though that this figure is partly so high because it includes all the benefits paid. However, the cost of adult mental health services in 2012-2013 was £1.1 billion (UK Government, 2013a). These numbers have

forced the government to rejig the budget so that it corresponds to these needs. This led to cuts in other areas of services. For example although there was a £200 million expansion of the Troubled Families Programme in 2013 (a programme targeting the reduction of unemployment and crime as well as ensuring schooling), the children's social care budgets were reduced (UK Government, 2013b). This indicates the clear prioritisation of adult services as well as a willingness to invest in treatment and care for the consequences of poverty rather than focusing on preventive measures at an early age. This is a difficult problem; although young people obviously are a part of a family and therefore benefit from any programmes targeting families, they also need help and support that is directly aimed at improving their well-being. In other words there are many children and young people in the UK with less than pleasant and happy everyday experiences and memories who would benefit from extra help and support.

The public social services caring for these children and families focus on practical advice and help with daily living and care, safeguarding and protection, progress monitoring and financial assistance. At the heart of these services is the aim to provide care that helps people to retain their identity and dignity (UK Government, 2013c). Although noble aims, the reality is that these services are overstretched and oftentimes the caseload of a social worker, for instance, is such that it leaves very little time for personal and individualised care or support. And since the resources these services operate with are limited, the care and support provided seldom extends beyond the everyday home life. This is where many third sector organisations, such as charities, voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises, come into the picture. There are a variety of organisations in the UK that offer respite from the everyday. For example there are many community programmes that offer leisure activities from walking to gardening and cookery lessons, for example the Calthorpe Garden Project in London (Calthorpe, 2015), the Beechgrove Community Garden Programme in Scotland (Beechgrove Garden, 2015) and Let's Get Cooking in London - a healthy eating programme for young people (Middlesex-London Health Unit, 2015). Additionally, there are a variety of programmes where the focus is on community

empowerment, inclusion and confidence building; such as Hackney's Community Empowerment Network (Sustainable Hackney, 2015) in London and the Achieving Community Empowerment Initiative in Scotland (Communities Channel Scotland, 2015). Although public sector social care also aims to enhance well-being, the goals of these third sector organisations tend to be *softer*, which is to say less tangible and less measurable. Furthermore, the public social service system often carries a stigma that can label not only the services themselves but also those who need and use them, resulting in people being more inclined toward using the third sector services. In other words third sector services often benefit from being a more discreet and less known presence that allows a certain level of anonymity for the user.

In research terms little is known about these third sector organisations and their role in delivering social care services. As Dickinson et al. (2012) identified, there is a lacuna in the literature on the strengths and weaknesses of different forms of third sector organisations, as well as a lack of efficient impact measurements. When systemically reviewing the extant literature, Dickinson et al. (2012) concluded that the third sector, more recently referred to as civil society, had some advantages over statutory services. Third sector organisations tend to be more value driven and more oriented toward social goals than the public sector and additionally benefit from excellent, committed volunteers (Dickinson et al., 2012). Furthermore, one obvious benefit is that since many of these organisations are funded independently these services are free to the government. But because these third sector programmes and initiatives are not that well researched their potential benefits are not fully understood. It would benefit the government to gain research insight on the relative costs and benefits of utilising third sector services, so that they can make fully informed budgetary decisions.

This section highlighted the wider research territory and identified the need for further research. The next section looks at some of the themes within the wider research problem that this thesis will address.

## **1.2. Gaps in the literature**

In this section I briefly outline the gaps in the literature that this thesis will address. This section merely points out the lacuna and I will discuss all of the literature in further depth in the Literature Review.

In this research, I seek to understand the beneficial and therapeutic effects of one particular third sector social care service. Country Holidays for Inner City Kids offers holidays in the countryside for disadvantaged young people who for a variety of reasons do not enjoy a period of childhood characterised by care, play, fun and freedom from responsibility. Mainly this thesis will seek to add to our knowledge of geographies of care, since rather little is known of care and caring experiences of such young people. Also, little is understood about how such young people experience time away from the problems of their everyday life. This thesis hopes, in part, to fill that gap.

Additionally, little is known in geography about young people's memory formation (Leyshon and Bull, 2011). In fact young people are often absent from geographical examinations of memories due to their chronological age, which can lead to misinterpretations of young people not possessing memories to the same extent as adults. When young people's memories are explored studies tend to focus on children and young people with life threatening illnesses (e.g. Kiernan and Maclahlan, 2002) or children and young people with severe behavioural difficulties (e.g. Dunkley, 2009), but little is known about the potential benefits of a holiday for socially disadvantaged young people.

## **1.3. Rationale for the research**

As discussed there are a significant number of children and young people in the UK who are marginalised and in a need of help and support. The well-being of children and young people is vital for the development and even, to a certain extent, the survival of a society (Dickinson et al., 2012). Today's young people (in the UK) have to face the challenges of the modern world and will have to deal with the future consequences of, for example, the recession, climate change and an aging population (Hopkins, 2010). On top of the general challenges of growing up these are big burdens to bear. This will be especially hard for those who are

carrying a raft of negative memories with them. So surely a welfare society owes its citizens, especially the young people, a fair, inclusive and empirical evidence-based welfare system (Dickinson et al., 2012).

This thesis tells the story of some of those young people. However, the focus here is not on the difficulties and challenges many of these young people face daily but on the happier times. More specifically this thesis examines the operations of a charity called Country Holidays for Inner City Kids, referred to as CHICKS from now on. CHICKS is an organisation that is committed to giving happy memories and hope to young people who are disadvantaged either economically, socially or emotionally.

#### **1.4. Research aims**

This research addresses three separate, although interconnected, research questions.

- 1) *How do care experiences shape memory formation at CHICKS?*
- 2) *How does care produce space?*
- 3) *What kind of emotional geographies does care produce?*

#### **1.5. Contributions of the thesis**

Firstly, this thesis offers new theoretical insights. Secondly, it explores the somewhat novel outlook and approach of CHICKS for caring for disadvantaged young people. And thirdly, this thesis is also a unique contribution due to the lack of empirical work on this topic. Academically, this research contributes in adding knowledge to geographies of care. This work contributes to the academic debates around the ethics and the concept of care by showing that 'one size fits all' care practices can be beneficial if the care is organised properly, in a flat manner that decentralises power, thus creating multiple care centres and directions. Furthermore, it ties care into other scholarly niches. It offers a somewhat novel conceptualisation of nature as a space of care: a therapeutic landscape that extends beyond literal connections between the physical environment and

feelings of well-being. This research also contributes to the geographical research on care and memory by integrating young people in such research, as well as by suggesting that memories can become a vessel for well-being. Overall, the unique research arena makes this an original piece of work thus adding knowledge to geographies of care on affective, methodological and theoretical levels.

In addition to the academic contributions this research also has an operational, and potentially, an economic impact for CHICKS. In operational terms this thesis could serve, to an extent, as a type of operating manual. This could lead to improving and optimising the service thus providing a very high quality CHICKS intervention. From an economic standpoint, the operational enhancement provided by the research may allow CHICKS to target their funds more efficiently. This could then, in turn, also have a social impact by enhancing the quality of life of those who attend CHICKS. Additionally, CHICKS can potentially gain funding both from the private and public sectors by being able to demonstrate the benefits of their service through this research.

### **1.6. Thesis structure**

This thesis consists of seven separate chapters as well as an abstract. Chapter one, the Introduction, sets the scene by highlighting the research territory and identifying the gaps this thesis is hoping, in part, to fill. Additionally, chapter one details the contributions of this research as well as providing a rationale for the thesis. Chapter two provides a critical and analytical review of the existing literature on the big themes of this research: care, young people, the natural environment and memory. The aim of chapter two is to examine these concepts by identifying gaps in the research and to discuss them in the light of the wider thesis as well as highlight the theoretical registers of these topics from which this research draws and to which it contributes.

Chapter three is a methodological chapter. It outlines how the research was actually carried out by discussing a variety of ethnographic techniques in relation to the research aims. Chapter three is a gateway into the empirical chapters. In other words, by introducing and critically examining the methods used, chapter

three explains and rationalises how the data was collected. Additionally, this methodology chapter examines the multiple ethical considerations that attended this research. It also explains and justifies the data analysis process.

This thesis has three empirical chapters each addressing a separate research aim. The first of these is chapter four: Memory Formation within the Framework of Care at CHICKS. This chapter argues that memories at CHICKS are formatted in a landscape of fun and love. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the flat ontology of care, and its role in memory production, in the light of empirical data. Chapter five, entitled Memory Formation and Nature, explores the role of the natural environment in the production of care and memories as well as the whole CHICKS experience. Its main argument is that the natural environment is secondary to the emotional landscape but still plays a vital role in allowing liminality and exploration. Chapter six is called Transformative Spaces and its primary function is to address the research aim on care and emotional geographies. Within the empirical findings it discusses happiness, confidence and widened horizons, drawing links to the previous empirical chapters. All three empirical chapters together cement what this thesis has previously discussed.

Chapter seven, Conclusions, brings this thesis together. It summarises, as well as critically appraises, the main arguments and findings of this research. It does this by emphasising the research aims and linking the key themes. Furthermore, chapter seven outlines the thesis limitations and possible further research directions.

This opening chapter aims to establish both the broad research context and the narrower niche that the rest of the thesis will be tackling. The main topic of care and disadvantaged young people is discussed and examined throughout the rest of the thesis.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

The previous chapter, the Introduction, highlighted the main research territory as well as establishing the purpose and significance of the research. This chapter builds on the introduction by widening the scope of the research and that of this thesis. In this chapter I introduce the key themes within this research. The themes discussed here, in the order of appearance, are: defining care, performing care, caring for young people, care and emotional geographies, spaces of care and memories (of care). Although separated into sections, I will be making connections between the themes so that this literature review will form a coherent picture of the theoretical registers that guided and inspired the research. This chapter forms a theoretical platform onto which the methodology was devised and practised. Furthermore, this chapter provides a space within this thesis in which CHICKS is examined as a producer of care. Each of the sections will offer their own arguments, but on the whole what I argue in this chapter is that although care is holistic, everyday and banal it is the multiple micro-geographies of care that are important to examine and understand – especially those that characterise care as relational, affective and spatial.

#### **2.1. Defining care**

In this section I will discuss the variety of ways in which care is defined in different contexts. This is done in two separate parts: care as a system/organisation and care as a value. These two sections together will form a multidimensional picture of care and provide answers to the question of what care is, as well as highlighting where more knowledge is needed. This defining section does not provide an overarching definition of care, but rather sets a platform for the examination of care within the framework of this thesis as well as build an overall picture onto which the human geographical (as well as other) contributions, debates and discussions can be placed and examined. I will argue here that for care to be

most effective it should be conceptualised within both political and moral frameworks.

I will begin by discussing how health and social care is organised in the UK and the advantages and disadvantages of the current system. Care as a term is widely used and is very common in spoken English language and can indicate both action and emotion or even a way of wishing someone well (Held, 2006). Care is a multidimensional concept and this defining section aims to explore that multidimensionality. I will begin with formal organisational care. Health and social care systems of societies are one example of such care. This type of care can be systemically organised publicly or happen in less public ways for example at home. Lawson (2007: 5) says, “Care is societies work in the sense that care is absolutely central to our individual and collective survival”. This notion captures the importance of an effective care system that is often at the centre of a welfare state: a Western concept. However, culture cannot be ignored as an influencing factor, as I will explain later in this chapter, since care as a concept is heavily influenced by the culture in which it is practised.

Regardless of the differences in how different countries organise their care systems, for example, every country has a way of providing public care and support for its citizens. Another common feature is that these public systems are often very large and led from the highest places of any particular government. For instance in the UK the adult social care sector employs 1.7 million people in England alone (CFWI, 2011), and the National Health Service (NHS) another 1.3 million (NHS, 2012). In fact the 2014 Care Act requires that local authorities provide a market of wide-ranging high quality care services – this means that the total number of care providers is even higher than presented here (UK Government, 2014e).

In addition to hospitals and social workers, there are the schools, nurseries and countless charitable organisations that offer care in a variety of forms. Additionally, there is all the informal care given within homes and families (Milligan, 2003). Furthermore, the money set aside for personal social services and health care is around 20% of the total budget of the United Kingdom annually

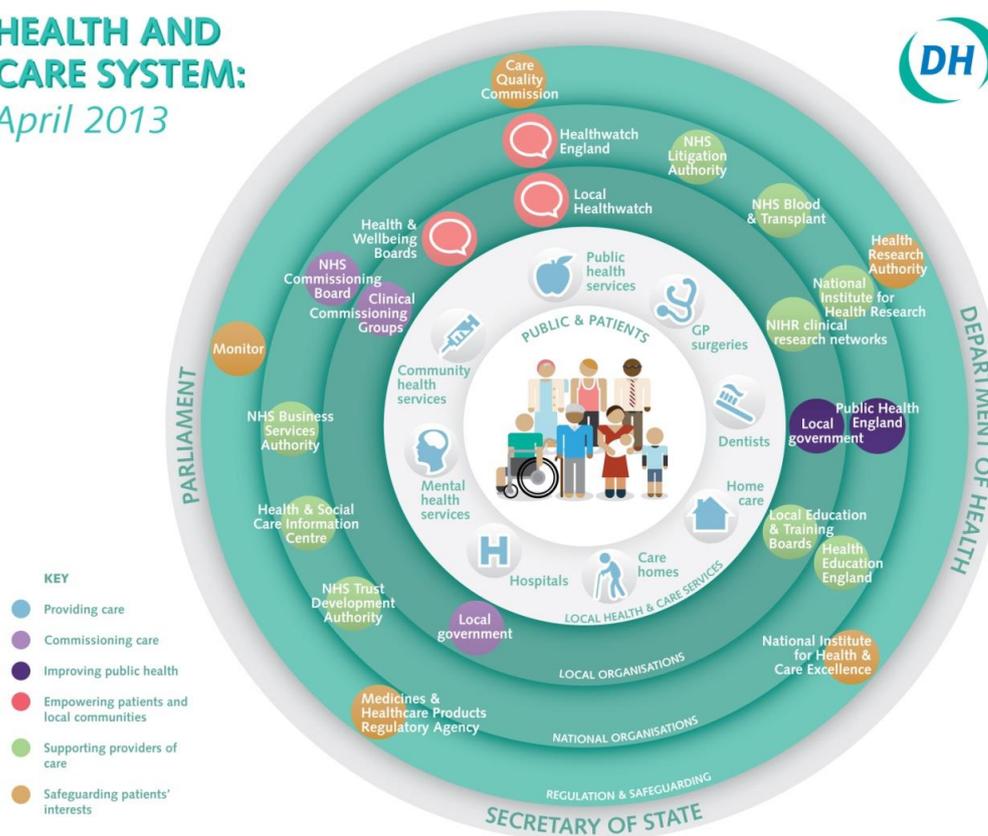
(UK Government, 2009). In addition, the 2014 Care Act places a cap on the amount a person is responsible to pay for their own care (UK Government, 2014f). Furthermore, it lowers the income/asset limit for free care. These two changes together mean that the government will be responsible for an even larger cost in the future. What these high figures indicate is that the government places a huge value and importance on such services. On the other hand, these figures and numbers demonstrate how big and costly these care systems are.

The Department of Education is mainly responsible for the care of children and families in the UK. Although the Department of Education's main purpose is to ensure high quality schooling, they have appointed a Parliamentary Under Secretaries of State for Children and Families (currently, 3/2015, Edward Timpson) whose responsibilities include, for example, children and young people's services, child poverty, families and young carers services (UK Government, 2014a). The offices of these two people, together with the Secretary of State for Education, Nicky Morgan, represent the UK's highest decision-making branch for children and family issues. Their offices are also in charge of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) that regulates and inspects children's social services as well as schools and childcare places (UK Government, 2014b). From these top levels the decisions and actions are then fed to local levels where they influence how any particular form of (public) care is executed. Although this type of top down approach can be very effective in, for instance, dealing with a public health threat, it is not without its problems as I will show later in this section.

All of the health and social care actions and decisions taken by the Department of Education as well as those of the Department of Health, are to some extent shaped and controlled by different care policies that are determined at national and also, to some degree, at European Union (EU) levels (UK Government, 2014c). These policies decide and control the allocation of public funds (Milligan and Wiles, 2010) and can extend from national health campaigns to seat belt laws to educational reform. Many of these issues are highly contentious since people, as well as different political and other organisations, have different

priorities and points of view; therefore political choices often also become economic choices (Anthamatten and Hazen, 2001). This is especially true in countries, like the UK, where the government is in a coalition (until the 2015 election) of two or more political parties often with different values and interests. Additionally, although there has been a clear shift toward community care, a great deal of the care still provided within a national care system is institutional i.e. mainly takes place in purpose-built institutions such as hospitals, care and group homes (Thane, 2009). In addition to long waiting lists some of these institutions, especially in the field of mental health for example, have strong stigmas attached to them, which can often negatively impact both the public and users' perceptions (e.g. Girma et al., 2013). Although alternative care systems, such as non-governmental and charity organisations, are not necessarily a substitute to such care, for these reasons they can often be an appealing alternative or supplement to government care. So care defined in this political organisational manner is practical and purposeful as well as carefully planned and organised, prioritised and politically determined (e.g. Haylett, 2003).

As well as practical and purposeful, these care systems are often hierarchical which can become problematic and complex. The figure 3.1 on the next page is a visual representation of the 2013 renewed national health and care system in the UK. The reason I wanted to include this figure here is that it demonstrates fairly efficiently the different units and types of care that can be present in a system like this. More importantly, though, it shows the hierarchical nature of this type of care system. In countries like the UK where universal health care (also known as the socialised medicine system where the government pays for care through tax revenue) is the norm, care systems are fairly centralised (Anthamatten and Hazen, 2001). In other words the government holds both the overall responsibility as well as the power. Although the main noble aim in a universal health care system is to reduce social and economical inequality by guaranteeing quality care for all regardless of social status or geographical location, the reality is that often different areas within the same country have different opportunities for care (Curtis, 2004).



*Figure 2.1. Visual representation of the organisation of the UK's Health and Care System*

*(Source: Department of Health)*

The care system is, as mentioned above, hierarchical. Held (2006) argues that care in whatever form involves attentiveness and responsiveness to needs as well as sensitivity. However, to produce this can be an evident problem for hierarchical systems as Milligan (2003: 458) points out: 'often in bureaucracy, those who determine how needs will be met are far removed from the actual care-giving and care-receiving, resulting in a poorer quality of care'. In other words there is a danger of disconnect between those who provide the care and those who receive it. Moreover, there is an obvious link here to power in the way that those on the outer rings of the system have the power to influence the quality and quantity of the care the people in the centre receive. Furthermore, those closer to the actual giving or performing of care are less powerful than those who are further removed from the people receiving care. I will examine power more

thoroughly in the section on performing care where I will discuss how power relations between a caregiver and a care receiver can affect the actual concrete actions of care. Here, however, I wanted to emphasise the fact that power penetrates through all the levels of an organisational care system. Held (2006) goes as far as asserting that power is in fact the opposite of morality and power structures keep oppression in place. I will discuss later on how power can actually be used in such ways that it becomes empowering rather than oppressive. And, furthermore, although it might seem like these systems are (over) powerful as well as very impersonal and detached; I agree with Fuqua and Newman's (2002) notion that although different kinds of social systems might limit individual control, they are always maintained and designed by humans and thus come with an enormous capacity and potential for adaptation as well as affective interactions.

So, in other words, although these types of care systems are embedded in the national and international wheels of bureaucracy and regulatory practices, and as such can seem purely functional and removed from the realities of the everyday, policies can also be empathetic as well as understanding, and are often genuinely aimed at enhancing people's well-being (Wiles and Rosenberg, 2003). Fuqua and Newman (2002) postulate that caring and functioning organisations or social systems should have the following components embedded: gratitude, forgiveness, encouragement, sensitivity, compassion, community, tolerance, inclusion and charity. This type of rhetoric suggests that emotional geographies should be extended to all levels of organisations and systems. Furthermore, care workers should be encouraged to internalise certain organisational cultures (Hochschild, 1983). Although many policies and regulations can often be frustrating for those performing care, they are a necessary component in any organised care system as they guide and control the care actions. Additionally, if the aim is to shape and reform care practices then changes at policy levels might be necessary; therefore an understanding of the system structure is vital for those who research and perform care. Care and even care systems, however, are complex in that they are also full of affect. In addition to affect, since organisational care systems are politically and economically charged, they also

carry a multitude of ethical and moral connotations. Care as a moral concept and as a value will be discussed next.

In order to answer the question of what care is, the moral and ethical sides of the concept need to be considered. Therefore this section discusses care as a value – a moral concept that is both culturally and personally constructed. In this section I want to make the following point: conceptualising care as a value, as a moral concept, humanises care and shifts it away from merely the political towards the affective.

In the previous section I discussed care as a system. I emphasised the political and hierarchical dimensions of this type of care but also the fact that states are providing, and are expected to provide (especially in Western Europe), care for their citizens. Essentially, what I was discussing was the duty of care. Duty of care refers to a legal obligation to care for those who are vulnerable or in need of care as well as avoiding causing harm (UK Government, 2007). On a national scale this means that states are required to provide care in a similar manner to parents who are legally bound to take (good) care of their children. If the duty of care is not fulfilled there will be consequences. For instance, if parents fail to take adequate care of their children, the state will interfere either by imposing regulations or removing the child from parental care (UK Government, 2014d). Understandably this type of conceptualisation of care has a strong ethical and juridical dimension. The point I am making here is that there are instances where caregiving is not optional. Who has to provide care and who should receive it are moral questions that affect care on all of its levels. In other words care has its roots in these ethical, philosophical and moral values (Popke, 2006).

The ethics of care are part of a moral theory. Moral theories seek to divide actions into those that are good and those that are bad (Rawls, 1974). The aim here is not to further discuss morality and ethics as theories but merely highlight how care is a moral concept and that the ethics of care is a useful framework for examining care. Since it does not provide definite answers to what is morally right or wrong, the ethics of care is not intended for practical use in the sense that it is not ideal for solving ethical dilemmas (Robinson, 1999). However, it is a very

useful framework for assessing and examining the quality of care given, especially in the private domain. Yet Held (2006) argues that ethics of care can be applied to private as well as to public care. But due to the hierarchical, disconnecting nature of care systems and organisations, the ethics of care as a more personal concept seems not to fit as such. However, Held (2006: 17) writes: “Policies that express the caring of the community for all its members will be better policies than those that grudgingly, though fairly, issue an allotment to those deemed unfit”; implying that ethics of care should and could be applied to systems and policies as well as producing equality. What this notion highlights is that the concept of morality in care is present at all levels. Furthermore, from a moral standpoint, care is both a right as well as a responsibility. Ethics of care is a useful concept because it has values and is sensitive to emotion, narratives and nuances. So it is starting to become evident how care is both an epistemological as well as an ontological construct. Furthermore, ethics of care also rejects universal rules of right and wrong; therefore valuing and taking into account vast cultural variability as well as individual experiences and circumstances (Held, 2006).

A survey by the BBC (2012) showed that 59% of young people aged between 16-24 felt that caring for one’s family was the most important moral issue in their life. Furthermore, over half (51%) felt that they as a generation are a lot less concerned with morals in general than their parents. There are a couple of points of interest here. First, in recent years the media has reported through a variety of forums that in Britain there are a great number of elderly care home residents who are infrequently or never visited by family members. So, although people are stating that caring for one’s family is a moral duty that does not necessarily translate into concrete actions. Secondly, it is interesting that young people judge themselves to be less moral than older generations. This could be a reflection of the individualistic values that seem to be prevalent in Britain and Western Europe today.

Although morality in relation to care in Britain might have declined, care as a concept is heavily influenced by the culture in which it is practised. Carlo (2005)

traces the value of care back to religious convictions by pointing out that many religions recognise forgiveness and generosity as building blocks of humanity on which to base the society of 'goodness'. This goodness, I argue, can take a variety of culturally shaped forms. For example amongst tribal societies in East Africa shared childcare arrangements are customary allowing the mother to work in the fields soon after childbirth. Similarly in the highlands in East Africa mothers use outside help for their infants in the form of 6-to-10-year-old siblings or neighbouring children (Harkness and Super, 1992).

Anthropologist Jared Diamond has written extensively on communities in New Guinea where the elderly are valued for knowledge transmission and often taken care of at home until their dying days. Rather conversely and dramatically, particular nomadic tribes in the arctic or in the desert, due to the lack of resources, kill or starve their old people (Diamond, 2012). Whereas Asian cultures have always valued the elderly and it is considered as an honour to be able to take care of older relatives. However, younger people in a country like Japan, for example, have started to value their independence more and multi-generation families under the same roof are on the decline (ICL, 2012). It is fairly obvious from these examples that any given culture largely determines the way care is conceptualised, practised and moralised. Practice that is very alien, or even against the law here in the Western world, can be approved, encouraged and even expected elsewhere. These different values to care are not just different understandings of morality between societies, or alternative interpretations of what is right or wrong, but also ingrained into the very being of the individuals. I will discuss this notion more in the section care as a practice.

Popke says, "Care is more than simply a social relation with moral or ethical dimensions; it can also be the basis for an alternative ethical standpoint, with implications for how we view traditional notions of citizenship and politics" (2006: 506). This notion highlights not only the moral basis of care but care as a higher ethical value with potential to alter the very system it is part of. Ethics of care is not only a moral theory but a stance for caring actions that could potentially shape larger systems too. Held (2006: 20) argues that, "The ethics of care is hospitable

to the methods of discourse ethics, though with an emphasis on actual dialogue that empowers its participants to express themselves rather than on discourse so ideal that actual differences of viewpoint fall away". So potentially if attentiveness and empowerment are utilised and valued at all levels of care systems such systems can become more caring and personal and less politically motivated. However, there are often a host of practical and theoretical complexities that tend to override the ethics of care.

Care as a value is problematic. Firstly, whose values and morals are all those decisions and actions based upon? Secondly, who are they serving, the next hierarchical stage in the system or the person at the end of it? Questions of paternalism, power, citizenship and justice emerge and cannot be ignored when discussing care as a value. Power in particular will be further discussed in this chapter. Although culturally varied, care often takes on an active form; that of an action or doing. Therefore the next section will explore the performance of care.

## **2.2. Performing care**

In this section I will argue the following point: in order to examine care holistically, multiple micro-geographies of care – that tie together place, emotion and interaction – need to be explored.

Performances of care are everywhere. Everyone at some stage of their lives performs acts of care as well as receives them. As discussed before, many care actions take place in organised settings that are formal and purposeful. However, a lot of the caring happens outside the public realm in private settings. For example caring for one's family members tends to be associated with close personal affective ties (Morris and Thomas, 2005), and as such is seen as something that is only normal to do for those we love and care about. In the UK alone there are millions of people who care for their children, parents or other relatives and friends who for various reasons need looking after. As Milligan (2000) points out, it is easy in a sophisticated welfare state like the UK to forget that the public care systems actually rely on those multiple informal networks of caring. It is important to acknowledge those informal networks of care because they can be very influential in our well-being or sadly, in some cases, the lack of

them can be detrimental. So at times it can be the case that further (more organised and purposeful) care is needed in order to fix or repair the damage that insufficient care has caused or to supplement care that does not quite fill all the needs of the individual. This is of course the main theme in this thesis and will be further discussed throughout.

For now I want to continue exploring who offers care. When discussing caring for one's family members it tends to be disproportionately women who carry out such caring, and traditionally, across cultures, care and acts of care have been seen as a woman's job (e.g. Robinson, 1999). In relation to caring for one's family members feminist theories often attribute this to what is maternal and natural rather than what is moral (Held, 2006). In other words, women are conceptualised as naturally more caring than men, therefore there are few ethical and moral implications of such natural acts. Intersectional factors, such as gender, interplay with care on a practical as well as a moral level. In fact when discussing women in professional caring roles, a multitude of political and moral dimensions appear. First of all professional care, whether social or health care, is often neither hugely respected as a vocation nor paid well (Milligan and Wiles, 2010). Since women dominate the professional care arena this devaluation of care could be seen as a devaluation of women. Furthermore, England (2005) argues, this devaluation of care is also significant in terms of race as often immigrant women are employed by the care sector where they are given the lowest level jobs. Would there be more political attention and discussion on care systems and their organisation if the care sphere was dominated more by men than women?

Ethics of care argue that caring well should be a moral goal, not a gendered one, in the sense that shifting the focus from gender to quality of care will bring about those political transformations that are required for providing good quality care (Held, 2006). This obviously demonstrates the link between the political care systems and the practical side of caring, as well as care as a gendered concept, but actually it does not yet tell us whether there is a certain type of a person who chooses to care. Neither does it tell us that males would be somehow inferior carers to females. In fact I would argue that the distinction between male and

female carers is actually insignificant but rather the focus should be on those attributes that define a good carer. I will now explore why people care for others.

There are a variety of reasons and motives for caring for others. As discussed above caring for family members tends to be seen as natural and somewhat as a moral duty. However, Rose and Bruce (1995) reported, in their sample of elderly people caring for their spouses, that some of the participants actually viewed their caring as work, however most saw their caring as a reciprocal relationship. So there seem to be individual differences in how people conceptualise their care relationships. According to Meintel *et al.* (2006) the same seems to be true for professional care workers. Many, but not all, of the care workers in their sample discussed their jobs affectionately, viewing it more as a vocation than an occupation, suggesting that people were passionate about their caring jobs. And, similarly, Spouse (2000) discovered that nursing students often cited wanting and liking to take care of people as their reasons for entering the nursing profession. It seems straightforward that those who enter into caring professions or other care jobs are the types of people who genuinely want to do good for someone else. However, this is not true of everyone and there are a few different ways suggested for differentiating the motives for caring.

Milligan and Wiles (2010) have distinguished between 'caring for' and 'caring about' in order to separate the genuine desire to help and care from more of a duty bound conceptualisation of care work. To them 'caring for' includes acts such as feeding or household tasks, whereas 'caring about' or 'being caring' refers to the emotional element of caring. This indicates there is an affective difference in the different elements of caring. Interestingly, however, for Held (2006) those terms have the exact opposite meaning. She argues that 'caring about' is a mere expression of how we feel about something whereas 'caring for' encompasses emotions and feelings. As Milligan and Wiles (2010) postulate these types of distinctions are useful in research but become difficult to engage with in practice. However, if one seeks to understand the difference between 'good', 'bad' or indifferent care then these types of definitions could be helpful regardless of whichever semantics one wishes to use.

Since the element of difference is emotion, whether an affective bond between the caregiver and the care receiver or an affective state of caregiving which someone with a passion for caring could be said to possess, dividing care actions into those that are emotionally charged and those that are less so is to overlook not only individual differences but also the overall care environment and its goals. In fact Kittay (2001) argues that without emotion or an emotional bond between the caregiver and the care receiver, as well as the caregiver's attitudinal commitment, the care given will be indifferent or even substandard. Therefore, it is likely that the way the carer perceives their care work affects the way they then carry out that work. But more importantly the multidirectional mixing of affect or the embodied emotional caregiving (Milligan, 2005) creates emotional geographies that can have a long lasting effect on both the care receiver and the caregiver.

The obvious reward in professional caregiving is a salary albeit often a small one. Besides wages professional care workers get personal and emotional satisfaction. For example Stacey (2005) explored the job satisfaction of home care workers and found that although there were negative aspects to the job, including physical and emotional strain, the positive aspects seemed to outweigh the negative. One such positive aspect that was interesting was a sense of pride and dignity in carrying out 'dirty work', for example assisting people with their personal hygiene. This type of finding suggests that care workers can value and take pride in the aspects of their job that many others might regard as not appealing. These types of emotional rewards seem to be related to the type of care work performed, since Bovier and Perneger (2003) found that amongst Swiss physicians intellectual stimulation and continuing medical education were the most cited rewards; a different type of emotional reward perhaps, but indubitably one that enhances job satisfaction and contentment.

In their review of care work Milligan and Wiles (2010) discovered that various care workers often cited a sense of pride and power, alleviation of guilt or new perspectives such as personal benefits derived through their caring work. Both a

sense of power and the alleviation of guilt suggest that motives for care work are perhaps not purely altruistic, or even a genuine desire to do good, but can be derived from all sorts of different emotional places. The interesting question then is whether those motives influence the quality of care? What Berk (1986) discovered was that there were differences in attitudes between early childhood workers who were happy with their working conditions compared to those who were less happy with their working environment. Specifically more positive child centred views and less restrictive attributes were held by those who were happy with their working conditions compared to those who weren't. This highlights the spatiality of care but also implies that the multidirectionality of care can extend from the policies regulating the working conditions to the way one interacts with those cared for – creating a complex and fluid network of affect. These networks of affect and care will be further examined in the empirical sections of this thesis.

In discussing rewards derived from care work those who volunteer to care are interesting, as Rohs (1986) discovered. In general, females tend to volunteer more than males. Wilson and Janoski (1995) claim that those who volunteer have more resources or human capital that allow them to donate their time and effort for free. They further postulate that those who volunteer often have a higher income or occupational standing compared to those who do not. Since there is no reward as a form of a salary, what then motivates people to volunteer their time often for total strangers? In their review of volunteers across a variety of sectors Bussell and Forbes (2002) found that the desire to help was often stated as the main motivation for volunteering. And similarly, as discussed earlier, for the paid care workers there were also expected (and attained) emotional rewards, such as a sense of belonging and making friends as well as gaining prestige and self-esteem. Much recent research on care has emphasised the importance on looking beyond the one-directional care interactions from the caregiver to the care receiver hence conceptualising the dyad in a way that reveals this bidirectional nature of care (e.g. Fine and Glendinning, 2005; Andrews and Evans, 2008; Milligan and Wiles, 2010).

I have so far discussed in this section why people (choose to) care for others and what types of emotional geographies caring for others can produce. Now I want to discuss another important aspect of performing care: the quality of care and what types of things make up good care. It is easy to imagine that a thoughtful, respectful and sensitive approach would be optimal and in fact Held (2006) argues that care in whatever form it comes in involves attentiveness and responsiveness to needs as well as sensitivity. Undoubtedly this formula produces good care but becomes problematic when the demands of the system do not match the workers' skills, expectations or values. This is the disconnect, discussed earlier, between the high levels of political (care) systems and those who perform the work. One good example of this comes from outside care work. In his work with flight attendants Hochschild (1983) found that there were often times when the emotional displays required by the company were not the internal emotional states of the worker. In other words somehow the working environment, or the work itself, failed to produce those emotional states in the workers that the company valued as essential. This obviously can create barriers for good (care) work.

A similar finding in a care work context was found by Karabanow (1999) who examined youth shelter workers' attitudes towards, and the internalisation of, the shelter's organisational culture. What he discovered was that the youth workers were selected for the job because of having the 'right' attitude and personal characteristics rather than any educational qualifications. This was due to the fact that the organisation viewed those with an appropriate education to be less genuine and more bureaucratic. Furthermore, a lot of emphasis was put on what Karabanow termed 'heart work' and internalisation of the shelter's pro-kid stance. Additionally, the youth workers would have to follow the shelter's philosophies on poverty and homelessness, or they were reprimanded. Whereas what were seen as appropriate care behaviours led to praise or eventually to a promotion. This is of course not to say that all affect is purely internalised due to organisational pressures, and therefore somehow less true, but to point out the external forces that influence the dyad of care and affective interaction.

Because of the multidimensionality of care it is not straightforward and it might appear very difficult to tease out the components of good care. Also obviously not all care work can be evaluated in the same manner, the optimal goals and outcomes of any given care differ hugely depending on the context. However, there are some common features, for instance individuality of care has often been seen as an important factor in producing good quality care. Gilligan (1999: 187) writes: “The complexity of the challenges faced and the unlikelihood of successful ‘one size fits all’ solutions have led to consideration of approaches which are more incremental and customised”. Similarly Held (1995) argues that good care has to be individually tailored and autonomous thus allowing empowerment.

Empowerment refers to strengthening individual and community ability, either socially, economically or politically and has quickly become the goal of many care activities (NHS, 2013). For example in mental health care there has been a clear shift in in the past two decades from a medical approach to the recovery approach where a lot of emphasis is placed on the patient and their role as an autonomous agent in their own treatment (e.g. Fisher, 1994; Barker, 2003). Furthermore, by the professional adopting the role of an apprentice and giving control to the patient, the aim then is to make a positive difference through empowerment. However, autonomy as a concept is not that easy to adapt to young people who are dependant on adult care and supervision.

Because of this dependency the lives of young people are characterised by rules and regulations. Also, in relation to young people, power is frequently executed by both parents and teachers (Thomson and Holland, 2002). Thomson and Holland (2002) also argue that at the heart of a teacher-pupil relationship is a moral relationship. Traditionally, however, authority figures, especially those who are trying to regulate or control young people’s behaviour, get little respect from them (Thomson and Holland, 2002; Hopkins, 2010). Dunkley (2009) studied young people with behavioural issues on a rural camp which sought to provide a therapeutic camping experience, so called *wilderness therapy*. Dunkley (2009: 92) writes: “I saw staff members create resistance by failing to provide leadership

or empathy at key moments”. The Dunkley sentence above captures the use of power in a negative manner, differing from a Foucauldian approach.

Foucault (1975) argues that power should not be perceived as something with negative nuances but rather be conceptualised as a network of people’s relations and as such is something that is constantly being negotiated and re-negotiated. “Foucault is one of the few writers on power who recognise that power is not just a negative, coercive or repressive thing that forces us to do things against our wishes, but can also be a necessary, productive and positive force in society (Gaventa 2003: 2).” Foucault argued against power as being repressive but as having potential for productivity. Furthermore, Foucault understood power to be relationally constituted and to be everywhere as well as in a constant state of negotiation and renegotiation. This constant state of flux diffuses power, Foucault argues, rather than concentrates it.

Foucault’s view is different from Marxist or liberal views of power as coercion and domination where the state is the upmost authority (Sharp *et al.*, 2000). Furthermore, Foucault argued that power wasn’t used as such but rather was part of the fabric of a society. In other words Foucault sees power as embedded within societies as a knowledge and understanding of how that particular society functions. This understanding is very apt in the context of this thesis where much of the CHICKS experience is constituted relationally between subjects. Foucault also argued that this type of power could be self-controlling. This again applies here where very little resistance was observed in camps but rather the CHICKS *code of conduct* was internalised. These findings will be further discussed in chapter four.

Noblit (1993) asserts that caring is about the ethical use of power. This type of feminist understanding of power conceptualises power as nurturing and empowering (Held, 2009). An example of good and effective use of power in a caring context can be found in Parsons’s work (2001). In her study of a teacher-student power relationship she discovered that the teacher used her power in organising the bodies in the teaching/caring space in order to mediate the white male privilege in her classroom. She did this to create spaces of equity and

equality and carried it out in such a manner that all of her pupils felt well cared for. In other words she created the type of moral typology of care that was aimed to enhance well-being rather than using her power as a negative force. And, furthermore, with everyone's best interest in mind and a strong desire to care well for her pupils, the teacher created an emotional space where her use of power was well received. Similarly Keltner (2010) states that when empathy and social intelligence are used efficiently, they can become far more powerful than control and coercion. Therefore power mixed with geographies of love could be a powerful tool in creating the emotional landscapes of care and in the creation of a positive moral typology of care. This will be further analysed and discussed in chapter four.

And similarly Gilbert (2003) states that power travels through systems in a multitude of covert ways. Therefore, in order to successfully incorporate the notion of power in the performance of care, power has to be accepted by the care receiver and equally the caregiver has to earn the right to use that power. This right is earned through affective, empathetic caring that creates an emotional space in which both the caregiver and the care receiver feel empowered. Also, if the care receiver refuses to hand any power to the caregiver, the care will not be successful since the refusal to give power will result in resistance. The performance of care therefore happens in a multitude of spaces that are constantly being negotiated and renegotiated. Next I will bring young people into the discussion.

### **2.3. (Caring for) young people**

In this section I will provide definitions for both the terms young people and marginalisation, and explain how these terms are understood and conceptualised in this thesis. Furthermore, in this section I will draw links between these concepts and care.

Marginalisation or social exclusion has become a term that is widely used both inside and outside academia. When talking about marginalised people what we are essentially discussing are people who for a variety of reasons (which will be detailed later) live lives on the margins of any particular society. "Whatever the

content and criteria of social membership, socially excluded groups and individuals lack capacity or access to social opportunity” (Silver, 2007: 5). In other words marginalised groups are in a disadvantageous position within their societies; lacking or having limited resources, rights and opportunities that are available to those not marginalised. There are multiple reasons for marginalisation, for example, marginalisation based on ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religion or social economic status (Silver, 2007). Although the above groups live marginalised lives everywhere, marginalisation is also culturally determined; for example Nordic (socialist democratic), Mediterranean (family-value based) and Anglo-American (liberal) societies all have different levels of marginalisation. Geographers have examined marginality and marginal lives in a variety of contexts; for example rural lives (Cloke et al., 1995), inner-city neighbourhoods (Bauder, 2002), immigrant youth (Bushin and White, 2007) and Scottish gypsy travellers (Shupin & Swanson, 2010).

What makes these marginal lives a social, and not just a personal, problem is the disadvantage that they carry. This disadvantage could be economical, social, political or cultural or a combination of some or all of these. For example migrant young people, whose mobilities, socialising and employment are all controlled by the immigration system (Bushin and White, 2010), are simultaneously marginalised in multiple ways. All young people, due to their age that restricts them from certain activities, could be argued to being marginalised to a certain extent (Hopkins, 2010). Silver (2007), however, states that age alone does not necessarily marginalise but rather the interplay of (young) age and other dimensions can marginalise. One of those dimensions, and the most relevant to this thesis, is poverty or economic marginalisation, also one of the main reasons for a child to come to CHICKS.

As Peace (2001) argues, poverty can marginalise in a variety of ways. Perhaps most obviously poverty causes low living standards that can then lead to a host of problems; for example poor living conditions, inadequate diet and mental stress. Additionally, Peace argues, social stigma and prejudice can often suffered by those who live in poverty; two things that Peace argues can cause low self-

esteem and stress as well as further social isolation. So this type of economic marginalisation can have long lasting effects that go far beyond purely lack of money. Therefore, it can become a huge burden for the individual and also to care systems. Ridge (2011) reviewed an extensive body of research on childhood poverty and concluded that material and economic disadvantage penetrates through childhood often causing sadness, shame and fear of social difference. Poverty can also understandably create strains in everyday family life and result to family dysfunction, caregiver stress as well as inadequate parenting (Ahmed, 2005). All of this can then have an impact on well-being. Well-being has become an overarching concept to describe a state of wellness that encompasses both mental and physical health; as the World Health Organisation (WHO) states: "Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community" (WHO, 2013).

Well-being is also relative and through social comparison one forms an opinion about their standing on various aspects in relation to others (Klein, 1997). Animal studies indicate that more dominant members of a social hierarchy are in better health than caged members while the subordinates' health status is somewhere in the middle (Tarlov and St Peter; 2003 in Kawachi; Kennedy and Wilkinson; 2002). In humans it has been found that in countries where the income gap between the rich and the poor is large there are larger health differentials and worse public health than in more egalitarian countries (Wilkinson, 1996). Additionally, it was found that Saudi Arabia, a prosperous oil producing country, and Kerala, a poor region in India, had very similar life expectancies even though Saudi Arabia is much more affluent than the Kerala region (Sen, 1993). Social comparison is based on relative measures rather than absolute. Simplistically it can be argued that a large income gap makes low social status seem even lower. When people at the low end of the socio-economic scale compare themselves to those at the other end of the scale it could create psychological discomfort and put their health further at risk. In the UK the income gap is constantly widening (Wilkinson, 2005). Children and young people are especially affected by this. Not

only does a relatively low standing affect your well-being but children and teenagers are building their identity based on that low standing (Sutton, 2009).

Young people with adverse family and home situations are a marginalised group whose everyday experiences often lack something that is deemed necessary for safe growth and development. Young people coming to CHICKS are mostly economically and/or socially marginalised. This creates a sensitive research arena. Also marginalised young people are often subject to stereotyping and only examined in relation to the challenges their marginalisation creates for society. This then leads to the needs and wants of these young people being overlooked. These needs, wishes and aspirations can be specific and different from that of non-marginalised youth, and, if not fulfilled, can potentially cause further marginalisation. In this thesis marginalisation is understood as an economic, social and/or emotional disadvantage that could have a negative impact on well-being. Marginalised young people on CHICKS holidays are the focus of this thesis. In order to get a full understanding of their experiences on a CHICKS holiday this thesis requires a consideration of several dimensions of young people and their lives.

In the next section I will examine the multiple ways that the term young people is defined and understood in different contexts. Furthermore, I will discuss how different disciplines come to understand and conceptualise how young people grow and develop. It is argued here that young people should be conceptualised within the social construction framework that allows the thorough examination of individual differences.

The term young people is now widely used and accepted to describe people of a certain age but, when further examining the concept, it does not seem to be straightforward what age group the term youth or young people is referring to. The United Nations (UN) defines anyone under the age of 14 as a child and those between the ages of 15-25 as youth (UN, 2010). However, the UN's Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1989) – a document listing a series of children's rights that member countries can ratify into their own legislation – defines anyone under the age of 18 as a child thus overlapping with their definition of youth. Moreover,

18 is the most common official age of adulthood in the world as well as for voting and other legal rights (UN, 2010). When examining social science research some consensus can be seen in that people under the age of 16 tend to be defined as children, people from 16 to 25 are young people and those over the age of 25 are adults (Valentine, 2003).

However, the range of terminology and definitions is vast and tends to vary from one academic source to another. Regardless of whether one examines the academic literature or other definitions there seems to be a blurred line between childhood and youth extending all the way to young adulthood. The Oxford English Dictionary (2010) defines a child as “a young human being below the age of puberty or below the legal age of majority”. Teenager is defined as “a person between 13 and 19 years” and youth as “the period between childhood and adult age”. Furthermore, a young person is defined as “a person generally from 14-17 years of age”. Politically in the UK in terms of schooling a lot of emphasis has been placed on the age of 11. At this age the shift from primary to secondary school happens. The age of 11 is then somehow seen as the age where a child is ready to move from being taught by one teacher in the same class to often considerably bigger schools with more teachers as well as greater responsibilities and workload.

As can be seen from the above, there are huge discrepancies in the age groupings of young people both in academic research as well as in public domains. Also there is a feeling of vagueness in these definitions that convey the image that these chronological definitions might just be arbitrary. In fact Pain (2001) argues that chronological age is just one of the approaches to age. She further postulates that physiological and social approaches to age should not be ignored when constructing or conceptualising young people. I would argue that chronological age is probably most useful for policymakers or researchers wishing to categorise people, but in reality tells us very little about the person or their everyday experiences. In a similar vein, Vanderbeck (2008) suggests that age should always be examined in relation to the wider social context. Furthermore, he argues that children’s geography as a sub-discipline should

contribute to political debates about age restrictions such as voting age, compulsory education and sexual consent.

Vanderbeck (2008) links this to the core theoretical assumption of children and young people as active social agents. He suggests that to be in support of somewhat controversial age restrictions can be seen as anti-child or to be against children having a status as active independent agents. This, he claims, is the reason for the reluctance of human geographers to participate in these debates. The point I'm making here is that children and young people are often conceptualised or examined in the light of their rights or on the other hand in relation to their vulnerabilities. For example, the UN's Human Rights Declaration (1946) clearly states that all humans should be protected but children are still given extra protection indicating the adult tendency to see children in the need of such protection and guidance (Lee, 2001). This is not to say that children and young people do not possess certain vulnerabilities but I am highlighting a tendency to differentiate children and young people from adults as if young people were a separate entity.

The lives of children and young people are of increasing interest to social scientists from a variety of theoretical perspectives. In a series of innovative papers, in particular by Hugh Matthews and colleagues, geographers have sought to break new ground in conducting research with children, as marginalised 'others', and their use and values of space (Matthews *et al.*, 1998, Jones, 2012). The otherness of children that Jones (2001) discusses addresses the points I was making above about young people being conceptualised in relation to adults. Jones further argues that there is a distinct difference between becoming a child and becoming an adult. He further postulates that children are mysterious in the sense that the way they are and their experiences are beyond adult understanding or frame of reference. I agree with Jones that children as a group have a specialness that only they possess, but I see this as a character-enriching attribute. I therefore feel that the term 'otherness' is somewhat misleading because it has negative connotations of difference; to be the other conveys images of segregation and marginalisation. In methodological terms this point

about the otherness of children is backed up by Philo (2003), for example, who argues that an adult researcher can never fully enter the life of a child because they operate on a different frame of reference therefore entering the mindset of a child is impossible for an adult. To put this differently; there seems to be a paradox here. On the one hand adults and children should not be separated in terms of assigning a different value whether in political, economic or academic debates and decisions. But, simultaneously, the specialness of children should be acknowledged and accommodated for by recognising their special needs and agency.

Also what is rather problematic is the focus on defining young people as 'human becomings' instead of human beings (e.g. Lee, 2001 and Uprichard, 2008). The term human becomings refers to the dynamic process involving increases in cognitive, emotional and social processes in which children and young people are constantly moving through on their way to adulthood (Uprichard, 2008). This definition, however, seems to diminish children's value as people; as Lee (2001) argues this view is extremely future oriented, ignoring children and young people as an entity in their own right in the present time. Furthermore, because this view positions young people as not yet adults and therefore 'incomplete', they are also seen as in need of intervention. This line of thinking is reflected in Blatterer's (2008: 2) view that "adulthood is the destination of adolescent development; and it replaces idealism with realism, rashness with prudence, lifestyle experimentation with career orientation, self-centredness with responsibility and commitment for self and others". If young people are seen as merely being on a journey toward the ultimate goal of adulthood then not only does that journey become insignificant, but young people become perceived of as less than or inferior to adults which then threatens their position in society.

Debates about the definition of children, young people, young adults and adults are further complicated by the notion of adolescence. Psychological approaches to young people tend to provide definitions that are tied to the concept of adolescence. The broad definition of adolescence is that it is a developmental period, during one's teen years, characterised by vast social, emotional and

physical changes (Berk, 2002). The psychological literature sees adolescence as a stage where young people face many developmental tasks, such as coming to terms with physical changes, forming an identity, breaking free from parents and achieving independence (Coleman and Hendry, 1999). Even though adolescents have greater cognitive capacity than younger children, psychologists argue that their thought mechanisms and personal resources are not yet on an adult level (Sandtrock, 2003). Furthermore, psychologists see adolescence as a critical developmental stage in the formation of personality (Berk, 2003) where physical and mental changes within oneself are seen as important in identity formation. In addition, through the changing body and mind, adolescents build up a physical-psychological image of themselves (e.g. Berk, 2002). These approaches, however, are not purely oriented around the notions of physical and psychological changes but also argue that personality formation happens through socialisation – where immediate family as well as wider society play a role in transferring their norms and values (e.g. Bandura, 1977).

So it would be wrong to argue that psychological approaches completely ignore the wider social context, in general such approaches tend to place young people in the midst of developmental tasks or at stages characterised by a strong biological theme (Gillies, 2000). The problem with these psychological approaches is that they seem to characterise young people or the period of adolescence as a condition that requires treatment i.e. successful navigation through developmental stages. In so doing, this approach automatically separates the period of adolescence from the rest of the life course, suggesting that it is like a separate entity; a vulnerable period during which cognitive and mental processes play a key role. Furthermore, these approaches ignore those who are marginalised and might not follow the developmental trajectory that is determined as normal, but this does not mean that their life journey is any less significant or valuable.

Using psychological measurements, the promotion of autonomy, combined with limited control and increased independence from parents, has been identified as vital for successful development (Newman and Murray, 1983). According to

Kjorholt (2003), increased autonomy allows children and young people to discover themselves. This view is shared by the human geographers Matthews, Limb and Taylor (1999) who argue that children and young people today have been denied the opportunity to freely explore, and are in desperate need of more spaces that are not regulated by adults. In a similar vein Peter and Iona Opie (1969), children's folklorists and researchers of children's street culture, wrote, "the most precious gift we can give to children is social space, the necessary space and privacy in which to become human beings" (Opie and Opie, 1969: 11). These common calls for more freedom and less adult regulation have a different significance for psychologists and human geographers. In other words, psychologists see freedom and independence as essential for navigating through adolescence fulfilling developmental tasks, whereas human geographers see freedom for young people as vital in terms of them reclaiming physical and social space. The common factor here is that freedom from adult control is seen as fundamental for young people to develop a sense of self and personhood. Furthermore, Matthews *et al.* (1997) argue that young people use their space in a variety of ways. Firstly, physical spaces allow spatial autonomy, away from the gaze of adults. Secondly, which physical space one occupies determines their social group. Those social groups then share patterns of consumerism, for example following the same fashion. Thirdly, the sense of control or ownership over a place and rootedness. And, fourthly, the feeling a connection to a place are important. I will further develop this discussion of young people in relation to place a little later in this section and will now focus on young people and identity.

Rather than focusing on developmental tasks, human geographers, alongside other social scientists, are interested in how young people experience their worlds and their lives. Human geographers argue that young people's identities are characterised by multiple multidimensional factors and spaces that influence who young people are and what they will become (Panelli, 2004; Leyshon, 2008). Age, gender, race, religion and ethnicity are all factors that young people bring with them into any interaction and to ignore these factors in young people's lives doesn't take into account intersectionality. 'Intersectionality' is a term that has been increasingly used in geographical research to refer to the interplay of space

and place with race, age, sex, religion and ethnicity and how that shapes and impacts our experiences (Hopkins and Pain, 2007).

Dwyer's (1999) work with immigrant Muslim girls in Britain highlights how everyday experiences can differ even within an ethnic or cultural group. Dwyer (1999) discovered that identity processes were different for those girls who were a minority group at their school than for those who were in the majority group at their school. Also the age of the girls mediated the identity experiences. This highlights the importance of the setting in the lives of young people and how their space or place matters. This spatiality of intersectionality does not only refer to different places but to different areas as well; regional identities are part of the entwined factors affecting interactions and communication (Nayak, 2003). A significant body of research has been conducted on the role of public space (Powell *et al.*, 2008), inhabited by young people outside of the home, school and playground, in which significant memories are created, negotiated and renegotiated. Yet, as Karsten (2002) and Leyshon (2010) have discussed, there are ever decreasing islands of acceptable spaces for children to be present; while the privatisation of youth spaces and commodification of young people's lives has been explored by others (Davis, 1997; Matthews *et al.*, 2000b; McKendrick *et al.*, 2000). Both James *et al.* (1998) and Matthews (1995) have noted that there is a clear distinction between designated and acceptable social space for children, and conversely inappropriate social space for children, seen as an invasion of adult space. The significance of social and play places in the lives of young people will be further discussed in chapter five.

In this section I discussed the multiple ways that young people are conceptualised. By merely focusing on developmental stages, unique individual differences and resources are ignored and vital components of personhood are missed. What has been discussed here is the importance of the examination of the wider social context in relation to young people. This gives a fuller picture of the lives of young people and opens up a door into their everyday lives encompassing both work and leisure.

#### **2.4. Care and emotional geographies**

In this section I will discuss the emotional geographies that are most relevant to this thesis. Here I will define emotion and affect and the ways they are understood here. Also, within this framework, the concepts of self and identity are explored. I will demonstrate here, as well as in the rest of the chapter, that self is relational, narrative, affective and imaginative.

Emotion and affect are concepts that are used to describe a variety of experiences and occurrences. They are also often used in this thesis; therefore the terms need defining and separating. Perhaps a decade ago or so emotion was not something that would often feature in geographic investigations. This, however, has now changed and emotional geographies have become a common feature across geographical writings. In psychology emotions are seen as interplay or as physiological, cognitive and neurological processes (Myers, 2004). Geographical understanding of emotions leans more towards seeking to understand how people experience and understand their environment, lives and positions (Bondi *et al.*, 2005). Both understandings acknowledge that emotions impact how we feel, experience, react and act in different situations and can vary from despair to ecstasy. Geographers are not ignoring the physiological and cognitive side of emotions either and often discuss emotion in relation to embodiment: minds and bodies as sites of emotion (e.g. Wylie, 2007). Emotions and emotional geographies have been examined in a multitude of contexts: for example emotional displays and their social function in prison (Crewe *et al.*, 2014), how emotions such as enthusiasm can influence one's performance and actions (Geoghegan, 2013), how emotions help form multiple identities in rural women (Herron & Skinner, 2012) and how emotions can impact on teachers' communication styles (Dotger, 2011).

As in the above examples, emotions are understood in this thesis as cognitive, subjective and as eliciting emotional displays. Cognitive in the sense that these emotions can be communicated, discussed and reflected on. Subjective in the way that although we attach descriptive words and certain preconceived ideas to emotions they can still be a personal experience; varying in intensity and nuance between people. Emotional displays can of course be disingenuous, or put on for

a particular social function (Crewe *et al.*, 2014), but nevertheless are also reflections of the underlying emotions.

If emotions are cognitive and rational, then affect can be conceptualised as unconscious and pre-rational (Simpson, 2011). As Thrift (2004: 59) writes, “there is no stable definition of affect”. Simpson (2011) further argues that since affect occurs outside reflective and consciousness abilities this makes it very problematic to study and examine. However, it could be argued that unlike emotions, affect, being a non-conscious experience, cannot be faked or fabricated so is reflecting a *true* experience. This thesis conceptualises affect based on these human geographical understandings of affect as out of human control – as a pre-subjective intensity preparing the body for action. This action can be slowing down or speeding up depending on the affective experience (Wylie, 2007). Affect is not the same as emotions or feelings although they are not completely separate either (Patterson, 2005). Wylie (2007) uses the term affective-emotional that folds together the unconscious and cognitive, the pre-rational and rational, and subjective and relational. The term emotional space in this thesis refers to more than just a physical space; but rather to a relationally constructed network of feeling that elicits (positive) emotions.

Self and identity are full of emotion and affect and are concepts that are widely used, discussed and debated both in academia as well as in everyday discourse. When examining how people experience and perceive places, other people or events both self and identity are involved. Not only do our identities and self-processes affect how we enter into such situations they can also be affected by them (e.g. Wager, 2003). Therefore, investigations into particular places are ultimately always to a certain extent about self and identity. Here I will discuss the processes of identity and the self especially in relation to young people.

Both self and identity are concepts that refer to the way that we are, or believe ourselves to be. They are made up of multiple personality traits, behaviour patterns, social belongings, memories and a variety of different life experiences and encounters (e.g. Pervin, 2003). Although different disciplines conceptualise them in differing ways, generally the self is seen as the one that immediately

responds to any given situation consisting of our thoughts, emotions and perceptions whereas identity is often a group or community affiliation based on a set of distinctive characteristics (Oyserman et al., 2012). The aim here is not to discuss them separately or in fact compare and contrast, but to examine them as the same phenomenon and, as such, a distinctive and important part of being human. Since I will from now on treat them as one concept making up a large part of humanhood the terms self and identity will be used (almost) interchangeably.

The concept of self has traditionally been a psychological construction. From a psychological point of view the self emerges early on in infancy (Pervin, 2003). Psychologists argue that one's self-concept is born through a differentiation between oneself and others. This similar line of thinking is also present, albeit in slightly different forms, in sociology where the self is seen as a part of a symbolic interaction within social structures (Stets and Burke, 2003). Furthermore, psychological understandings of the self argue that the self-concept develops when new information from the environment is evaluated against old existing concepts (e.g. Pervin, 2003). The new information is then either integrated into the old, or the old information gets replaced with the new. Additionally, psychology examines the self in relation to and how it affects, for example, the development of self-esteem, self-actualisation and self-efficacy. All of these terms refer to self-processes that allow us to believe in ourselves, and realise our own potential and self-worth (Oyserman et al., 2012). So in a way the self in a psychological sense comes about through information processing whereas sociologists Stets and Burke (2003) argue that when we interact with others we develop a self-concept and a set of meanings about ourselves that consists of feelings, thoughts and imaginations. Additionally, in sociology the self is mainly seen as a social construct, something that develops through reflexivity while interacting with others.

Psychology also acknowledges the relationality of the self. To this effect, maybe one of the most renowned psychological concepts of the self is William James's 1890 'looking-glass self' (James, 2011). James postulated that the self is central

to all of human experience and develops in interplay with other people. The term 'looking-glass self' refers to the development of the self by looking at oneself through others and examining the many selves that they show us. In other words all of these conceptualisations emphasise the role of others and the relational character of the self – suggesting that one truly becomes oneself when interacting with others. Philosophical examinations of the self and identity tend to focus on questions of existence and circle around notions of consciousness, spirituality and soul; conceptualising self as a thinking but simultaneously a feeling concept (Gallagher, 2000). This merging of cognition and affect is in line with sociology and psychology as outlined above. Human geography follows this pattern but the particular focus is on different places or locales where identities and the self are negotiated, developed and redeveloped in a complex web of space and affect (e.g. Paasi, 2001; Saldanha, 2002; Leyshon, 2008; Hopkins, 2010). These places can be highly emotional therefore these self-processes are emotionally charged.

Earlier in this thesis I discussed how care should always be examined within a particular culture; the same is true with self and identity. The difference in general is that Western concepts of identity emphasise independence whereas Eastern concepts of identity highlight the importance of interdependence (e.g. Zhu and Han, 2008). National and ethnic identity is one form of identity that has been extensively studied across disciplines for example in relation to negative attitudes toward immigration (Esses et al., 2001), in young people leaving care (Barn, 2011) and young people growing up in divided Northern Ireland (McGrellis, 2011). These types of identities are highly emotional and these cultural differences also influence what is termed appropriate behaviour or self-presentation. Goffman (1959), a sociologist, in his famous book *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life*, argued that the avoidance of embarrassment in social interactions requires the individual to adapt their behaviour and manners according to a situation. Moreover, he argued that social interactions are a performance where the actors must take on different roles accordingly. This idea of multiple selves is also echoed in psychologist Tory Higgins's (1987) self-discrepancy theory. The theory postulates that one holds three different types of selves: actual, ought and ideal. The actual self is the true reflection of our personality while the ought self

comprises of those characteristics we perceive we should have and the ideal self of those we would like to have; suggesting the multidimensionality of the self both in a relational and an affective way. Additionally, the idea of multiple selves highlights the self and identity as dynamic and fluid concepts rather than stationary and fixed.

Self as a narrative is a somewhat new approach to the study of the self. Studying the self, or indeed lives, as a narrative opens up a whole world of lived experience. If we conceptualise self and identity as relative, but also as imagined and ideal, then surely the story around the self matters not just as a part of self but as a series of occurrences that build and shape the very self they are part of. Since human geographers are often interested in the lived experience, these stories become the focus for a story itself but also in how the individual is making sense of the story. Narrative self has also been examined across disciplines. For example by sociologists in relation to experiences of illness (Kelly and Dickinson, 1997), in business studies by examining managerial identity (Watson, 2009) and in psychology in relation to living with traumatising experiences (Crossley, 2000). It is especially through these stories that the self and memory become connected (e.g. Jones, 2005 and McLean, 2005) and therefore can be significant in identity building as well as in well-being (Bauer et al., 2008). As has already become evident this thesis advocates this narrative stance on self and identity. When the focus is to understand as much as possible about somebody else's experience this approach of examining identity offers the most comprehensive way of doing so. The narrative approach is of course not without its critics. Carr (2001) argues that historical narratives especially can be unreliable and therefore distort the truth. I would argue that in the exploration of narrative memories and identities that becomes insignificant since the focus is on the meaning making and emotional residue rather than the actual event.

In this section I will briefly discuss some of the specific issues that are related to young people's identity processes; this discussion will be further developed within the empirical chapters. I will discuss here how identity building, although a lifelong task, is especially interesting in youth since young people are trying on multiple

roles in multiple spaces which open up rich narratives for the examination of identity.

Self and Identity are especially interesting in young people since they are constantly, with increased dependence and responsibility, discovering and rediscovering themselves (Worth, 2009). Although a young person strives for independence, rules and norms bring security and structure in the lives of children, two things that are viewed as vital for successful development (Berk, 2003, Schaffer, 2004). However, it is common that children at some point will test their boundaries by protesting against the rules and regulations. Adolescence especially is the time in a child's life when adult control can be perceived as getting in the way of the ongoing struggle for independence and identity formation processes (Berk, 2003). In fact Vanderbeck (2007) suggests that too much adult regulation and surveillance during adolescence can actually hinder identity formation. However, simultaneously, as his thesis has already shown, adults can be an important part in this identity formation as a young person builds his/her identity through interactions with other people, making the child-adult dyad significant. Also adults act as guideposts in the lives of children; teaching, guiding, pointing in the right direction and nurturing, which is especially important in our modern society as Valentine (2000) postulates that our modern lives mean that paths to adulthood are now more complex than they were decades go.

Complexities such as an earlier start of sexual life and more choice for education and work (Valentine, 2000) are all issues that affect today's young people more than earlier generations. Also nowadays, as mentioned, young people are very much seen as active producers of culture both with as well as within places rather than passive beings under adult culture and control (e.g. Matthews et al., 1998). However, young people as a group are still marginalised due to their age that automatically excludes them from certain activities in society. James (1993) argues that this marginalisation can actually affect young people's sense of self. I believe, however, that this issue is in line with the intergenerationality and otherness of children and young people, and although as such it can certainly affect identity, it does so in a relational way that can unite young people as a

collective and therefore actually give opportunities for growth. Furthermore, as young people move with and within places they get opportunities to try on multiple different roles through which both social identity as well as a sense of place are developed (Depeau, 2001).

Place can be very important and a defining factor in identity building for young people as Leyshon (2009) discovered in rural youth who stressed continuity and resisted change if anything was threatening their rural habitat. Places, as well as bodies through which the places are sensed, are explored simultaneously building identity as well as expressing it (Hopkins, 2010). In other words places that the young people occupy can influence identity building but also say something about the person occupying it. Similarly, bodies can be changed to represent the identity a young person is exploring by changing haircuts, clothing and so on. Places and bodies have already been discussed in this thesis in relation to sensing and experiencing fun and care. This exploration incorporating identity continues in the empirics.

I discussed earlier how psychological approaches view the period of adolescence as a developmental task. This is true to identity formation as well; psychological approaches to young people and identity are stage-like. In other words different theories postulate different types of stages that become developmental tasks in adolescence. Erik Erikson's (1950) psychodynamic theory of life-span development postulates that the developmental task to fulfil in adolescence is that of identity building. Furthermore, he argues that if the young person is not given sufficient encouragement through social relations the identity building fails and results in identity confusion. Freud's psychosexual theory sees the period of adolescence as that of a genital stage; where emerging sexual needs alongside a concern for others are the two important issues for a young person (Berk, 2003). Freud argued that if this stage is successfully navigated the young person grows to be well-balanced as well as warm and caring. Piaget's theory of cognitive development (Berk, 2003) argues that adolescence is a period characterised by formal operations where abstract 'adult-like' reasoning is developed.

These stage type theories of development are probably most useful in instances where development needs to be assessed in a formal manner. However, they assume a stage-like linear and universal development ignoring individual differences and circumstances; therefore, in the context of this thesis where the focus is on the individual's story a different approach to self and identity is needed. This, however, does not mean that these psychological theories do not give insights into the period of adolescence and, as long as the events are investigated within every individual's specific framework and context, they could offer further insights into the lives of young people. Additionally, what they importantly highlight is that there seems to be this (psychological) understanding that if one does not have optimal conditions, such as nurture and encouragement, or opportunities for identity development that can have an effect on well-being. This notion becomes especially important in a context, like in this thesis, where the young person might not enjoy a typical childhood and therefore could be deprived of such opportunities. In this section I showed how young people build their identity relationally and spatially. The next section explores spatiality in care.

## **2.5. Spaces of care**

This section examines and discusses the multiple spaces of care, mainly from a geographical point of view, but also highlights the key findings or debates across disciplines when relevant to this thesis. This section discusses different spaces in care and their importance in shaping and forming the care experience. Here I will discuss nature as a space of care and briefly introduce different conceptualisations of nature. I argue here that these places are political and moral, just like the policies and systems that created them, but that they do not stay stationary but are full of emotional responses and displays. In other words they can create or foster emotional spaces.

Recently the spatiality of care has been given more attention in geographical research and the importance of place has been highlighted for example home as a caring space (e.g. Wiles, 2003) or nature retreats (e.g. Conradson, 2005). Milligan and Wiles (2010: 1) state, "Care and care relationships are located in, shaped by, and shape particular spaces and places that stretch from the local to the global". Physical spaces where care actions happen can vary substantially

from institutions to home and outdoor spaces. Therefore, care can be public and formal, private and informal, or indeed a combination of some or all of these (Milligan, 2003). The physical space of care is just one of the components in the multidimensionality of care, but as I will discuss later, can be an influential one and therefore should not be ignored. Furthermore, the physical space can at times dictate what kind of care actions can and should be performed. In other words the physical space of care is a platform for caring actions influencing the directions and interactions of care. Furthermore geographical (and other) research (e.g. Fortier, 2000; Massey, 2004; Hinds, 2011) has shown us that physical spaces can play a significant role in the processes of self and identity. In relation to care this can have a multitude of implications that I detail later.

Whatever the physical space for care is, it should always aim to be optimal as well as functional and comfortable not only for those being cared for but for the caregivers as well. This sounds like a simple task to accomplish but can be complicated. Johnsen, Cloke and May (2005) highlighted the disconnect in day centres for the homeless between those at the decision-making levels and those who provided and those who benefited from the care. Although the intent of those at the decision-making level was to provide a safe therapeutic space for the homeless, those working there felt the pressures of lack of funds as well as dealing with, at times, challenging clientele. Similarly, those benefitting from the service were faced with stigma and hierarchical relations amongst the homeless. This type of research demonstrates the need to carefully examine caring experiences holistically as well as acknowledging the fact that caring spaces can have multiple conceptualisations depending on the subject's position.

One place that is a scene for many (informal) caring actions is the home. Homes are often associated with warmth and affect, however home as a place for care brings all sorts of complexities ranging from power struggles to identity-forming processes (e.g. Milligan, 2009) both of which will be further discussed later. Here I wanted to highlight the significance of the physical space and the altering impact it can have on the care processes. Williams (2002) discusses home as a scene for caring and calls for research in discovering how the meaning of home changes

for both caregivers and care recipients, and how it changes the way people start reconstructing themselves in relation to their home. Yantzi and Rosenberg (2008) investigated the home as a caring place for children with chronic disabilities or illnesses. When interviewing the mothers they indeed discovered that it was not just the caring actions that were determined by the physical space, but that the meaning of home had changed for these women. Although the women did not want to define their homes purely as a place of care the majority described their homes as public places, due to the presence of outside carers. This then created tension between the imagined ideal home and the actual lived home space. Similarly, Gott et al. (2004) found that those families providing end of life care at home described the presence of professional carers in one's home as intrusive. However, home was more often preferred to an institution as a place for dying because of familiarity and flexibility in care and comfort. These types of findings suggest that homes are emotional places for care where an outside interference can be disruptive both in practical as well as in emotional terms. Also it emphasises the importance of home as an emotionally important place both for the caregivers and the recipients – but are these types of emotional geographies restricted to traditional homes or can they extend beyond the conventional conceptualisation of a home?

In an attempt to investigate different types of homes as care places, Johansson, Anderson and Hwang (2008) quantitatively compared young people's care outcomes from residential care institutions to foster care. They found that the place itself did not seem to play a role in the care outcomes. However, it was rather the external factors such as the level of education of the staff and higher staff-resident ratio that influenced the quality of care and the outcomes. This is somewhat surprising since foster care is thought to be close to a traditional family environment, and therefore produce more favourable outcomes for well-being than institutions (Barber et al., 2003). This is exactly what Smyke et al. (2010) discovered when studying the attachment patterns of Romanian orphans. Those in institutional care exhibited significantly more attachment disturbances than those in foster care. Furthermore, placement in foster care from institutional care had a positive impact on attachment patterns. However, what Whetten et al.

(2009) found in their sample of orphans and displaced children in three African and two South East Asian countries was the complete opposite. Those 6-12-year-olds in community institutional care compared to those in foster care were quantitatively tested to have higher intelligence and fewer emotional issues. However, the community institutions in their sample, particularly those in the African countries, were established out of a strong sense of responsibility and desire to help within the community. This suggests that there could be mediating differences at play. It is also important to acknowledge that same physical spaces can produce different emotional spaces depending on the wider context.

Another interesting aspect about place and care is the buildings in which these care actions take place. In his book *The Happiness of Architecture*, Alain De Botton (2006) talks about the aesthetics of buildings, design and indoor spaces. He highlights that shapes, colours and materials are all capable of lifting moods and inspiring happiness. He further argues that these places can vary from schools and hospitals to libraries and airports. Anthropologist Marc Augé (1995) asserts that certain places lack memories or a rich domain of associations and hence are non-places, such as supermarkets and airports. Geographers would strongly argue against that, postulating that even the seemingly insignificant places can hold a vast amount of affect and personal meaning. In relation to care these notions on places and non-places are interesting. If there are non-places can care actions performed in such places be experienced less meaningfully or even affect our mood? What I want to highlight here is that physical places of care can be complex but can potentially have consequences for care and well-being.

Although we might associate care taking place mainly indoors, outdoor places should not be excluded when investigating spaces of care, and are specifically relevant to this thesis. Before I discuss nature as a space of care and as a space for children and young people I will introduce some of the geographical thinking around ideas of nature. By defining the concepts of nature and landscape, spaces are opened for closer ontological examination in applied settings. Furthermore, a closer examination of these concepts will help to spatialise the research as well

as the empirical data. I will begin by discussing the different ways nature can be defined and how those definitions expand beyond the natural world into deeper philosophical, cultural and emotional aspects.

In some sense one can easily think that nature as a concept does not need to be defined or in fact suffers from a lack of definition. After all nature is such a part of the lived experience that many would be puzzled by the mere question of definition since the forests, the lakes, the mountains are all understood and conceptualised to be part of the physical or natural world (e.g. Habgood, 2002). The natural world that surrounds us gets often labelled by its physical attributes, things are described for example as beautiful or they get another adjective, such as calm or peaceful, attached to them. The historical perspective of nature seems centred around exploration and adventure (Habgood, 2002). Conquering natural and hostile environments was the ultimate feat. For centuries that natural world and wilderness has been set against human culture. Culture or concepts such as religion and science and (historically) magic have all served and serve as dichotomies to nature (Kellert and Farnham, 2002). In this traditional sense, as a dichotomy, nature is seen as something that exists outside of human culture, outside of human touch as a pure natural construction. Nature as an *independent state* is separate to the social world existing as a real entity and as an imaginary construction beyond us, but simultaneously threatened by human invasion (Hinchliffe, 2007). Adam (1997), however, argues against that separation by postulating that in the contemporary world the division between nature and culture is virtually non-existent. This merging of the natural world and modern society is due to, for example, technological advancements that are invading or erasing the purity of natural environments. However, conceptualising nature in this separate manner makes it something that is virtually non-accessible and not really part of the lived experience.

But if it is in effect impossible for nature and the social to exist separately perhaps conceptualising nature as a *dependant colony* is more appropriate (Hinchliffe, 2007). Hinchliffe argues that in this way nature becomes an idea, an ideology affected by social and political realities. This ideological way of conceptualising

the natural environment fits well with the mainstream idea of the countryside or rural environments being seen as idyllic, harmonious and innocent; in many ways a binary to the urban environment (Little and Austin, 1996; Bell, 2006). In these first two ideas nature and the social are either separate or merged to the extent that nature is virtually erased. The third idea, that maybe takes a more philosophical stance on this debate, is the idea of nature as enacted, as co-produced and/or performed in some sense (Hinchliffe, 2007). This idea builds on the idea of nature as an imaginary. But rather than the social trumping of the natural; the idea here is that first of all nature is different for everyone, and secondly nature is dynamic, constantly produced and re-produced. In other words when two people see the same thing, the meaning may be different for each person. The meanings that we attach to nature depend on our personal circumstances and experiences of and in nature; therefore no two experiences are the same. When thinking like that it is easy to imagine the constant motion of nature and the social impact on it and vice versa.

I have so far introduced three different ways of conceptualising nature. Which then is the right one? Castree (2005) argues that nature is not about the definition, the labels or words that we attach to it, but it is about our knowledge of it. Perhaps it is then not always meaningful to try and define nature. Especially if nature is investigated as part of a particular experience, as part of a whole network of other things and happenings that individuals experience and perceive from their point of view while simultaneously being affected by what is around them. This more philosophical stance to nature is followed through and demonstrated by the empirics in this chapter. Additionally, the next section on landscapes builds on this view of nature as an experience.

Landscape as a term first emerged through landscape art, mainly paintings (Hirsch, 2003). Perhaps because of this landscape as an idea or as a concept has always been more visually available and accessible than nature. In other words landscape is solid, real and physical while nature is more of an idea than a reality (Wylie, 2007). Although initially the term landscape was only used in conjunction with visual and pictorial images the concept has become more

cultural than natural, and as such is used in a range of contexts to describe a variety of social experiences (e.g. Winchester; Kong and Dunn, 2003). In the academic literature this social trend of landscape is hugely varied: for example, in relation to the lives of children and young people, the landscapes of child poverty (Wight et al., 2010), erotophobia (Hawks and Egan, 2008) and teaching (Dunn, 2003) have all been examined. Landscape and children and young people in a more traditional sense, as a piece of physical land, has also been increasingly studied, often in relation to landscape perception and preferences (e.g. Bernaldez et al., 1987; Fjortoft and Sageie, 2000).

Whereas landscapes are engrossed in the everyday, nature remains slightly mysterious and inaccessible. However, this idea of the landscape natural-cultural connection appears at first glance to be the same phenomenon as Hinchliffe's (2007) proposed co-production of nature and social. But putting aside the social and cultural landscapes, and thinking about landscape as a piece of physical land, what separates it from nature is the relationship between the subject and object, viewer and the view (Ingold, 2000; Wylie, 2007; Ingold, 2011a). Since landscape is more of a single compact entity, something to be seen, than a larger idea it allows this relationship to be formed. The relationship between the viewer and the view was historically about a person looking at a landscape painting. This tended to be all about a pictorial image representing real life but often an imagined one, one that was beyond the ordinary or the everyday (Hirsch, 2003). So in many ways even back then the relationship between the subject and the object was about interpretation and seeing. Ingold (2011b) argues that seeing a (physical) landscape is an experience. This, he postulates, is experienced through sight and hearing, but also with the weather, with the wind and the sun and the rain and everything in between. Furthermore, he emphasises the constant making of the landscape through materials in it that are in motion. This making, this motion, is equally or mutually people and the land, Ingold (2008, 2011) suggests. Further this interplay of people and the materiality of the landscape is what Ingold has termed dwelling (the concept will be more closely looked at a bit later on).

Similarly, anthropologists Gow (2003) and Bloch (2003) also describe the human landscape relationship through movement or motion. Gow (2003) discusses how a tribe in Western Amazonia construct the knowledge of their landscape through other people's motion through it. This, Gow argues, then becomes more than an added knowledge of the landscape but a lived experience. In other words landscape is perceived as a place of action, where things happen, where one, with others, exists in the world. This type of conceptualisation supports the co-production of the landscape by the landscape itself and the people in it. The actions shape the landscape, and the experience of someone seeing it, while simultaneously the landscape dictates what type of actions are appropriate and again the perceiver is affected both through other people and the physical land thus creating a co-produced experience.

Bloch's (2003) view is slightly different from this. Although he describes how the Zafimaniry people of Madagascar see their landscape through the movement of people in it the idea of a co-production or any mutual relationship is alien. Bloch writes: "While the land does not change the living people change" (2003: 67). This Zafimaniry proverb apparently refers to the fragility of human life and the higher power or strength of the physical environment. Bloch further argues that the Zafimaniry see the land as an uncaring or indifferent environment and humans as agents trying to reach their full potential since only then can they be one with the landscape. This would still suggest that humans can draw strength from the landscape and change because of it; the landscape however remains still, remains unchanged regardless of the change that might be happening on it and in it.

Before I bring this section on landscape to a close I want to briefly examine two concepts that are associated with landscape: embodiment and dwelling (these will both be explored more in the empirics). Dwelling was mentioned earlier with reference to anthropologist Ingold's conceptualisation of the human landscape relationship. Embodiment is a human geography term used to describe a variety of experiences; John Wylie (2007) is probably best known for using it to describe the human landscape relationship. Earlier it was discussed how the physical land,

the landscape, can become (in anthropological terms) a site of action, living and movement. I also discussed how this process is affected by interpretation and knowledge base as well as by other people. This was perhaps discussed in a fairly materialistic way so now I will bring in the emotion into the discussion.

It would be easy to view Ingold's dwelling and Wylie's embodiment as opposites or in some way competing on the strength of their role in relation to landscape explorations. Dwelling, as Ingold defines it, is being in the landscape not just together with it but being possessed by it. To dwell is to see with the landscape; the wind, the sky and the trees are the objects of vision and hearing. Perception, interpretation and knowledge are constructed with the landscape. Embodiment, on the other hand, suggests that landscape becomes enfolded with the self, not as possessively as dwelling but to the extent that landscape becomes a way of seeing (Wylie, 2007). Landscape in this sense almost becomes immaterial and secondary to affect. But this emotion, this affect, and its intensity, is still strongly linked to the spatial elements, to the spatial scale (Davidson and Milligan, 2004).

To put all of this in another way – the main difference between dwelling and embodiment seems to be the degree of materiality and affect. Both are affected by motion, other people and interpretation. But dwelling is material, outside the human in the land and in the sky. But also simultaneously in the human but still as beings of their own right. Embodiment, however, is more about the inner processes; what is happening within whilst still being connected to or gazing at the landscape. The other difference that should be noted is the difference in the temporal. Wylie's view seems to lean toward a fleeting experience, a one time occurrence (although it can be repeated) when in, on or within a landscape. Ingold's dwelling perspective is a more enduring way of interpreting the world around us. Rather than contrasting the two points, I propose a stance where the two come together when examining the human landscape relationship. As Wylie himself says, "...landscape might best be described in terms of the entwined materialities and sensibilities *with which* we act and sense" (2004: 245). It is in this way, I believe, folding together the self and both the material and the

affective, that identity making is possible (this will be discussed further in the empirics).

Although I just argued that (at least) in physical terms nature and landscape are the same, the way they are understood by the young people in this research might be different. And as discussed above, those understandings and perceptions can then have further implications on how the individual experiences the natural environment they are in. For example if the rural or nature is perceived as a binary to the urban, away from the city noise and business the nature ideal will then be characterised with calmness and peace. Whereas if nature is perceived as the other, almost as something inaccessible, it might be that the nature ideal is instead characterised with apprehension and even fear. The point of interest here then is whether that frame of reference will, or can be, changed due to actual experiences in the landscape no longer imagined but right in front of you, beneath you and around you.

For example Gesler's (1992) work on therapeutic landscapes and his idea of nature as a therapeutic healer fits into this line of thinking. The idea of therapeutic landscapes began with physical spaces that were traditionally thought to be therapeutic such as spas, mountain retreats and mineral springs (Gesler, 1992). The therapeutic effect, Gesler argued, was created by nature itself in the form of fresh air and sun for instance which then produces a relaxed mindset. Also postulating the relationship between nature and a relaxed mindset is Attention Restoration Theory by Kaplan and Kaplan (1989). The theory states that nature offers something so fascinating to humans that it only requires effortless attention therefore putting one's mind at ease (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989). Nature gives respite from directed attention which is effortful because there is a constant mental battle to keep irrelevant thoughts or emotions at bay while concentrating on the task at hand. Kaplan's argument is that in this way nature offers an environment where attention becomes effortless because it is based on innate interest. Supporting this argument is Korpela's (2008) finding that both young people and adults most often chose a natural environment as a place to go when mental restoration was the goal. These types of findings suggest that people

believe in nature's healing powers. Additionally, it highlights the potential for such environments within care practices.

However, the role of such a setting explicitly as a site of care has seldom been examined. One of the exceptions is Conradson's (2005) investigation of landscape, care and the relational self. The respite centre in Dorset that he was investigating placed a strong emphasis on facilitating and encouraging their physically disabled adult clients to engage with the natural environment. Conradson argued not only that the natural environment produced positive emotional geographies but that it also enhanced social interaction between the guests. Thus 'being cared for' can also be a social experience and open up social spaces of care (Conradson, 2005). Sociality was an important dimension of the experience for these adults. The carers and peers were mentioned in the context of providing social support and encouragement and in creating a family atmosphere. Describing a family connection implies a sense of unity or togetherness between the people and nature. Interestingly, though, solitude was viewed as equally important for some guests. This highlights the subjectivity of these types of therapeutic and emotional landscape experiences.

Geographers have long been interested in nature as a spatial and emotional space in which children can experience and learn. It is easy to imagine children in nature; walking through the woods or a field, kicking leaves, throwing sticks, stopping to watch an insect crawl and gazing up to the trees. It has been suggested in the interdisciplinary nature literature that nature is there for us to enjoy, but in addition being in nature seems to actually have a positive influence – beyond aesthetics – on physical health (Henwood, 2002). There are a variety of studies with adults that have explored the link between nature and health, for example Ulrich (2002, 1991) has for years reported the positive impact of gardens and green views in hospitals. He found that patients with views of nature reported significantly less pain and needed less pain medication than patients without such a view recovering from the same surgery (Ulrich, 1991). Additionally, he discovered that only a few minutes' exposure to a green view reduced patients' blood pressure, heart activity and brain electrical activity as well as increasing

positive feelings and reducing fear (Ulrich, 1991). Ulrich et al. (1993) widened the scope of these types of studies and discovered that a view of nature also alleviated pain and therefore decreased the need for pain medication in intensive care patients. These types of findings seem to be strong evidence for nature's direct influence on physical health.

In a similar way to Ulrich, Broadleaf (2009) reported that after an exposure to trees the human brain's alpha waves indicate a relaxed, calm state of mind. Jones and Cloke (2002) write about trees as things possessing active agency and having a physical as well as an affective presence. They further argue that trees come with significant cultural baggage that can range from trees being seen as the world's lungs to even part of one's national identity. If adults can have such strong mental presentations of trees then children, with their generally vivid imaginations, are not likely to be any different. For a child a tree could represent anything from a hiding place to a climbing set, and could even be seen as a near magical creature that is so much bigger than the child him/herself. By conceptualising trees (and the rest of the natural environment) this way, rather than merely treating them or nature in general as variables in a physical environment, one will be more likely to discover the nature-human link that extends beyond physical reactions, that encompasses the complex emotional responses as well. This will be further argued and explored in chapter five.

While most of the studies where nature's impact on physical health has been measured have been carried out with adults, nature as a teacher has traditionally been examined through children. Historically nature and humans have always been connected (Wylie, 2007). The biophilia hypothesis could be seen as supporting this view by arguing that there is an instinctive bond between human beings and other living systems (Wilson, 1984). The biophilia hypothesis bases its premise on the claim that humans are naturally attracted to something that is alive and vital (Wilson, 1984). In fact *philia* literally means positive feelings toward something. If there is such a strong evolutionary natural connection this, together with children's capacity to be naturally curious, could act as a catalyst for learning about and in nature. Examining nature as a learning environment, Waite (2007)

found that learning outdoors created good memories which then in turn acted as a motivational force for subsequent learning. Similarly Farnham and Mutrie (1997) discovered that children with disabilities showed enhancement in communication skills, engagement with others and self-directed motivation through outdoors learning. However, the term outdoors could refer to a city environment with traffic, people and pollution not corresponding to definitions of nature. Therefore these results should be interpreted with caution.

Kellert (2002) suggests three ways through which a child can learn in nature: learning experiences can either be direct, indirect or vicarious (Kellert, 2002). Kellert further argues that it is the direct contact that today's children are lacking. It is argued that direct contact with nature offers a child something that vicarious or indirect contact cannot: almost unlimited opportunities to compare, label, contrast, differentiate and classify objects as well as problem solve and evaluate (Kellert, 2002; Kahn 1999). Kellert presents evidence suggesting that direct contact with nature is indeed linked with overall enhanced cognitive development. These types of cognitive skills are transferable so, when directed to other learning environments, can be hugely beneficial to a child (Berk, 2003).

There is an agreement in the literature that nature offers a truly unique learning environment. It has been argued that not only does it teach our children about nature itself, but that it also has an impact on overall cognitive development (Kaplan, 1987; Wells, 2000; Kellert, 2002). Kellert (2002) argues that nature engages children qualitatively in a very different way than classroom or computer based learning ever can. Conversely it is argued, later in the thesis, that nature does not automatically engage humans. People are active independent agents and either choose to engage themselves or not. But nature does offer opportunities for children to play and learn in; therefore offering the option for children to merge themselves with and within nature. Sobel (2001) argues that in nature children experience a sense of wonder and exploration. It is a magical playground with limitless possibilities that stimulates imagination, inviting them to play. Being in nature provides a child with a sense of independence away from the watchful eyes of adults (Roe, 2006) as well as a space to test their

resourcefulness and self-sufficiency (Kong, 2000). It is also an emotional and sensory space from which young people can emplace themselves in the world and develop a sense of belonging (Leyshon, 2010).

Reflecting on his own childhood, Louv writes, “The woods were my Ritalin” (Louv, 2005: 10). That simple sentence where Louv reflects on his own childhood adventures in nature puts into words the mental impact nature can have on children and adults alike. Whitehouse et al. (2001) examined the impact of the healing garden in an inner city hospital. Nine out of ten adult and child users reported being in a better mood after having visited the garden. The parents also reported that when visiting the garden before being seen by a physician their children were less anxious during examination. Physicians have taken notice of these types of studies and are now prescribing walking in the woods as a treatment for stress and mild depression (Broadleaf, 2009). Being physically active in a naturalistic environment has been shown to have positive mental benefits. Pretty et al. (2007) have termed this green exercise. It was found that recreational activities, such as mountain biking, canoeing and walking in nature, are connected in the reduction of a host of negative affects such as anger, hostility, depression, anxiety, tension and confusion. The type or duration of the activity did not matter, but were all equally beneficial. Interestingly what they discovered was that those participants who had lower self-esteem scores prior to exercise had greater increases in their self-esteem than those participants who had high or higher self-esteem scores to begin with.

In the light of this it seems that nature is especially beneficial to those individuals who may have more of a mental or emotional need. In fact there is evidence of a positive impact of nature in rape/incest victims (Levine, 1994), addicts (Bennett et al., 1998) and in people dealing with bereavement (Moyer, 1988). This seems to take us back to the connectedness of humans and nature. It is widely asserted that nature has a calming effect on humans that does not only change mental functioning, but physiology as well.

Studies examining the benefits of nature on children's emotional well-being are scarce, but there are some that present striking evidence of the power of nature on children's mental well-being. Faber Taylor, Kuo and Sullivan (2001a) examined the connection between green outdoor areas and severity of ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) symptoms. It was found that those children playing inside in windowless settings showed more severe symptoms than children playing out in nature. Furthermore, it was discovered that attention levels were higher than usual in all children after they had been outdoors in green areas. Faber Taylor et al., (2001b) wanted to see whether the same effect would be found in children with normal attention spans. And indeed they found that even just views of nature correlated with increased impulse control and self-discipline in poor inner city girls. Since inner city children are at a heightened risk of getting involved in crime or teenage pregnancy (Faber Taylor et al., 2001a) increased self-control can be a life changing asset, making nature even more valuable and possibly transforming the lives of some children.

Berger (2006) examined nature as a learning environment for children with severe learning disabilities. The children encountered nature through multisensory experiences in the presence of their peers as well as adult teachers and carers. The adults reported great improvements in the cognitive and emotional functioning of these children. One of the notions that came out of the study was the sense of belonging that these children developed not only in terms of each other but with nature itself. The therapeutic value here then is the multidimensional sense of belonging and through that a sense of self, encompassing social ties and nature (Korpela et al., 2001; Mayer and Frantz, 2004).

Similarly the importance of other people was found when Kiernan and Machlachlan (2002) examined participants' perception of a rural activity camp for children with life threatening conditions such as cancer. When these children were asked about their camp experiences most often mentioned were caring staff and fun activities and they were mentioned more often than scenic surroundings. This implies that in certain instances nature can have a more contextual role in

creating therapeutic and emotional landscapes. These findings highlight the role of other people in creating emotional and therapeutic landscapes within nature. Nature creates an optimal space for social and care interactions.

For children living in adverse conditions nature can offer a safe haven; a world away from abuse and neglect (Castonguay and Jutras, 2009). In this sense nature can become a healing setting in which children can reflect in a safe and non-judgemental environment (Louv, 2005). Leyshon (2009) discovered that rural youth used nature as a means of not only escaping problems, but solving them as well. Nature was used almost as a therapeutic tool: "Through contact with the land they attempt to heal themselves" (Leyshon, 2009: 592). Similarly Korpela (1992) found that nature offered youth facing upsetting events solitude and relaxation, and helped them to clear their minds and reflect on their situation. Nature has also been found to buffer against stress and to have a positive impact on global self-worth in children (Wells and Evans, 2003). These types of findings suggest that nature seems to offer something that is very soothing to children; a world of quietness and calmness where one can be oneself. This will be further discussed and examined within the empirical chapters.

Nature can also offer a child a world separate from his/her parents. In nature a child can experience a sense of independence (Kellert, 2002). Away from the watchful eyes of adults a child can explore alone, or with friends, without grownups controlling or invading their space. Children between the ages of 6 and 10 in Roe's (2006) study placed high value and emphasis on special places in nature. These places offered the children a place to hide and keep secrets from parents. Additionally, the children indicated that these special places would lose their specialness if an adult intruded. These statements indicate that nature represented independence and autonomy to these children. The older the child the greater the need to slowly start breaking free from parents and seek greater independence (Berk, 2003). Nature can offer 'safe danger' to children to test their resourcefulness and self-sufficiency (Kong, 2000). What is meant by this is that nature does not possess the same dangers as an urban area would, there are no

cars or people, but there still are certain risks in nature that make it exciting and engaging for a child who is creating their own world separate from adults.

In this sense being in nature helps the child to construct a sense of self and identity (Kellert, 2002). This becomes increasingly important in middle childhood and adolescence (White, 2004). Sobel (2002) talks about how being in nature helps children create a place for themselves. This place that the children are creating for themselves could be interpreted in both concrete and physical, but also in metaphorical terms. It could be understood as a mental space where child can produce and reproduce oneself. Crain (1997) discusses how nature offers a child a sense of peace and the sensation of being one with the world. So in this way nature could be seen as something not only through which a child builds identity, but something that becomes part of that child. Being in nature itself can be meaningful even though it might appear to lack purpose. Leyshon (2009) discovered that through wandering in nature rural youth were constructing their identity. These wanderings did not seem to have any apparent goals or missions, but helped the young people to find stability and order (Leyshon, 2009). Here I've discussed different spaces of care as well as nature as a space for care, the next section will explore memory and memories.

## **2.6. Memories (of care)**

In this brief review I will discuss the relevant literature on memory and memory formation especially in relation to young people. Also this review will demonstrate the shortcomings and lacuna in this literature, which this thesis will, in part, attempt to fill.

Throughout our lives we experience many moments of joy, sadness, fear and a variety of other emotions. We encounter different people and find ourselves in many diverse situations. Many of these encounters and people leave memories that become part of us and our lives and through which we construct ourselves and the world around us (Pillemer, 1998). Good and happy memories particularly are the ones that we want to remember and cherish, especially in times of distress and hardship. Geographical studies of memory have significantly increased in the recent years and have provided focus in relation to landscape (e.g. Jones, 2005;

Wylie, 2007), historical events (e.g. Della Dora, 2008), managed retreat (DeSilvey, 2012) and politics and institutions (Chang, 2005).

Although all these investigations have been useful in enhancing geographical understandings of memories and memory formation, there is still a significant lacuna in the extant literature that this chapter, and the project as a whole, will, in part, attempt to address. Firstly, children and young people are virtually absent from these studies apart from few exceptions, for example Leyshon (2009) and Leyshon and Bull (2011). Secondly, memory is often investigated in relation to memory processes, whereas my aim is to illustrate how memory is mobilised into the practice of 'active care' both in the creation of memories as well as the recall of affect. This understanding opens the potential for investigating memory as an intervention tool for well-being. Thirdly, as Jones (2011) states, geographers have become increasingly interested in this "fantastically complex entanglement of self, past spatial relations and memory in current life" (Jones, 2011: 7). If memory has the potential to increase, or be used as a mechanism for increasing, well-being then it is vital that this entanglement can be, in part, unravelled.

I will begin from the biological perspective although Greenfield (1997) eloquently states, "Memory is the *cornerstone of the mind*" (1997: 146). In other words memory is more than a mere function of the brain as it encapsulates individuals' inner resources for interpreting the world around them. Neurological studies have, of course, yielded vital information on the inner workings of the brain and its cognitive functioning but memory is more than remembering facts and figures and memories are more than memory itself; a separate construct even (Hoelscher and Alderman, 2004) with its own nuances and functions. Therefore, the main focus of this review is beyond biology, examining the whole person in this equation rather than just the brain. However, to begin the investigation into memory and memory formation from the basic physiological point of view is logical since memories could not be created without a living processing brain. When we interact with our environment and people in it; neurons, transmitters and action potentials are hard at work and necessary to capture the countless moments and memories.

The formation of memories purely from a physiological point of view is the number of connections forged and the strength of neural activity that influences the strength or vividness of a memory (Waite, 2007). Neuroscientists and psychologists tend to examine memory this way; by conducting studies that test recall, retention and forgetting. In these studies long strings of numbers or letters are often presented to the participants and their recall is then tested, there is less focus on remembering experiences and events. In cognitive terms memory is separated into two distinct categories: short-term and long-term memory. And both are further divided into different categories. We all have an episodic memory for life events and semantic memory for learned events within the long-term storage as well as a whole compartment for non-declarative memories that are on an unconscious level (Gazzaniga et al., 2002). What has been concluded is that not all forms of information and memories hold the same essential quality, but for example events with an emotional charge leave vivid tags of memory and the manner in which new information is processed affects both the memory and recall (e.g. Josephson et al., 1996). This notion, albeit biological in nature, is examined in this thesis within a social science framework demonstrating the connectivity of these understandings.

Using neuroimaging Sharot, Delgado and Phelps (2004) found that emotion indeed enhanced remembering; highly emotional events were remembered in more detail and were more vivid than their less emotional counterparts. Consequently the basic physiological processes of memory can have a profound effect on the experience of that memory. For example if these physiological processes are not intact, not only is the experience of the memory changed, but there can be a great impact on individuals' self-processes and quality of life; this can be seen for example in people who have suffered head trauma and have a loss of memory function (Broks, 2003) suggesting that a fully working memory is important on multiple levels.

In this section I will discuss the relationship between emotional geographies and memory. This section will focus on the feeling of memory, and also what those affective registers are capable of doing in an applied setting. For decades,

memory research used to be almost solely carried out by psychologists and psychiatrists. In recent years other social scientists have contributed to the study of memory and memories and the concepts such as collective, social, historical and cultural memory have emerged (Hoelscher and Alderman, 2004). All those concepts are a combination of the past, self, memory, future and emotion. The emotional component, especially emotional geographies, has had a surge in geographical thinking in recent years. Memory and different emotional landscapes have been examined for example in relation to: national identity (Tolia-Kelly, 2010), monuments (Mitchell, 2003) and landscape (Wylie, 2007, Wylie, 2009). Bondi et al. (2005) argue that “whether joyful, heart-breaking or numbing, emotion has the power to transform the shape of our lives, expanding or contracting our horizons, creating new fissures or fixtures we never expected to find” (Bondi et al., 2005: 1). Statements such as this emphasise the omnipresence of emotion and affect and it is now widely accepted that emotions are present in all aspects of the lived experience.

Jones (2005) argues that not just every memory but every piece of knowledge that we possess comes with an emotional charge rather than being an abstract rational construct. We feel the memories and might even be able to recollect the smells, textures and tastes. Hampl’s (1995, in Jones, 2005) notion ‘remembering through the heart’ captures well the qualitative difference between the actual memory in a pure cognitive sense and what that memory might represent. It is easy to relate to the affective side of memory when fondly remembering our wedding day, birth of a child or childhood summers. We might have a limited recollection of all the details but we are likely to remember the smiles, the laughter and togetherness and equally sadness and despair when recalling those events that are less positive.

These types of emotional geographies are pervasive and can be carried through to adulthood and beyond (e.g. Wylie, 2007) suggesting that memories are not only important in the present but can shape and form the future as well; therefore having huge potential to be used in a positive or therapeutic way. Sadly there are increasing numbers of children and young people in the UK with memories of

adversity and horror (Save the Children, 2012). There are children and young people who suffer from abuse or other family dysfunction and a large number of children and young people who live in poverty as well as those who are young carers taking on responsibilities way beyond their years. However, as mentioned in the introduction young people tend to be for the most part absent from geographical memory research. This might be because young people are not thought to possess memories to the same extent as adults due to their age or because children's geographies tend to centre on the child as an active social agent rather than as an active emotional being. However, such research into memory could significantly contribute not only to our knowledge of the role of negative memories on the processes of self in young people, but also whether and how such memories can be counteracted. The latter, especially, is what this thesis, in part, attempts to demonstrate.

In a psychological context, Josephson et al., (1996) tested whether happy memories could be used to repair induced sad moods. As they predicted it was found that those participants with higher depression scores tended to recall more negative memories, whereas those with lower depression scores recalled more positive memories and explicitly stated mood repair as the motivation for the positive memory recall. In the light of this it seems to be that those who really are in a need of mood uplift and broader emotional resources are the ones who might not have access to the upward spiral. There are also already some geographical understandings that could be utilised to possibly counteract unpleasant memories. Philo's (2003) work on childhood reveries combines imagination and memory in an interconnected way where he suggests that one cannot exist without the other. He refers to Bachelard's work where the focus is not on the historical or factual accuracy of any given memory, but on the psychological side of a memory – the side where memories always have at least a hint of imagination in them; a reflection of our reveries or imaginative geographies. Moreover, he argues that adults cannot truly enter such reveries because of the mere fact that one is an adult stands in the way, effectively blocking the essence of childhood experiences. Also Waite (2007) argues that the mixture of imagination and memory carries weight and meaning equal to actual factual memories.

Legg (2007: 457) writes, "Memory is a representation of the past and that the fissure between experience and recall is one that is filled with creativity". Children tend to be naturally more curious and imaginative than adults (Holloway and Valentine, 2000), which probably makes them less cynical and more open to reveries. All of the above are hinting towards or suggesting a subjective component in memory recall. Thus stimulating children's imagination by offering them positive experiences could lead to positive outcomes. Chang (2005: 248) says, "Memory not only conserves the past but adjusts recall to current needs". In other words memory and recall of the memory are never exactly the same, rather memories are constantly recreated and constructed within one's personal resources and framework. This obviously then creates methodological issues and will have to be considered not only when examining memory but also when memory and memories are mobilised into an applied setting.

This section will look at some of the different constructions of place in memory production. Although geographers have become increasingly interested in a holistic approach to memory, equally space has kept its place in geographical investigations. In fact there seldom is a memory that isn't embedded in spatiality (Jones, 2005). Hoelscher and Alderman (2004) discussed South Africa's Robben Island and its symbolic, racial and political meaning not only to South Africans but to the world. Kearney (2009) talks about the meaning of homeland and the strong emotional ties that are attached to the notion of heritage. Both of these examples are strongly tied to national identities and produce a multitude of memories. Memories that simultaneously are spatial but also represent a greater emotional space. Closely linked to particular places are also memorial sites where the practice of memory becomes performative; an active engagement with the physical space creates and shapes the memory (Hoskins, 2007). Brockmeir (2002) argues that if one wishes to fully comprehend memory and memories understanding of that particular culture is required. It is argued here that culture can refer to beyond national or regional culture and can include for example organisational cultures that can differ from the national one of which they are part.

Wylie (2007) asserts that landscapes are also places of memory and we never merely watch or see a landscape but do and be the landscape. Additionally, he argues that through this embodiment one constructs the self in relation to others and the landscape. Similarly Jones (2005) notes that remembering being in a (childhood) place and remembering through a place can produce strong emotional geographies of the self. Conradson (2005) examined disabled adults in a resort in a natural environment. Most of his participants remembered and reported afterwards a shift in well-being as well as fond memories of the surrounding wildlife as well as some participants discovering new dimensions of selfhood. What these three are saying is that natural environments can become embodied, performative and produce strong emotional landscapes and memories that are linked to a place, but can also move beyond the place and have an impact on the processes of the self.

As mentioned earlier, memory literature on young people is sparse. There have been investigations on rural youth and the role memory and the rural landscape play in their identity formation (Leyshon and Bull, 2011; Leyshon, 2009; Riley, 2009). Investigations of memory in inner city young people in rural or natural landscapes are even sparser. Most such investigations of inner city young people in natural environments are of young people who have been classified as having severe behavioural difficulties (e.g. Dunkley, 2009). Additionally, those studies seldom focus on the memory processes but on other aspects such as environmental attitudes (Hinds and Sparks, 2008) or purely on outcomes (e.g. Kiernan et al., 2005). This thesis, in part, is trying to fill the gap by focusing on memory processes as well as memory outcomes in inner city young people in a rural/natural environment.

It is indisputable that memory and memories play a great role in the process of becoming (e.g. Lee, 2001; Jones, 2011) and therefore are vital for the development of self and autobiography. Jones (2011) discusses memory as a trajectory where a host of different affective states from ecstatic happiness to deepest despair live and overlap, sliding over each other. If memory is to be examined as a tool for well-being or as a type of an intervention this type of

understanding then raises the following questions: What is the interplay between the sad and the happier memories? Can one override the other? Which ones do we carry through?

Jones further (2011) argues that through memory the present is practised. This notion is similar to those discussed in the affect section where past memories are used for present needs. This seems to be suggesting a construction of identity as the here and now albeit with past shadows. Jones (2011) argues that we never live in a single moment but our identities and self are scattered in the countless memory fragments around us. This notion of fluid identities ties memory and identity together in a dynamic even unstable way (Thrift, 2008). Leyshon and Bull (2011), however, argue that identities are stable, or at least people believe their selves to be so, and construct and perceive the world accordingly. Psychological development theories on the other hand would argue that since young people are in the midst of developing their identities, and for many that period is far from stable but characterised with emotional inner turmoil, young people's identities are not yet stable (e.g. Berk, 2003). Leyshon and Bull (2011) further argue that identities are practised through self-storytelling. Through this narrative self-construction, telling stories to oneself of oneself, memory is practised in identity building ways (Somers, 1994).

All of these understandings lead to autobiographical memories or to an autobiographical self; who am I, where do I come from, what is my story (Damasio, 1999). Psychological experiments examining infantile amnesia, the inability to recall events that happened before the age of three, state that children under three years of age are not capable of forming meaningful long-lasting memories, because they do not yet possess a self-concept to which they can tie the memories (Eacott and Crawley, 1998; Harley and Reese, 1999). This view suggests that not only does memory shape, form and change identity, but indeed identity is needed for memories. The above section showed that memories are spatial, affective and a vital component in identity construction.

## **2.7. Conclusions**

In this chapter I discussed and analysed the main themes through the lens of the key theme care. Care and caring are spatial activities and the space in which they happen can change the action, the care experience or the perception of the space itself. These physical places are therefore important for care, but in order to fully understand and appreciate the multidimensionality and nuanced care the examination has to go beyond the physical. What in fact are the factors that produce most (positive) emotional geographies? Are there some that override the others? For example are relationally constructed emotional places within a care setting more important than the physical places? This is one of the main focuses of this thesis and something that has not been fully untangled yet. Outcomes of care are measured as benefits to the care recipient but these benefits have multiple directions. Caregivers often experience strong affective, mental or practical rewards. Most people who care for others are those who genuinely want to help and there are arguments for better quality care if it indeed comes from a sincere empathetic place. It would be too simple to state that because women are traditionally labelled as more caring it means the same as women offering better care. Intersectional factors can, of course, and do mediate our care experiences but the real care story lies in subjective experiences, and they are so much more than race, class or gender.

Care is such an everyday concept, full of actions and systems that we might not think about or we take for granted such as care from parents to a child or vice versa when people age. We do not often see the systems, although we might be aware of the political debates surrounding care. Although such debates might produce strong opinions these care systems are such an intrinsic part of a welfare society that they often become banal. However, spaces and performances of care are where care cements and really starts to produce strong emotional geographies. The rest of this thesis focuses on those geographies and examines how they are produced, the networks of production and the multiple other factors that influence care and care experiences. A methodology chapter follows this chapter where I will introduce the methodology and methodological techniques

that were used in this research in order to explore the above issues and answer the research questions.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

In the last chapter I introduced and discussed the key themes within this thesis. This chapter will examine the methodology and methods that were used within this research in order to unravel the research questions. Furthermore this chapter will demonstrate how different research spaces generate different types of research and how those varied spaces demand different methods. Furthermore this section will explain how I solved and negotiated any issues or problems regarding ethical considerations or positionalities. Additionally the data analysis that was carried out is dissected and explained. The overall aim of this chapter is to bring together, justify and evaluate the methods used within this research thus opening a gateway to the empirical data presented in the subsequent chapters.

Firstly I situate the research by introducing the research partner CHICKS. I then move on to discuss ethnography as a methodology. I will then move on to the ethical considerations and will discuss confidentiality, consent, positionality as well as the role of CHICKS in the research. This chapter ends with a conclusion that aims to bring together the methods used within this research by offering insights and advice for carrying out this type of research as well as identifying any problems or pitfalls that might occur when working in this type of research arena.

#### 3.1. Situating research

Firstly I will introduce CHICKS, the partner organisation in this ESRC Case Studentship funded research. This section begins by discussing the rationale behind choosing CHICKS as a research topic. I will then introduce the history, policies and practises of CHICKS as well as their operational aims.

CHICKS (Country Holidays for Inner City Kids) is one of many third sector organisations in the UK offering respite breaks to children and young people. For example *Over the Wall* offers fun adventure camps for young people with serious illnesses. Whereas organisations such as *Supporting Families*, *Kids Adventure* and *Family Holiday Association* offer help and support to young people and their

families with family difficulties such as financial difficulties, illnesses and so on. Expanding Horizons offers primary school-aged inner city children the opportunity to camp in the countryside and in June 2012 gained publicity, for not only itself but for similar organisations as well, by being visited by the Duchess of Cambridge. CHICKS, however, is unique in the sense that it offers respite to a marginalised group of disadvantaged young people that are in a need of respite from their everyday family and home environments, but do not necessarily have any specific behavioural issues or medical needs. This group of young people is often absent both in academic literature as well as from political discourse. Moreover CHICKS' structure of operations and the fact that it is partly run by volunteer workers make it very accessible to carry out research amongst young people. CHICKS itself is also a very keen research partner with a curious mind-set wanting to know its strengths, weaknesses and benefits in order to maximise the services they offer for the young people. For all the above reasons CHICKS was chosen as the partner organisation.

CHICKS is a charitable organisation that runs free respite breaks for disadvantaged children and young people between the ages of 8-15. In its first year of operation in 1992 CHICKS helped 25 children. Since then they have grown drastically having hosted nearly 1200 children and young people in 2014. CHICKS has two centres; Moorland retreat in Brentor, Devon, and Coastal retreat in Tywardreath, Cornwall. Both centres have multiple indoor and outdoor play areas as well as large grounds and are situated in the middle of a picturesque English countryside (<http://www.chicks.org.uk/>).



*Figure 3.1. CHICKS Moorland Retreat in Brentor, near Tavistock in Devon (Source: CHICKS)*



*Figure 3.2. CHICKS Coastal Retreat in Tywardreath, near Par in Cornwall (Source: CHICKS)*

All the children attending a CHICKS break are referred there by a professional person (social worker, youth worker, teacher etc.) The children come from a variety of backgrounds such as having experienced domestic violence, poverty,

emotional/physical/sexual abuse or they are a young carer. The CHICKS holidays, or 'camps' as they are called by the supervisors and those who attend them and that is how they will be referred here from now on, run from March to December each year with a camp running at both centres each week. The camps last for 6 days running from Thursday to Tuesday (this was changed for 2012; see the note under the table on the next page). The two age groups, 8-11 and 12-15, are on separate camps. On each camp there are 16 children (8 boys and 8 girls, unless there are last minute cancellations), 3 CHICKS supervisors and 8 volunteer workers (could be 6 or up to 10/11) plus a cook and cleaners. The supervisors are all employed and trained by CHICKS, and are responsible for the overall running of the camp. Anyone over the age of 18 with a clean CRB can volunteer on a CHICKS camp and many volunteer on a regular basis.



*Figure 3.3. Some of the supervisors on camp (Source: CHICKS)*

Table 3.1. Typical week at CHICKS Moorland Retreat (Source: Author).<sup>1</sup>

<p><b>Thursday</b>            Arrivals            Free play            Welcome talk            Dinner            Free play            Swimming/Badge making            Diaries/Best bit of a day</p>	<p><b>Friday</b>            Breakfast            Free play            Rock climbing            Lunch            Free play            Games on site            Dinner            Free play            Question of CHICKS            Diaries/Best bit of a day</p>	<p><b>Saturday</b>            Breakfast            Free play            Face painting            Crealy Adventure Park            Lunch            Crealy Adventure Park            Dinner            Free play            Speed Pictionary            Diaries/Best bit of a day</p>
<p><b>Sunday</b>            Breakfast            Free play            Swimming in Plymouth            Lunch            Free play            Chocolate bar hunt            T-shirt designing            Dinner            Free play            Party games            Diaries/Best bit of a day</p>	<p><b>Monday</b>            Breakfast            Free play            Horse riding            Lunch            Team games            Dinner            Karaoke Disco            Diaries/Best bit of a day</p>	<p><b>Tuesday</b>            Breakfast            Free play            Presentations            Departures</p>



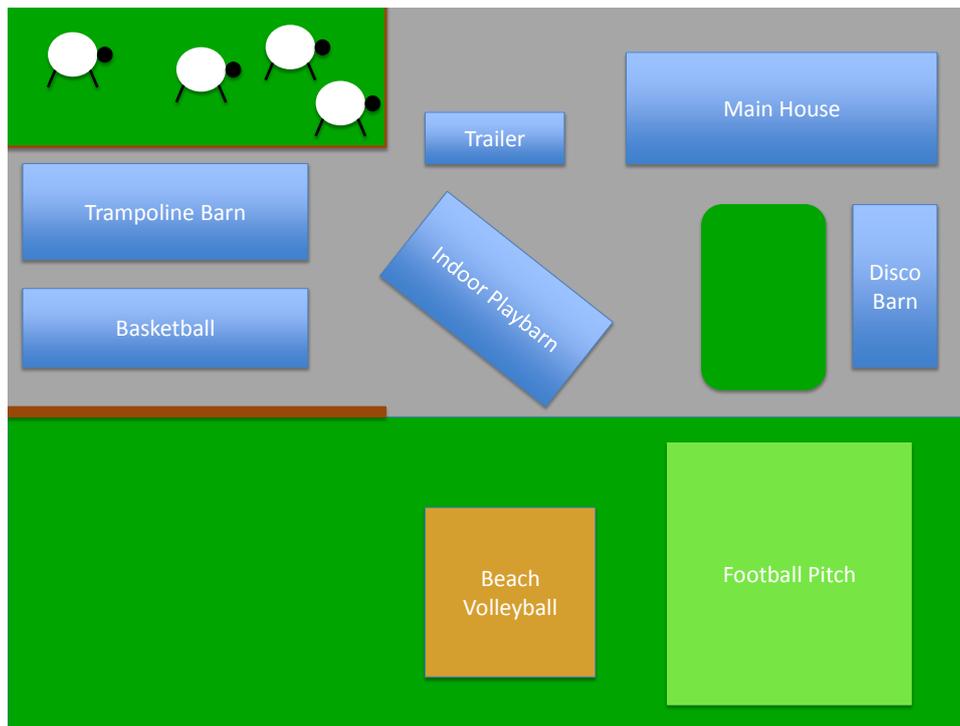
Figure 3.4. Evening activity on camp- playing word games (Source: CHICKS)

<sup>1</sup> In order to be cost effective for the year 2012 the camp format was changed from running camps Thursdays to Tuesdays to running them from Mondays to Fridays. Majority of the activities as well as the structure of the days have stayed fairly similar. Also the structure above was occasionally subject to change due to extreme weather but to most part was adhered to on all Moorland camps.

CHICKS' ethos is to provide hope and happy memories and aiming to show the children that there are safe adults who care for them and who are there for them. CHICKS does not forget the children after they leave but sends a Christmas card and a present and a birthday card to every child who attends CHICKS camp that year. The children are also given a CHICKS e-mail address and a free post envelope to stay in touch with the supervisors/volunteers once they return home.

I will now discuss CHICKS as a research arena. Finding research spaces with young people can be time consuming and laden with ethical issues (e.g. Leyshon, 2002). Similarly many (public) spaces that become research spaces are under adult rule where children and young people are powerless and without control (Punch, 2002). Hence finding and entering research spaces that are culturally credible to young people and on their terms will enable the researcher to observe naturally occurring interactions and communications (Leyshon, 2002, Markham, 2004). CHICKS is a purpose-built environment especially designed to be attractive to young people attending the camps. Thus it created an optimal space for observational data gathering as well as aided me to immerse within the population studied.

The map below shows the outdoor spaces at Moorland retreat, I chose to demonstrate these spaces here since most of the camps I attended were at Moorland. Langevang (2007) points out that sharing and moving between the spaces young people occupy allows the researcher to build rapport and relationships. As Langevang (2007) noted I moved within and between these spaces with the young people, at times moving with one set of young people at other times staying in space whilst the young people moved around me. This allowed me to engage in a long observational spell but simultaneously swiftly and dynamically changing from one group to another if assessed necessary (details of this will be discussed in the observations section).



*Figure 3.5. Map of the Moorland retreat outdoor spaces (Source: Author).*

The different physical spaces (as seen above) invited different types of interactions and communication modes. For example on the trampoline and basketball courts I would often adapt the stance of “an incompetent adult” (e.g. Barker and Smith, 2001) where the young people had a chance to teach and advise me with trampolining technique or basketball handling. This alleviated the power dynamics as well as opened up a research space where I could simultaneously observe, sense and be part of the affective experiences (again this will be further discussed in the observation section). Although there were many active areas at CHICKS, for example the trampolines and the football pitch, there were quiet places too, for instance a grassy area next to the football pitch. These areas offered opportunities for quiet discussions and chats with the young people. This way the whole outdoor area was a potential research space.

### **3.2. Ethnography**

Here I will discuss and introduce ethnography as a methodology. I will also outline the reasons why it was the chosen methodology within this research.

Ethnography is a methodology with a long history and it is aimed to investigate how any particular population experience, live and interpret their lives as well as events and happenings within it (e.g. Willis and Trondman, 2000). Furthermore ethnography seeks to contextualise people's subjective experiences by placing emphasis on the human contact and respecting the irreducibility of human experience (O'Reilly, 2005). This is done by using a range of methods (these will be further discussed in the methods section) from interviews and observations to art and photo projects that are all designed to build a cohesive picture of any particular phenomena (Atkinson and Hammersely, 1995, Morrow, 2001). However ethnography as a methodology is not without criticism. Natural sciences tend to see ethnography as un-structured and un-systematic. Because of this ethnography can be seen as lacking structure and order, thus falling below the general standards of science (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Additionally the subjectivity of the researcher and researcher's strong presence within one's research arena has been critically discussed (e.g. Peshkin, 1988).

However within this research it was exactly that un-structured nature of ethnography that allowed me to adapt a dynamic stance to my data collection especially at the observation stage. This is not to say that the research wasn't planned and organised and solidly rooted in the relevant literature but rather extremely flexible and compromising thus opening doors to new discoveries. Brewer (2004) defends ethnography by arguing that by making sure that the research topic holds wider relevance, both in applied and theoretical terms, as well as openly discussing negative cases and choices the ethnographer can establish an authority for one's data and research. In other words by being transparent throughout the research process, as was the case in this project, one establishes strength for the data and for the research as a whole.

Willis (1980) argues that by using ethnography is the best way to encounter, contextualise and analyse *the ordinary human encounters and experiences*. Ethnography, he argues, allows the emergence of *surprises* in a way in which a research design with pre-mediated hypotheses and theories would not. Willis and Trondman (2000) further argue that ethnography is theoretically informed and carefully practised, allowing the rich conceptual and contextual writing of the account. Hence ethnography allowed me to examine care, memory formation, transformative effect and the natural environment as a space for care at CHICKS in a fluid and dynamic way being and sensing with the young people, becoming part of the encounters and experience. This line of thinking will be expanded on the methods section.

Coffey (1999) postulates that social relationships embedded in their social as well as cultural settings are in the heart of ethnography. She further argues that to understand and analyse those relationships shared experiences and social interactions are crucial. Hence using ethnography as a methodology within this project allowed me to explore the subtle nuances of the young people's experiences on a CHICKS holiday and the complex multiple interactions between young people, physical space, nature, peers and adults. To begin to understand social relationships and connections with the cultural and physical spaces one has to become part of these networks to truly appreciate the subtle tones and colours. I hence needed to be in the emotional and affective spaces to truly appreciate their production, functioning and re-production. Moreover by simply administering questionnaires would have risked the reduction of rich experiences into numbers and statistics or sentences that lack context. For example Kiernan and Maclachlan (2002) investigated young peoples' respite breaks through quantitative methods and even though they reported some interesting findings they were ultimately reduced to categorical lists rather than rich accounts of experiences embedded in affective responses.

Gallagher (2009) suggests that ethnography is particularly powerful when used to investigate the lives of young people and capture their voices and opinions because they allow an inclusive, less disruptive way of exploring what has been

said and done. Moreover this type of research is often carried out so that the researcher is actually assisting with whatever the young people might be engaging with. This was often the case within this research as I will demonstrate in the later sections. However Gallagher (2009) also argues there are potential pitfalls for using ethnography with young people. He argues that ethnography can be interpreted as intrusive, gaining an informed consent might be difficult and personal relationships between the researcher and those researched can create complications that can potentially be detrimental to the research process.

These points are of course valid and a good ethnographer takes all the possible precautions to avoid such pitfalls. The issue of obtaining consent at CHICKS was probably easier than in many other places young people occupy since the organisation assisted in this (details in the next section). Similarly the notion of ethnography seen as intrusive by young people is probably truer in a space where young people usually do not interact with adults. However, at CHICKS the adult presence is a given and expected by those who have attended before. Those who are new to CHICKS adult presence might take longer to get used to, but will quickly become a natural part of the CHICKS experience. In other words adult presence is not perceived as intrusive since they are engaging and interacting in culturally credible ways. In regard to personal relationships becoming disruptive I would comment that those exact relationships are the ones where lot of the data lies, and hence should be embraced with curiosity rather than shied away from. Prior experience working with young people was hugely helpful when navigating through ethnography in this research. All of this will be further discussed in the subsequent sections.

### **3.3. Ethical Procedures**

In this section I will outline the ethical principles and procedures that highlighted and guided my research practise. Here I will discuss how confidentiality was practised and how consent was gained. I will also outline the ethical procedures at the university level as well as discuss positionality and how it impacted the research process.

Safeguarding all my participants especially the young people was at the ethical heart of this research project. The University of Exeter guidelines for working with children were complied with. The University's ethical guidelines state that "students who work with children must be formally vetted". As well as the interview for the PhD position, where representatives from both the university and CHICKS were present, I went through the University's ethical approval process by submitting a written ethics form outlining the ethical issues such as child protection matters associated within the project (Appendix 3.1.). Professor Stephen Hinchliffe was the chair of the University's ethics committee at the time (Feb 2010) and therefore the ethics form was sent to him via email as was the procedure at the time. Professor Hinchliffe then presented it to the rest of the College School of Geography, Archaeology and Earth Resources (now changed to the College of Life and Environmental Sciences) ethics committee where it was then assessed and approval granted as can be seen from the e-mail from Professor Hinchliffe (Appendix 3.2.). The project gained ethical approval before any practical work with the young people started. This guaranteed that no unvetted work was carried out with the young people.

Furthermore CHICKS require all of their staff and volunteers to be CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checked so CRB checks were also carried out on me. Additionally I attended child protection training at CHICKS with the supervisors where the emphasis was on vigilance towards child protection issues. In terms of the practical work with children CHICKS has two main ethical points of consideration: no one-to-one work with children and policies dealing with disclosures. No one-to-one policy was strictly adhered to whilst carrying out ethnographical work at CHICKS. At first this required conscious effort but soon became automatic and standard practise for me at CHICKS. The CHICKS disclosure policy states that one can never promise a child to keep a secret but can promise that the fewest possible number of people will be involved. Further there is a straightforward procedure for disclosures should they happen whilst on camp; first, a volunteer must always make sure a supervisor is present. Secondly one should never promise to keep a secret. Thirdly no leading questions should be asked. And fourth extensive notes have to be taken and these passed on to

the supervisors. Since I was never subject of a disclosure I did not carry out the procedure. The disclosure policy extended to the interviews with young people as well. This was to meet the terms of CHICKS policy and also the UK 1989 Children Act (more on this in the interview section).

There were also other general ethical principles that were adhered to in this research; they were confidentiality and consent. Confidentiality does not only refer to a promise not to share confidential information with a third party but also implies the safe storage of personal data and anonymity (e.g. Oliver, 2003, Boyle, 2005). All of my research materials are stored behind locked doors. After I have graduated, the University will be in charge of the safe storage of the data for several years, after which it will be destroyed. The data will be in an encrypted format so that the identity of the participants will be disguised. To further assure anonymity all identifying features, such as names of places/people, or expressions tied to specific places, are changed or removed from the thesis. As Hopkins (2010: 53), states ethical issues “should be considered throughout the research process and not just at specific points such as when applying for ethical approval”.

In social science research obtaining informed consent has become a good ethical practise (e.g. Bell, 2005). I obtained an informed consent from all my participants (Appendix 3.2.-3.3.). Gallagher (2009) states that in order to consent be informed participants have to be fully aware of the aims and likely outcomes of the research. Also consent should be given freely and voluntarily and is constantly open for negotiation. Morrow (2008) argues that giving consent should be an on-going event rather than one of occurrence. Hence I constantly kept checking that the participants were happy to take part by reminding them of their right to withdraw and asking if they had any questions.

CHICKS supervisors were the first group to be presented with my consent forms. This happened when I attended their training week prior to the start of camps. I addressed them all as a group and explained the aims of my research as well as my role on camps first and foremost as a volunteer. I then explained that they

had the right to opt out which would mean being outside the research (i.e. no interview or being a subject of personal observation). After all of this I presented them with my consent forms (Appendix 3.4.) which I asked everyone to carefully read before signing, and then invited any questions (either there or one to one later); everyone was happy to sign and participate. However as mentioned this was an ongoing process, rather than one off occurrence, hence the supervisors were periodically reminded of their right to withdraw and consent was re-checked before the personal interviews too.

The volunteers were given a similar speech by me on the first night of the camp which was the first change of getting all the adults together and not being busy with the young people. After I had explained the purpose of the research I assured the volunteers that if they chose to participate it would not get in the way of their volunteering experience. As with the supervisors I then asked everyone to carefully read the form (Appendix 3.4.), invited questions (either there or one to one later) and to sign if they so wanted. Again everyone chose to participate and again the consent was always re-checked before interviews as well as the recording of the last night's discussion.

The process of consent was slightly different with the referral agents since I did not have a personal face to face contact with them. Since they did not attend a CHICKS camp for them the consent was needed for the interview only. The interview process will be detailed later on, but Appendix 3.6. demonstrates the e-mail sent to the referral agents where consent was first mentioned. When I received a response to the initial e-mail I then sent the consent form, answered any questions and wrote a few more sentences about the purpose of the research. After I had received the consent form the interview date was set. At the onset of the interview I would further explain about the project, invite questions and emphasise the right to withdraw.

Regarding the young people my consent forms (Appendix 3.3.) were sent to all the parents/guardians (via the referral agents) of those young people I was going to be on the camp with. These forms were often filled in the presence of the

referral agent in conjunction with the rest of CHICKS forms. Although the intention was to ask the young people also to sign a form, this was not the wish of CHICKS. CHICKS was very committed to safeguard the young people in their care and ensuring the best holiday possible for those who attended. This is why CHICKS absolutely did not wish that the young people filled or dealt with forms either before or during their holiday. This was repeated by the CEO and the Operations Manager on multiple occasions (the role of CHICKS as a research partner will be



further discussed soon) hence I opted for verbal consent from the young people. Even though parents hold the power to decide for their underage children, this does not mean that young people's wishes and autonomy should be ignored (Lansdown, 2010) which is why I always explained the purpose of the study and asked whether or not a young person wanted to participate before carrying out art/photo projects or interviews, and without an exception respected their decision. I only encountered wishes for non-participation during a camp but not during interviews. I also showed the consent form signed by a parent/guardian to the young person. Only after I was satisfied that the young person had fully understood what they were agreeing on did I proceed. Changes in research methods have to always be evaluated against implications for data production and final research. In this particular case I do not believe it compromised data production but perhaps helped to put young people at ease since they 'didn't have to participate in a form filling exercise' as one CHICKS executive put it.

In this section I outlined the ethical considerations that guided the research. Next section is titled doing the research and within it I will discuss CHICKS as a research partner, explain how the research was carried out in practice as well as outline the specific research methods used: observations, interviews and other methods.

### **3.4. Doing the research**

In this section I will outline both the role of CHICKS and my role within the research. I will also introduce the methods that I used as part of ethnographic approach.

Positionality of the researcher refers to the multiple roles that an ethnographer often takes when carrying out the research and how one acts and interacts within these roles; this has been extensively written on (e.g. Chiseri-Strater, 1996, Choi, 2006, Merriam et al., 2010). Leyshon (2002) discusses becoming a hybrid persona of a researcher-youth worker when carrying out research with rural youth, taking on multiple dynamic roles. This is also how this research was carried out – by me taking on multiple roles without losing the sight of the researcher role whilst acknowledging the role that I played in the construction of the CHICKS experience. I was directly involved with the children and young people by watching, listening, asking questions and at the same time acknowledging the role of the theoretical underpinnings of the project (O'Reilly, 2005).

On camp I was mainly known as a volunteer who was keen to join in at all the activities with the young people. This was done for two separate reasons. Firstly, at the heart of ethnographic research is observation and in order to begin to understand how people experience their lives the ethnographer should immerse herself into the population studied. Secondly there was the question of power and the issues of background and age. Whenever an adult researcher is researching young people inevitable power roles emerge (e.g. Hopkins, 2010). Hence it was my aim to reduce the perceived power roles by, first, presenting myself as a volunteer rather than a researcher and, secondly, as a volunteer who was not

judgemental. In other words as someone who was curious about youth culture, demonstrating caring and accepting behaviour, and at times behaved occasionally in somewhat silly manner, all reduced the power perception of age and background. This manner is demonstrated in the picture below.



*Figure 3.6. Me as a camp volunteer at Crealy Adventure Park (SOURCE: CHICKS)*

Another aspect of positionality that plays a role in ethnographic research is one's background and past experiences. Race and ethnicity differences in a research environment can create tension and anxieties not only in the researched but the researcher alike (e.g. Hopkins, 2010). In my research I was aware of my racial identity and being the only one from Finland as well as often the first Finn the children had ever encountered. Hence amongst the British children I probably got assigned the status of 'the other', but I was also seen as an interesting entity with my unique name and funny accent. I was asked on separate occasions if I am posh and once if I came to England on the back of a lorry. Both of these enquiries demonstrate that the young people were trying to place me within their frame of reference. I do strongly feel that my different background worked in my favour

making me 'exotic' and interesting drawing the young people to me and helping me to establish relationships, and a line of dialogue, rather than alienating me (more on foreign researchers see Corsano and Molina, 1998). Also a level of positionality that has to be considered in ethnographic research is social class. Rose (1997) writes about a sense of failure; a feeling of dissatisfaction or discontent as a researcher who engages with participants from a different social class and finds herself in an entanglement of humorous comments, misunderstandings and uncertainty. While my nationality was different from the young people, my social class was not. This I believe made it easier for me to relate and understand some of the young peoples' backgrounds and challenges.

Other than my nationality and social class my actions and role on camp were also influenced by my background (Rose, 1997), in particular my past experiences working with children. Prior to university I had gained 3 years of experience working with children under 7 both in a nursery and as an au-pair. I had also graduated as a practical nurse, specialising in the social care of children and young people. Every summer during my Bachelor degree in Developmental Psychology I worked for an international language course company where I worked in a managerial position overseeing social leaders and being in charge of social activities for 8-18 year old young people. During those 9 months I learned a lot about young people and how to interact with them. In addition, I have Master degrees in Sport & Exercise Psychology as well as in Health Psychology and further post-university experience from a nursery as well as work experience from food industry to nursing homes. All of these experiences taught me to view people holistically and to work according to the principle of working *with* rather than *on* people (e.g. Powell, 2009). In other words the CHICKS very child centred and participatory way of working with young people was somewhat easy for me to adapt to.

Also being around and interacting with young people was perhaps easier for me than for someone else without any experience. In addition, at nursing school a lot of emphasis was placed on reflexivity and on developing that skill through numerous exercises and assessments. A reflexive researcher seeks to keep

one's personal history and subjectivity as well as theoretical positioning on the forefront of their minds when engaging with participants (Willis, 2000). This of course does not mean complete objectivity but rather puts the researcher in a stronger position to understand one's positional strengths and weaknesses and helps in creating a respectful attitude towards those under study (Willis, 2000). The extract below demonstrates the level of my reflexivity and the acknowledgement of the interconnected roles after an incident where a 12 year old girl, and a few others, turned against me after I had expressed concerns for her lack of eating.

*Saturday dinner chaotic. Supervisors not in the room. Behaviour displayed by Reece, Maria, Nina and Kristy would've not happened them (supervisors) in the room. Maria's food → not eating → exploded → everyone jumped on the bandwagon. Did I do something wrong? Maybe I should have been quiet/more understanding? → Volunteer supervisor role difference! Doesn't feel good, shit actually.*

*Research diary extract, 01.04.2011*

Those interacting, communication and reflexive skills, I believe, helped me to build trust. Brewer (2000: 85) writes: "Ethnographers earn peoples' trust by showing a willingness to learn their language and their ways, to eat like they eat, speak as they speak and do as they do". Furthermore Brewer (2000) highlights the significance of negotiating and re-negotiating the trust so that people feel reassured and comfortable at all times around the ethnographer. Trust between the ethnographer and her research participants is vital for successful research (e.g. Fetterman, 2010). Ennew (1994) states that with trust and rapport between a researcher and her participants lies and evasions will be less likely. In other words trust with one's participants can strengthen the data gathered.

In terms of gender CHICKS is a mixture of both genders, in children and in adults, hence making it a gender balanced arena. That of course alone does not remove the fact that I am a female and therefore get placed in a particular frame and I'm assumed to have certain female attributes. In my case though what might have lessened the assigned female role was my somewhat 'tomboy' tendencies to enjoy, play and discuss all sports for example hence creating relationships with the boys as well. What I wanted to highlight in this section was that in this

research I was constantly negotiating and re-negotiating my subject position. Next I will briefly discuss the role CHICKS had a research partner.

As Willis & Trondman (2000) point out researcher is always responsible for her actions, not just when working in the field, but there is a continued responsibility all the way through the research process. This is linked to power, the power that researcher has to affect the lives of the participants by choosing for example what to report (Oliver, 2003). In my case my loyalty lay first and foremost with CHICKS and the university but also with the wider academic community. This at times could be a balancing act, especially since within CHICKS alone I had different levels of position and different levels of loyalty. For example, when working with the young people I was counted as one of the volunteers and therefore was really careful not to compromise their holiday experiences. I wanted to carry out my volunteering duties to the best of my ability when simultaneously doing efficient research. Additionally if I would have let my research duties affect my volunteering duties the other volunteers would have had to do more and that would have been likely to change the dynamics of the group. I was also expected to report back to the management on my experiences. This was done on many different levels from the operations team up to the CEO whose interests were all slightly different. However since the same trust that I shared with my participants had been established with these groups of people I could always report back honest findings instead of feeling that I had to 'sugar-coat' my reporting.

For practical reasons – so that I could use the invaluable sources such as the children's files and the knowledge of the office staff at CHICKS – on three occasions I was on camp as a researcher rather than a volunteer. This was only whilst the young people were off site. Additionally, at the request by CHICKS, on two camps I acted as the camp support supervisor taking on a more active role on the running of the camp by, for example, being in charge of the laundry and paper work. This rose from the need of CHICKS, but gave me an opportunity to compare my own power relations and positionality within a camp environment and interactions. In other words it made possible for me to experience the subtle nuances of interaction with the young people and other volunteers as a person in

charge compared to that of one of the volunteers. Additionally this allowed me to get a glimpse of the camp life behind the scenes and be able to observe the supervisors more holistically. Cook (2005) points out how close physical proximity helps to observe and build an understanding of any given community. Further, becoming one of the supervisors allowed me to see glimpses of the supervisor experience and duties that normal volunteers seldom witness, such as delivering a firm speaking to a young person, listening in and being part of the evaluation of the volunteers as well as communication with the parents. So although CHICKS in this case altered my intended role it actually was a positive addition to the research and data. Having now discussed both my role and that of CHICKS within this research I will now move on to the practical side of the research and will discuss the individual methods.

I started with ten potential methods that were all theoretically and practically grounded in relative literature. In the flow chart below it can be seen what those methods were and how they evolved. The red text indicates different issues that were encountered which led to the dropping of that particular method at particular times indicated by the large blocks. Flow means that that particular method was used throughout the research whereas partial flow means that that method was used on some camps. Previously I discussed the role of CHICKS as a research partner; this flow chart taps onto that discussion as well. Although CHICKS was a very co-operative research partner they had some reservations with the text message method since it went against their safe-guarding policies. I of course strictly wanted to adhere to their policies, and good ethical practice, hence that method was not used at all. In terms of the video projects CHICKS was willing for me to use them in my research. However after a couple of camps I realised it just would not be practical and would be too time consuming. If it would have been possible to use all the intended methods I might have been able to gather even richer data and perhaps discover some hidden nuances. However I did use multiple methods that, I believe, yielded a good representation of the CHICKS experience. Furthermore, White and Bushin (2011) argue that by applying child-centred research methods can enhance social and cultural identities as well as aiding the children to represent themselves as individuals. The bigger point I am

Method	Flow	Time Scale	Flow	Time Scale	Flow	Time Scale
Interviews	Full flow	F I R S T M E E T I N G	Full flow	C A M P S 1 - 5	Full flow	C A M P S 6 - 17
Observations	Full flow		Full flow		Full flow	
Art Projects	Full flow		Full flow		Full flow	
Young people taking photos	Full flow		Full flow		Time Issues	
Video recordings	Full flow		Equipment/time Issues			
Young people keeping a diary	Already in use/time issues					
Diary Room	Full flow		Partial flow		Partial flow	
Texting with Young People	Child Protection Issues					
Producing a DVD for the Young People	Full flow		Time Issues			
Social Media Methods	Full flow		Partial flow		Partial flow	

*Figure 3.7. Flow diagram of the selection process and the use of methods (Source: Author).*

making here is that, if applied efficiently, certain research methods with children and young people can go beyond the function of methodology, hence serving multiple purposes.

Before I discuss the individual methods I wanted to outline the temporality of this research. As can be seen from the table below the methods had some overlap but some clear phases can also be seen. For example the main period for the interviews with the young people was the year 2011. All the methods were connected in an iterative-inductive manner. This means guided by examination rather than by hypotheses as well as evolving in the field (O'Reilly, 2005). In other words the use of one method would guide and shape another.

*Table 3.2. Timetable for the different methods used (Source: Author).*

2010	2011	2012
Camps/observation (14)	Camps/observation (2)	Camps/observation (1)
Adult Interviews (39)	Adult Interviews (28)	Young People Interviews (1)
Art/photo projects	Young People Interviews (25)	Analysis
Social media	Social media	
Online questionnaire	Online questionnaire	

Observing is probably most common and most used ethnographic method (e.g. Crang and Cook, 2005, Morrow, 2008). Access to observe can sometimes be difficult to obtain but in my research access was pre-granted. Mayall (2005: 110) writes “Good information about childhood must start from children’s experience”. This in mind already at the grant application stage of the project it was decided that in order to carry out this research effectively attendance on CHICKS camps would be necessary. 2010 was the main period for camp attendance. Any subsequent camps were done to fill in the gaps in the data collection as well as for obtaining more potential interviewees and the 2012 camp was for exploring the new camp format. In February 2010 I booked myself on camps for that year as a volunteer and since the target age group was the 12-15 year olds most of the camps I attended were with that age group. The additional roles of a researcher and camp support came into the picture later. For the first three camps my consent forms had not gone out to the parents/guardians yet hence no active data collection was done on those camps but rather those camps were used to get myself acquainted with the ins and outs of a CHICKS camp and CHICKS as a research arena. Table 3.3. outlines the camps that I attended and clarifies my roles and camp location. Camp names refer to the specific themes each year e.g. types of dance/tree etc.

Table 3.3. CHICKS camps that I attended during 2010-2012 (Source: Author).<sup>2</sup>

2010	Month	role	location
Ash <sup>*,**</sup>	March	V	M
Birch <sup>*,**</sup>	March	V	M
Cello <sup>*,**</sup>	April	V	C
Cork <sup>*</sup>	April/May	V	M
Flute	May	R	C
Guitar	June	V	C
Honeysuckle	June	V	M
Larch	July	R	M
Panpipes	August	V	C
Palm	August	R	M
Synthesizer	September	V	C
Redwood <sup>*</sup>	October	CS	M
Tuba	October	V	C
Willow <sup>*</sup>	November	CS	M
2011	Month	role	Location
Bounce	March	V	M
Flamenco	May	V	M
2012	Month	role	Location
Finland	May/June	V	M

As mentioned earlier the children and young people who attend a CHICKS camp come from a variety of different backgrounds. As a volunteer I did not have access to the young peoples' personal files and hence was unaware of their personal circumstances. This is standard practise at CHICKS to assure that the volunteers can to the best to their ability treat everyone equally rather than let pre-conceptions, or any personal attitudes, interfere with their interaction with young people. So for the most part all of those 227 young people on camp with me their backgrounds remained unknown to me. Since it would have not been practical to obtain background information of only those I was on camp with I opted for the whole of 2010 (the main observation year) statistics to get a general idea of the type of life situations and home environments the young people came from that year. Table 4.4. shows these figures.

<sup>2</sup> Role: V-Volunteer, R-Researcher, CS-Camp Support

Location: M-Moorland Retreat, C-Coastal Retreat,

\*8-11 camp

\*\*no consent (observations on these camps were camp not people specific i.e. I observed and familiarised myself with the running of the camps)

*Table 4.4. The breakdown of family circumstances of those who attended CHICKS in 2010 (one person could fit into multiple categories)*

*(Source: CHICKS).*

<b>Young person subject to</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Total</b>
Bereavement	13	10	23
Bullying	134	149	283
Caring responsibilities	32	34	66
Domestic violence	9	16	25
Eating disorder	6	2	8
Emotional abuse	147	166	313
Low family income	27	27	54
Marital breakup	230	229	459
Neglect	125	149	274
Physical abuse	40	66	106
Poverty	9	19	28
Racial abuse	8	11	19
Self harm	14	11	25
Sexual abuse	29	13	42
Not indicated	170	161	331

As mentioned above I was oblivious to the personal circumstances of most young people I met on camp. However I did read the files of those that I interviewed as well as all of those that attended the two camps on which I was part of the supervisory team. 55% or 125 young people came to camp with a signed consent form and those individuals were the main targets of the observational data

collection. However due to the nature of CHICKS it was at times impossible to exclude from observation those who hadn't consented. But whenever this was the case their anonymity was always guaranteed as well as not subjecting them to any further methodology i.e. art projects, interviews. To be more specific, those without consent were never individually observed only included as part of a group in diary recordings such as 'everyone laughed'.

The way I carried out my observations was that of a participating researcher (Bergold and Thomas, 2012). In other words conducting my research with (rather than on) the young people. There were times when I was very active within an observation, for example, rock climbing with a young person side by side. Other times I was more passive in the activity but active in the observation, for example watching a game of football with a group of girls. I argue that to begin to understand any particular experience researcher has to experience it not as a sideliner but as an active engaging agent. Further by throwing myself into the research environment amongst the young people opened up avenues and dynamics that merely by watching from the side-lines could have been left unnoticed. Additionally the thorough investigation by watching, listening, participating and asking questions allowed me to write a rich account of the lived experience of the young people at CHICKS (e.g. Cook, 2005). Ideally participatory techniques allow "working in ways that increase participant's ability to bring about positive change in their own lives" (Kesby et al., 2005: 144). This notion is very descriptive of CHICKS as I will further explain within the empirics. Picture below demonstrates nicely that participating nature of my observational technique.



Figure 3.8. *Being in the heart of CHICKS – me being soaked for entertainment (Source: CHICKS)*

Thorne (1993, in Mayall, 2008), however, has criticised the notion of an adult researcher being able to wholeheartedly and fully enter into the social world of children. Moreover by drawing from her own experience she stated that an adult cannot hold the 'least-adult role' for very long. Her point is valid; and it has been widely recognised in the literature that an adult as hard, as they might try, does not have the ability *to see through the eyes of children* (e.g. Philo, 2003). CHICKS however is a unique place where through funny, silly and often childlike activities the adult child line blurs creating such social and emotional geographies that aid and guide an adult observer in the world of children.

Before moving on to the interviews I will now highlight how I carried out my observations in practice. The main tool for recording and constructing information in an ethnographic research is a research diary (e.g. Miles and Crush, 1993, Tricoglus, 2001, Cook, 2005). By using a research diary the ethnographer can keep a record of what had happened but also make sense of the ways one's research develops and takes shape (Crang and Cook, 2007). My research diary acted as a notebook as well as a reflective tool, as something I could always go back to and re-contextualise my camp experiences. My field notes filled two A5 sized research diaries together approximately 220 pages. At times they were

bullet points, diagrams or scribbles on the margins while there are also rather detailed descriptions of a particular event or a dialogue with a young person. Sometimes further reflection or analytical thinking took place hours/few days after and was added in a different colour as can be seen in figure 3.9. In addition to the written notes I also have a photo collage from each camp I attended. They acted as a useful reminder of the activities done, as well as people on camp, and also functioned as a form of visual data (e.g. Pink, 2007).

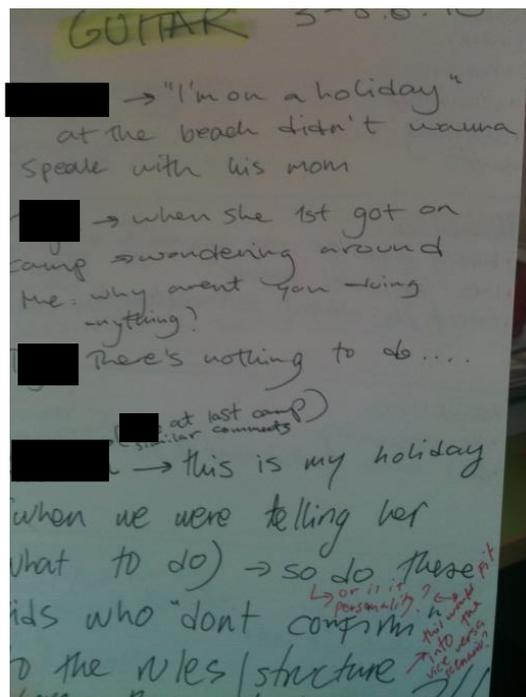


Figure 3.9. An insert from my research diary demonstrating the added reflections in red to this particular dialogue (Source: Author).

A researcher standing on the side-lines with their notebook could have been perceived as an intrusion or as uncomfortable, and even change behaviour (O'Reilly, 2005). Therefore I often discreetly scribbled bullet points on a piece of paper, or relied on my memory, these were then later recorded into my research diary. In practice this meant that if I was in the middle of the action myself I would memorise what was said, how I felt, what I saw and often in my head already wrote a few sentences describing the experience that I would then at the earliest convenience write down. If I was observing something that I wasn't actively part

of firstly I was always very conscious of scribbling notes discreetly if I had access to pen and paper at the time. Furthermore I would always try and incorporate all of the observations into the ordinary camp life. For example I tried not to leave and go and observe something else (even if very interesting) if I was in the middle of something like a game of pool with a young person.

The time lapse that I had between an action and recording obviously raises questions of reliability of recordings, and that is one of the challenges in this type of research (e.g. Cook, 2005). I tried to record notes as soon as I could, but at times it was not possible to do so until later in the day. However it can be argued that there is nearly always a time lapse between actions and recordings in ethnographic research purely because, as mentioned, a researcher standing writing on a notebook in the middle of her participants would not be practical and could cause apprehension (O'Reilly, 2005). Hence my approach to note taking was the one I felt was the most appropriate for this kind of research. Also it could be argued that there are benefits from the unavoidable time delay too, such as allowing time for reflection and 'digestion'. Having now outlined the observation part of my research I will now move on to the interviews.

In this interview section I will categorically go through the format and the way in which the interviews were carried out with each of the participant groups. Additionally ethical considerations are discussed as well as the rationale for using interviews. Furthermore the reasoning behind the selection of interviewees, interview locations and other demographic interview data is introduced.

By listening and talking to people about their subjective experiences a whole new window into their lives opens. Conducting interviews allows the participants to express their views in a variety of ways and is less restrictive than a questionnaire thus creating a rich account of experiences (Valentine, 2005). Moreover interview or *conversation with a purpose* (Eyles, 1988) is a people sensitive and people oriented method of data collection accounting for individuality and variety of responses (Silverman, 1993). Interviews as a method have been criticised for the interviewer effects as well as eliciting what is thought socially acceptable or

confirming responses (e.g. Valentine, 2005). I would argue that both of these can be reduced by a capable ethnographer who is tuned into his or her participants and can adapt their own actions accordingly; all this is discussed in greater detail later.

For my research I interviewed not just the young people but different groups of people that together form the CHICKS experience and networks. The table on the next page shows the order of the interviews throughout the project. The main interview period with the young people was the year 2011 in order to give the participants an appropriate time to digest and reflect their camp experiences. The interviews with CHICKS staff members, however, started about a month after my first camp. This was because many of them had worked at CHICKS for a while and had already formed image of their experiences. The interviews with the volunteers and the referral agents started about six months after my first camp when I had gathered enough volunteering experiences myself and had become familiar with the referral system. And since both of these groups were somewhat difficult to recruit these interviews continued in 2011 and in total took 1.5 years to complete.

*Table 3.5. The interview schedule (Source: Author).<sup>3</sup>*

Month	2010	2011	2012
<b>January</b>		Volunteer 13 Volunteer 14 Volunteer 15 Referral Agent 14 Referral Agent 15 Referral Agent 16	
<b>February</b>		Young person 1	
<b>March</b>	Adult recordings	Volunteer 16 Volunteer 17 Volunteer 18 Volunteer 19 Adult recordings YP recordings	
<b>April</b>	Supervisor 1 Supervisor 2 Senior Supervisor Deputy Ops Manager	Volunteer 20 Volunteer 21 Volunteer 22 Volunteer 23 Referral Agent 17	

<sup>3</sup> Adult Recordings refer to the end of the camp chat on camp experiences with the volunteers and the supervisors. YP recordings stand for the 'diary room' type brief mini interviews done with the young people.

	Adult recordings	Referral Agent 18 Referral Agent 19 Referral Agent 21 Referral Agent 21 Young person 2 Young person 3	
<b>May</b>	Adult recordings YP recordings	Referral Agent 22 Adult recordings Young person 4 Young person 5	Young person 26
<b>June</b>	Adult recordings	Young person 6 Young person 7 Young person 8 Young person 9 Young person 10	
<b>July</b>	Adult recordings		
<b>August</b>	Supervisor 3 Supervisor 4 Supervisor 5 Supervisor 6 Supervisor 7 Supervisor 8 Volunteer 1 Referral Agent 1 Referral Agent 2 Referral Agent 3 Adult recordings		
<b>September</b>	Volunteer 2 Volunteer 3 Volunteer 4 Volunteer 5 Volunteer 6 Referral Agent 4 Referral Agent 5	Volunteer 24 Volunteer 25 Volunteer 26 Volunteer 27 Referral Agent 23	
<b>October</b>	Supervisor 9 Supervisor 10 Volunteer 7 Volunteer 8 Referral Agent 6 Adult recordings YP recordings	Volunteer 28 Referral Agent 24 Young person 11 Young person 12 Young person 13 Young person 14 Young person 15 Young person 16 Young person 17 Young person 18 Young person 19 Young person 20 Young person 21	
<b>November</b>	Supervisor 11 Supervisor 12 Volunteer 9 Volunteer 10 Volunteer 11 Referral Agent 7 Referral Agent 8 Referral Agent 9 Referral Agent 10 Adult recordings	Volunteer 29 Young person 22 Young person 23 Young person 24	
<b>December</b>	Volunteer 12 Referral Agent 11 Referral Agent 12 Referral Agent 13	Young person 25	

Semi-structured, open-ended, in-depth interviews were used for data collection. This type of interview structure was selected for its flexibility and suitability for obtaining rich data of people's subjective experiences (Willig, 2001). Moreover semi-structured format was best geared to deliver the data for my objectives since it allowed in-depth discussion which fully structured would have not and totally unstructured format would have not been suited due to time constraints. Focus groups might have been appropriate for this type of research but since my participants were scattered all around United Kingdom this approach would have not been practical. However one such group interview was carried out. This was due to a situation where a group of young people lived in the same city and all knew each other previously. Since I set out to examine the fine nuances of young people's experiences of CHICKS questionnaires, although a useful tool especially when dealing with a large participant pool, would have been inadequate to be used and would have left out the subtle colours, similarities and differences of experiences.

As per the characteristic of a semi-structured interview (e.g. Valentine, 2005) I had prepared an interview checklist of topics even though the order and the emphasis of these varied considerably from one interview to the other. These questions and topics were mainly used as prompts rose from my camp experiences and were guided by my research objectives hence I could be fairly confident that they would be appropriate in delivering the data for my aims. However the questions were not restricted to my objectives but ideas, precedents and analogues in the extant literature also informed these. I had a separate script for each separate group of participants (these can be seen in Appendices 3.4-3.7). The format allowed the participant to be the one leading the discussion. This often led to pathways that I might not have even considered, revealing experiences that were surprising or unexpected.

Throughout the interview process I placed emphasis on building an empathic rapport and on active reflective listening (Roberts, 2000). Also at the onset at each interview I reminded the participant of their rights as well as other ethical considerations such as confidentiality. To reduce the power role I was talking in

language that the participants could relate to and avoided scientific terminology. I also aimed to be attuned to any anxieties or discomfort (more on this later in this section). All the interviews were recorded and later transcribed. All the participants were given pseudonyms and other identifying features were changed or removed.

Here I will outline the interview process with the young people by discussing ethical issues, selection process, access, and how the interviews were carried out in practice. Children and young people's participation rights have been a hot topic in recent years both in academia and in everyday realms (e.g. Lansdown, 2010). Since young people are increasingly seen as active agents with rights in the places, groups, societies and nations that they occupy researchers, policy makers and different institutions alike have recognised the importance of including young people into research, decisions and discussions (e.g. Malone and Hartung, 2010). This however is not as a straightforward process as it might sound and presented difficulties within this research as well. To gain access to minor participants researchers are required to go through so-called gatekeepers (e.g. Barker and Weller, 2003). Skelton (2008) argues that in placing the power of participation on gatekeepers rather than young people themselves increases the social power that those adults already have over the potential research participant. Skelton (2001) outlined the scepticism and doubt that she encountered from the youth workers when trying to gain research access to young girls in a youth club. I do not dispute the importance for child protection, and having worked with children and young people myself in a professional setting can easily relate to the concerns of these workers. However I argue that by placing themselves between the researcher and the participant gatekeepers can potentially deny the young person's right to participate and to be heard and valued. I will outline my experiences with the gatekeepers in the next paragraph.

I had a pool of 125 consented young people from which to select the interviewees. I wanted as much variability in my sample as possible in terms of age, gender and ethnicity. At the beginning the selection process was more or less random, since in my participant pool that variety existed to some extent, and I did not

foresee any major difficulties in getting access to the young people. So I first contacted (see the e-mail; Appendix 3.9.) the referral agents with a large number of young people on my list. According to the wishes by CHICKS all communication with the young people regarding the interviews happened through the gatekeepers and hence an initial request for interview access was sent via e-mail. At one occasion a referral agent wanted me to devise a letter that she could then forward on to the young people and from then on it was up to the young people to get in touch with me if they so wished, this method gained me 2 participants (out of possible 14). Another referral agent forwarded the phone numbers of the 4 young peoples' parents that he was responsible for. Later when it became obvious that access indeed was problematic these criteria of selection were removed and at the end virtually all the referral agents on my list were contacted as detailed in the next section. Consequently at the end the selection of the final number of 26 interviewees was then more due to the response from the referral than a result of a strategic sorting process. In total 29 out of potential 37 referral agents, that together had referred 88 young people, were contacted. Since I interviewed 26 young people the response was relatively low. What gained me a few more responses was when CHICKS operative re-sent my e-mail.

Apart from the two examples above the search for potential interviewees happened solely through the referral agents. Once the initial contact was established I would usually follow the e-mail with a phone call where I would further explain the purpose of the research/interview to the referral agent. I would also then ask them to check with both the young person and their parent/guardian to make sure that they still remembered the research and were still happy to participate. Only after it was confirmed by the referral agent that the young person and their parent/guardian were happy to participate the interview time and place were set.

Overall what the above description demonstrates is the need for a sensible and efficient system for access when carrying out this type of research with young people. As soon as I realised that access was challenging I devised a system of

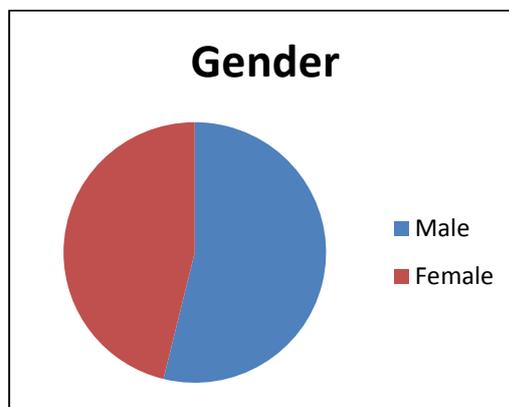
particularly targeting those referral agents that worked within a school environment, as I found out that within my sample access to schools seemed to be easier to gain than access via social workers for example. Valentine (1999) however notes that when gaining access through a school researcher often encounters the wheels of bureaucracy and cannot be sure whether children or parents have been consulted. I however felt that my procedure was ethically sound even with the school since I only approached those young people whose parents and themselves had been consulted, and further gave the young people themselves an opportunity to withdraw. Similarly youth clubs and young carer groups yielded better results than social workers.

Whenever researching minors ethics is a pertinent operational issue (Hopkins, 2010). Bushin (2007) asserts that it is important to form successful research strategies so that ethical principles can be turned into practice. One of such strategies in this research was for me to read the young person's personal file prior to the interview. This was done so that I would be aware of any possible sensitivities and would be able to tailor my interview style and questions accordingly. The content of these files varied quite significantly as it was purely down to the referral agents' judgement as to how much information was included. Some were detailed accounts of young person's background, home life and circumstances whereas others were merely a line or two. Extra caution was taken not to let the information I knew to affect the interview in any other way. Moreover all the interviews were recorded and this was always explained to the young person. At this point of the interview an option to reject this or withdraw completely was given but not taken by any of my participants.

At the onset of each interview by using age appropriate language (details of this later in this section) I informed all the interviewees of confidentiality and anonymity always emphasising that confidentiality might have to be breached if it is in the best interest of the child. For instance if a young person would have disclosed any information that might have put either them or someone else in danger to comply with UK 1989 Children Act and CHICKS policies I would have been obliged to pass that information on to an appropriate person. I also asked

all the young people interviewed to assign a pseudonym for him/her. This was done to empower the young people and to make them feel valued as a research participant (Leyshon, 2002, Hopkins, 2010).

Below figure 3.10. demonstrates the gender distribution of the 26 interviewees. Regardless of the recruitment this total number for qualitative ethnographical research is acceptable since, for example, Bertaux, (1981) suggests that 15 is the smallest acceptable number for qualitative research. Furthermore Green and Thorogood (2009, In Mason 2010) state that oftentimes in qualitative research after 20 participants the so called theoretical saturation occurs. This means that more sampling does not add any additional insights into the data. As can be seen in figure 3.10. there was virtually an equal amount of both boys and girls in the interview sample population (53.8% and 46.2%, respectively). This was ideal since both genders attend CHICKS camps. I was also keen to see if any obvious gender differences would exist in their CHICKS experiences. All the interviewees were White Caucasian. Ideally other ethnicities would have been included, but as explained above the selection was largely due to the active participation by the referral agent hence the main selection strategy was that of a convenience sample.



*Figure 3.10. The gender distribution of the interviewees (Source: Author).*

Figure 3.11. presents the ages of the interviewees. Even though the majority (56%) of the interviewees were 13 and 14 year olds (36% and 20%, respectively) apart from the 8 year olds all the other CHICKS age groups were represented. Since the majority of the camps I attended were in the 12-15 age category this

sample reflects that. And although the strategy was a convenience sampling it gave a fairly varied sample in terms of age.

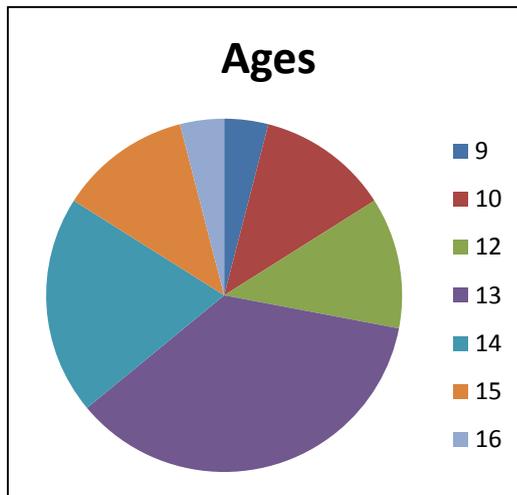


Figure 3.11. The age range of the interviewees (Source: Author).

Figure 3.12. shows the breakdown of the home regions and thus the geographical locations of the interviews. As can be seen the majority of the young people lived in the South West (64%). Since both CHICKS centres are located in the Southwest they get a large number of young people from that area. Also this sample is somewhat representative of the home regions of the 125 I had on my list apart from maybe the relatively low percentage (8%) of London in this sample compared to the 19% on the list of 125.

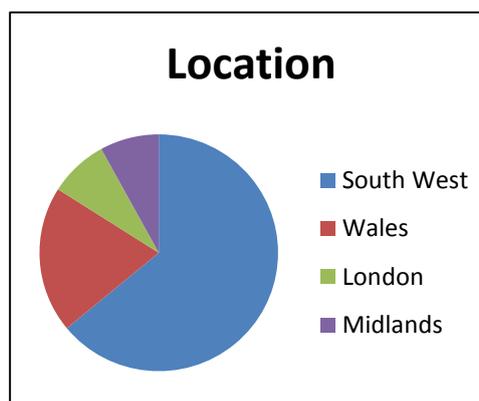


Figure 3.12. The geographical interview locations (Source: Author).

In order to allow an appropriate time for reflection, as well as time for some potential *effects to emerge*, the interviews were not carried out immediately after

the camp but some months later. Table 3.6. demonstrates the time passed from a camp to an interview.

*Table 3.6. Time lapse between a camp and the interview (Source: Author).*

<b>Months after last CHICKS camp (range)</b>	<b>Months after last CHICKS camp (average)</b>
2-13	7.8

As can be seen from the table 3.7. below there was quite a lot of variability in the duration of the interviews. For example some youth centres and a few schools had only set aside a certain amount of time for the interviews even though I always requested an hour minimum. However it should be noted that the richness of the data is probably a better measure of the significance of the data than the length. Even when I had limited time for the interview I always tried to ensure that all the interviews carried out captured the richness and the fine nuances of the experience.

*Table 3.7. Duration of the interviews (Source: Author).*

<b>Number of interviews</b>	<b>Length (range)</b>	<b>Length (average)</b>
26	20 min 55 s	31 min 56 s
	↓	
	72 min 12 s	

There is some debate (e.g. Scott, 2008, Hopkins, 2010) about where interviews with one's participants should be conducted. Elwood and Martin (2000) argue that the interview place on its own is an important source of information and can contribute to the overall data collection as well as produce multiple micro-geographies. They further argue that a place that is personal and where the participant spends a lot of time would be the best for obtaining these rich micro-geographies, often a home or an office. While I think that their point is valid ethical considerations as well as practical issues took precedence when I decided where to interview. Valentine (2005) states that interviews should never been carried out where the researcher does not feel safe and comfortable. For this reason the homes of the young people were not really considered as an appropriate place for an interview of this sort, but preference was given to an institutional location

where the referral agents were also present. Therefore the majority of the interviews took place in the referral agents' workplace which were all places that the young people frequently occupied. However on deciding the place young person's wishes were taken into an account where possible. For example two interviewees were met and interviewed in a cafeteria near their home instead of their referral agent's office because they so specifically requested.

The final interview place was decided on a case-by-case basis but as can be seen from figure 3.13. below most interviews took place at schools. Schools are a contested place for an interview with young people because of the power that it places on the adult as well as its institutional dominance (e.g. Barker and Weller, 2003). Additionally Bushin (2007) argues time restrictions at schools can hinder the gathering of data. On the other hand, interviewing at schools allowed the absence of a parent or a third person that could be detrimental for the research process (e.g. Punch, 2000). Also the power can be given to the young person, or at the least it can become shared, by letting them decide for example where to sit, how long to talk for and what to say (Gallagher, 2009). By using this practise is how I could assure that the power relations associated with schools were diminished to an extent. Additionally by dressing casually (jeans and a hoody) in a school environment made me "a different type of adult" (Emond, 2005), further refiguring power relations.

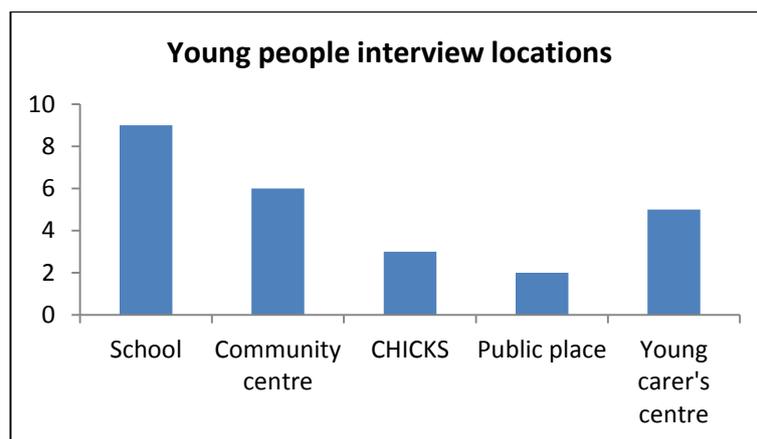


Figure 3.13. Interview breakdown according to place (Source: Author).

In this section I highlight the actual interview process that took place as well as discuss the importance of age appropriate language and active listening when interviewing young people, and how I incorporated this practise in my research.

All the interviews begun in a similar manner by me stating the ethical requirements and issues as well as informing the participants of their rights (see earlier description of this) and explaining the reasons and the importance of the research. Mayall (2008) suggests that a researcher interviewing children and young people should always make an effort to become known and familiar before attempting to interview hence I only interviewed young people that I had attended a camp with. The method that I used to open the line of dialogue was using the photo collages from camp. This technique has successfully been used before in an ethnographic research with young people (e.g. Leyshon, 2002). Since only three participants brought their photos, my photos (example below) alone were mostly used as a base or a prompt for the interview. My reminiscing of the photos often helped to break the ice and put the young people at ease. It also encouraged them to start sharing their stories and pointing out people and activities which then prompted more memories.



Figure 3.14. A typical camp photo collage (SOURCE: CHICKS).

On camps I had actively tried to reduce the perception of power, by acting in a silly CHICKS manner, insisting the young people use my first name and engaging in all the activities (see the section on role/positionality). Similar principles were used during the interviews. Valentine (2005) suggests that is always a good idea to dress according to those interviewed-even at schools I wore casual attire. O'Connell Davidson and Layder (1994, in Valentine, 2005) point out that interview is always to some degree a social encounter and hence the success is often determined by the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee.

Different places have different constructions and hence require different techniques to engage the young people in culturally relevant ways. Since I had managed to build a good rapport with all of those that I interviewed on camp it wasn't too difficult to re-locate that bond during interviews. Apart from two exceptions all interviews with the young people were individual interviews. On one occasion I interviewed a brother and a sister together and on another occasion five people; a group of young carers from a same organisation were interviewed together (see the interview schedule Appendix 3.9.). Mayall (2008) states that interviewing young people together could generate a lively discussion as well as alleviate anxiety by having a friend present. However group interviews are not without their criticism and for example Valentine (2005) points out that interviewing in groups could silence some participants. Additionally Punch (2002) compared group interviews to individual interviews and concluded that boys tended to find the group more enjoyable mainly because the interviewer was a female. Girls, however, favoured the individual interviews feeling they could say more when alone. These observations highlight the multiple factors that are present in interviews. To overcome this as best as I could I would adjust my interview technique accordingly. For example brief individual chats followed after the group interview giving a voice to the quiet ones.

Most interviews with the young people were dynamic narratives where I didn't have to say a lot but merely by asking short open ended questions sparked a story telling from a young person. However there were differences between the participants. I would say the biggest difficulty when carrying out the interviews

came in a form of 12-13 year old boys. Most boys in this age group, apart from one or two exceptions, were a lot quieter and more inhibited to talk than for example their female counterparts. However this didn't come as a huge surprise since I am fairly experienced working with young people and could prepare for that. Valentine (2005) states that appropriate background research to the topic or those interviewed is always desired. Hence before each interview I carefully went through my camp notes to make sure that I remembered and could share specific stories of that individual, or reminded myself of their particular interests, this seemed to help to get the interviews going more fluidly.

In a similar manner my chosen language and the way I framed the questions depended on the age and the maturity of the respondent. As Scott (2008) points out the language used should be at a level of the cognitive development of the child interviewee. For example the older interviewees I could ask "What does CHICKS mean to you" whereas the younger ones I would ask to describe CHICKS. At times during an interview the young person's home life or background would come up. Those were the times when I practised non-judgemental reflexive listening and felt like I managed to successfully navigate through these interview spaces and gather rich data. Having outlined the interview process with the young people I will now move on to the referral agents.

Due to practical reasons all the referral agents were interviewed on the phone. Over 130 referral agents were initially approached via e-mail asking to participate for the research. This was often followed with a phone call. The 24 who agreed to take part (67% females, 33% males), see figure 3.15. below to ease visualisation, were then sent further information and a consent form before the interview took place. As discussed in relation to the young people this number is acceptable for qualitative research even though Morse (1994, in Mason, 2010) suggests that for ethnography the number of interviewees should be between 30-60. However since the referral agents alone did not construct my research sample I am confident that this number is sufficient.

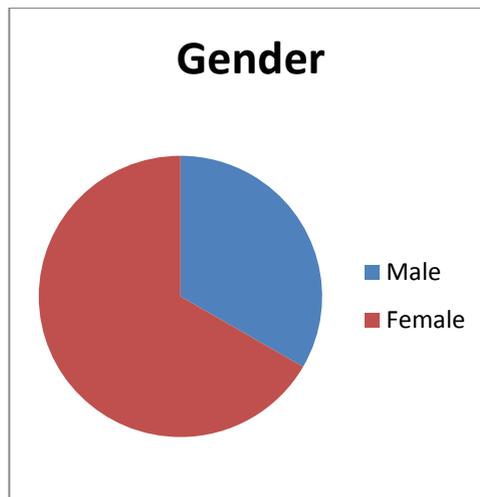


Figure 3.15. The gender distribution of the referral agents (Source: Author).

To gain a broad perspective from different points of view I made sure that I approached professionals working in different institutions and organisations (see figure 3.16). As can be seen the biggest group of the referral agents interviewed were social workers. As a side note, they also seemed to be the “strictest” gatekeepers in terms of interview access to the young people. Perhaps this was quite understandable since their working environment is very sensitive.

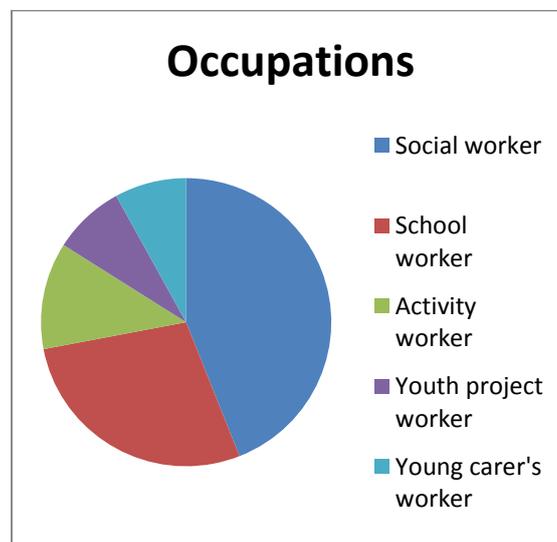


Figure 3.16. The occupational distribution of the referral agents (Source: Author).

Overall the recruitment process wasn't without its challenges since I frequently encountered non-response to my e-mails or phone calls. But again what seemed to encourage a better response rate was when my e-mail was re-sent by a

CHICKS employee. Due to the time constraints of their jobs the majority of these interviews were relatively short (Table 3.7.). In cases where time was especially restricted, the focus was put on one or two central topics determined by the interviewee.

Table 3.8. The durations of the phone interviews with referral agents (Source: Author).

Number of interviews	The length range	Average length
24	14 min 10 sec	21 min 9 sec
	↓	
	38 min 35 sec	

Also the volunteer interviews were carried out on the phone for practical reasons and recorded straight onto a computer. The majority of the volunteers interviewed had attended a camp with me which allowed me to approach them in the first place either via e-mail or the interview details were agreed on the camp. There was only one volunteer I interviewed with whom I had not been on camp with. In that case I sent the consent form beforehand, for others I already had one from their camp. A total of 29 volunteers were interviewed. Figure 3.17. below helps to visualise that the majority of the volunteers (62% females, 38% males) were between the ages 20-39 (62%) but other age groups were also represented. The age range here (figure 3.18.) is representative of the overall CHICKS volunteers since majority of them are between 20-39 years of age.

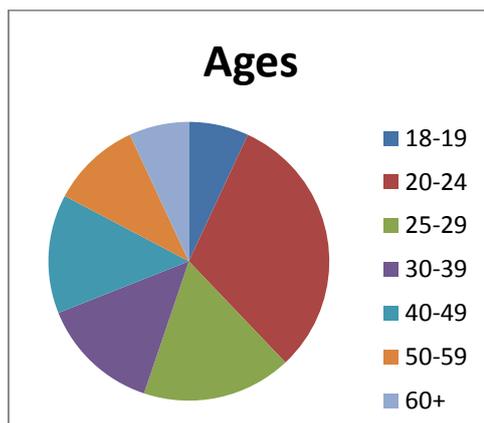


Figure 3.17. The range of ages of the volunteers interviewed (Source: Author)

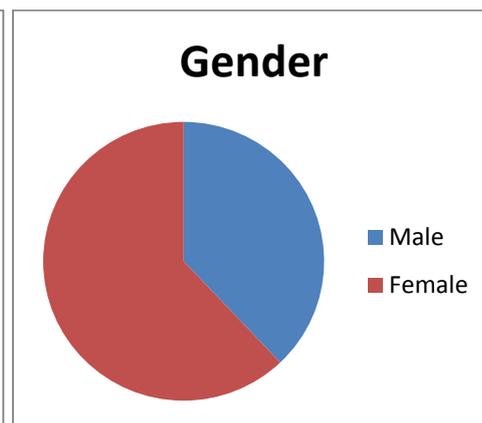


Figure 3.18. The gender distribution of volunteers interviewed (Source: Author).

As can be seen from the table 3.9. below the volunteer interviews were longer in average than the referral agent interviews. This of course doesn't necessarily mean stronger data, but is more likely to be a reflection of lesser time constraints.

*Table 3.9. The durations of the phone interviews with the volunteers (Source: Author).*

Number of interviews	The length range	Average length
29	20 min 07 sec	42 min 35 sec
	↓	
	58 min 49 sec	

All the staff interviews were carried out on training/office days face to face rather than on camp where the time would have been difficult to find. All the staff members (8 females, 6 males) were eager to share their experiences, but due to time constraints some of these interviews had to be kept to ~30 minutes. The breakdown of the durations can be seen below.

*Table 4.10. The durations of the interviews with the staff (Source: Author).*

Number of interviews	The length range	Average length
14	23 min 46 sec	40 min 38 sec
	↓	
	78 min 58 sec	

Below I will introduce the other methods I used in this research as part of the ethnographic approach. Visual images can be powerful and meaningful and have the ability to create landscapes and insights into the lived experience that could otherwise be non-accessible (Aitken and Craine, 2005). I strongly felt that by incorporating visual methods into my data collection would further enhance my understanding of the CHICKS experience. For decades children's drawings have been a means to analyse and treat in the field of psychology and psychiatry (e.g. Alvarez and Phillips, 1998). It is commonly thought that through drawing children can express themselves on a qualitatively different level and safely explore themselves and their feelings as well as work through issues (Malchiodi, 1998). To access these sometimes hidden feelings and emotions I used the CHICKS camp diaries (see figure 3.19.) as a means of data collection (only those participants' diaries with a signed consent were photocopied). The young people

filled these every night on camp hence it was a method that was already incorporated into the everyday activities and did not require special arrangements.

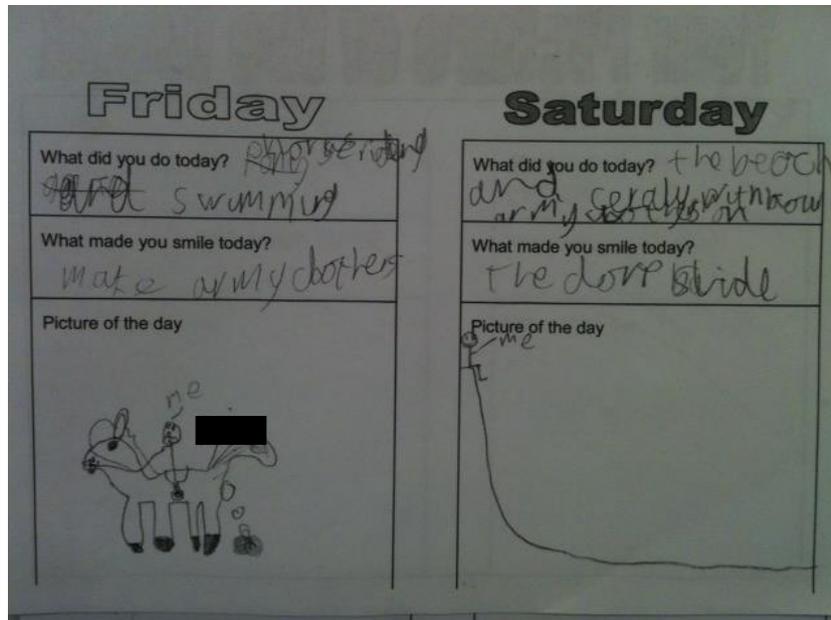


Figure 3.19. An extract from Noel's (12) camp diary (SOURCE: CHICKS).

Also when an opportunity on camp rose I encouraged the young people to draw, write or craft about their experiences of CHICKS. This would typically be done either after breakfast before the morning activity or when we returned on-site in the afternoon. I would approach a young person/people who had consented, remind them of the research aims and ask if they would like to do anything creative for me to demonstrate their CHICKS experience. The operational challenge here was the time constraints during camp where often for these types of *free play sessions* there was only 30 minutes or so and many young people elected to spend that time in a more active way most commonly playing outside. Thus these sessions did not produce as much data as I had hoped for.

When instructing the young people at these sessions I intentionally kept the instructions brief and non-specific so not to influence the natural creativity. Carr and Vandiver (2003) discovered that when children living in temporary shelters were given few instructions the art that they produced was well expressed, creative and less chaotic in comparison with the art produced with more

instruction. The art produced at CHICKS varied from drawings and poems to badges and little ice-cream stick people as demonstrated in figure 3.20.



*Figure 3.20. Piece of art produced during an art session I organised (SOURCE: Author).*

To further employ the young people as researchers (Jones, 2004), thus giving them the opportunity to be active participants, on a few occasions I asked some young people to take photographs of the places that appealed to them. This was done similarly to the art projects where I would approach those consented, remind them of the research and asked if they would like to participate. If they chose to participate I gave them a disposable camera for the duration of the camp. When off-site I would carry these for the young people and hand them out if asked by the young person. This was a visual method that has been successfully used with children and young people (e.g. Castonguay and Jutras, 2009). However, once again time constraints proved too difficult for this method to work efficiently. Free time at CHICKS is a precious commodity and many young people preferred to spend theirs in other ways. Even when I did manage to recruit some keen photographers the access to interview that particular young person could then not be organised so these photos were not used at interviews, but could of course still produce valuable visual data. I will now move on to discussing the use of

social media and online questionnaires as means for data collection and briefly discuss the debate surrounding the use of “netnography” in research. As Kaplan and Haenlan (2010) point out the world today is full of opportunities for electronic lives and the use of different social media sites have been launched in the last few years. This then opens up interesting possibilities for new innovative research methods. *Netnography* is a term given for most often qualitative research methods that collect data from peoples’ use of social networking sites, blogs and different discussion forums (Janta et al., 2010). Since many people now a days are very active users of the internet the biggest advantage of using netnography as a research technique is that it gives the researcher a nearly unlimited access to research participants hence reducing the problem of getting people to respond (Langer and Beckman, 2005). The flipside of this, and the reason for debate, is that netnography is often used covertly i.e. the internet users are unaware of their communication being used for research, this then obviously raises a whole host of ethical issues (Janta et al., 2010).

Within this research I used social media (Facebook) as a supplementary means for data collection, the main gain being a greater access to participants. I did this by introducing myself and my research on the Facebook page and by monitoring peoples’ posts. In a similar manner I monitored the online questionnaires for referral agents and volunteers and even devised some of the questions. When following the link to the questionnaire people were advised that their responses could be used in my research hence the decision to continue to the questionnaire was taken as a consent. However I did not use any of this data within this thesis nor was it really included in the data analysis since I felt it did not reveal anything new, surprising or contradictory to my data.

### **3.7. Analysis**

The final part of this methodology chapter as well as in the research process itself was the analysis. As is often customary in ethnographic research I also had many diverse data sets produced by the different methods used. One of the big challenges in ethnographical research is to order and starting to make sense of it all. In particular throughout the research process care was taken to establish context and validity. The concepts of validity and reliability sit very comfortably within quantitative research but perhaps less so in qualitative research (Golafshani, 2003). However triangulation is a methodological technique used in qualitative (social science) research to ensure greater validity and credibility (Guion, Diehl and McDonald, 2011). Triangulation refers to looking at any particular phenomena from different standpoints, thus providing more comprehensive knowledge and cross-checks to the data (Guion, Diehl and McDonald, 2011). In this research triangulation was established by using different types of methods as well as focusing on different groups of people, this way achieving a more complete picture of the research arena.

In quantitative research concepts of validity and reliability are always checked statistically to determine the significance of the research findings. Furthermore quantitative researchers are also concerned whether or not their experiments are replicable or generalizable. In qualitative research, such as this, where the focus is on the particular and unique group of people and on their experiences those principles as such do not apply. Since although it is important for us to understand the experiences of these young people at CHICKS we cannot say that there are universal features between theirs and everybody else's experiences of CHICKS. Also if the project would be replicated, even with the same participants and researcher, it is likely that the results would be different to some extent because after all people are dynamic entities, always changing and developing. If the exact same methods would be used exactly in the manner I have discussed in this chapter some replication might be achieved but when mapping out people's

unique experiences replication is not really the end goal like it might be in quantitative research.

Baxter and Eyles (1997) suggest multiple ways of increasing or establishing methodological strength in research with young people. For example they argue that there should be multiple methods as well as a sound rationale for the methodology. Furthermore they call for information on the selected young people, quotations, details about interview practises and immersion/lengthy fieldwork. As can be seen earlier in this chapter all of those requirements were fulfilled within this research. Moreover this research was set within existent literature and hence was theoretically and empirically valid (e.g. Crang and Cook, 2007). Second I have left behind a traceable paper trail as well as a written account in a way that explains my reasoning and logistically consistent thinking.

Pulling the vast amounts of data together is a process that is creative at the same time as it is structured (Cook, 2005). That notion captures well the *controlled chaos* that was this data analysis embedded in sound techniques, but not constrained by them. There are multiple different methodologies for analysing qualitative data sets such as content analysis, grounded theory and interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) (e.g. Willig, 2001). All those methods have a unique way of interpreting, re-contextualising and making sense of the data. The fact that I had many different data sets from many different groups that were all full of diverse emotional geographies made the analysis challenging. The challenge then was to find a method for the analysis that would allow me to see into that data, and make sense of it in a meaningful way that captures the essence of how, what and why of the CHICKS experience.

Alvesson's (2000) approach to reflexivity fits here well to explain the data analysis technique used in this research. Furthermore it describes the reasoning behind multiple techniques and approaches. Alvesson (2000) emphasises careful interpretation and reflection when conducting data analysis. He sees reflexivity in data analysis as interpretation of interpretation i.e. double hermeneutics. In other words he places emphasis on careful examination of not just the data sets but also the inferences, assumptions and conclusions the researcher makes about

those data sets. Further he argues that one can only discover mystery within data by using intuition and creativity and deviating from the norm that shackles us onto the data. In a similar vein Law (2004) proposes a method where the data chooses the analysis. Since multiple data sets are often messy there is nothing wrong with using multiple methods to gain best access into the data (Law, 2004). It was in this light that the data analysis was carried out within this project. A creative and open mind-set without self-evident or simple rules or procedures as a guide gave more freedom to the interpretation. Additionally this method expanded my interpretive repertoire by freeing the data thus allowing more theoretical switching if and when required (Alvesson, 2000). The paragraph below outlines the exact procedure.

Initially I started with a thematic analysis by looking at big emerging themes or categories. To be precise the first stage of this was listening and transcribing the interview data. Whilst listening and transcribing I jotted down words, themes and points that were mentioned often, equally differing points were noted down since as Atkinson (2004) notes turning the spoken into written is more than just writing, but rather an actual engagement with the spoken data and the subsequent text produced. As Perakyla (2004) notes, transcription is a skill that can only be mastered after a long training. Although I had some prior experience, I was aware of the fact that I was fairly new to transcribing, hence I paid special attention to the process often listening to parts of recordings more than once, making sure that I had captured the finer nuances of the spoken data. At times I had to ask a native speaking colleague to listen to some parts if I could not understand the pronunciation or the context. As suggested by Atkinson (2004) I transcribed not only the spoken words, but also the pauses, the hesitations, the laughter and the crying. However for practical reasons, since I had hours of recordings, in the later transcriptions I stopped transcribing everything that I had said, unless it played an important part in the interview, but rather wrote down topics that I asked about. Crang and Cook (2007) propose a method where all the data gets chopped, re-ordered and re-contextualised. This could be linked to Alvesson's (2004) reflexivity in the sense that interpretations are further interpreted with creativity and intuition which requires not purely looking at data as already part of

something but as an individual pieces of information before they may or may not be connected. Allowing the creativity in the analysis to emerge the aim was to look at all of my data sets with fresh eyes and a mind free of assumptions, for this reason I didn't analyse any data before it was all transcribed.

As stated before, the thematic analysis started with the transcription process. Thematic analysis is one of the most common ones used in a qualitative research and was appropriate to use here as it aims to identify big themes or categories within the data. Furthermore I wanted to start the analysis by identifying those categories so to have a solid base for the final analysis (Dixon-Woods et al., 2005). I started this process by re-reading of all my material. This is important because it helps the researcher to remember occurrences and to place each bit of data into an accurate context (Crang and Cook, 2007). All of my data at this point was more or less in a written form. I had gone through drawings and photographs (taken by the young people) and scribbled key words on the sides accordingly. Emmison (2004) argues that to use visual data is not so much about it being a separate piece of data as its own entity, but its purpose is to preserve, store and represent information either in congruity or in place of, when text was lacking. Although I agree that it is important to analyse whether the visual data agrees with the written one, but to be truly reflexive is to appreciate visual data on its own as well as a part of a written data. Hence I went through visual material not just looking for recurrent themes but open to surprises.

This thematic part of the analysis aimed to identify patterns and themes that could be translated into categories. At this stage I also used some aspects of Content Analysis to determine the frequency of occurrences of any particular points, this would then allow me to more easily identify the categories. This was done by scribbling keywords etc. on the margins. Once I had gone through all the material I had identified 6 major categories: Nature/Landscape, Love/affection, Care, CHICKS feelings, Memories and New Skills. Next part of the analysis involved colour coding all the transcripts and other forms of data with the new found categories. Figure 4.21. demonstrates one such coding.

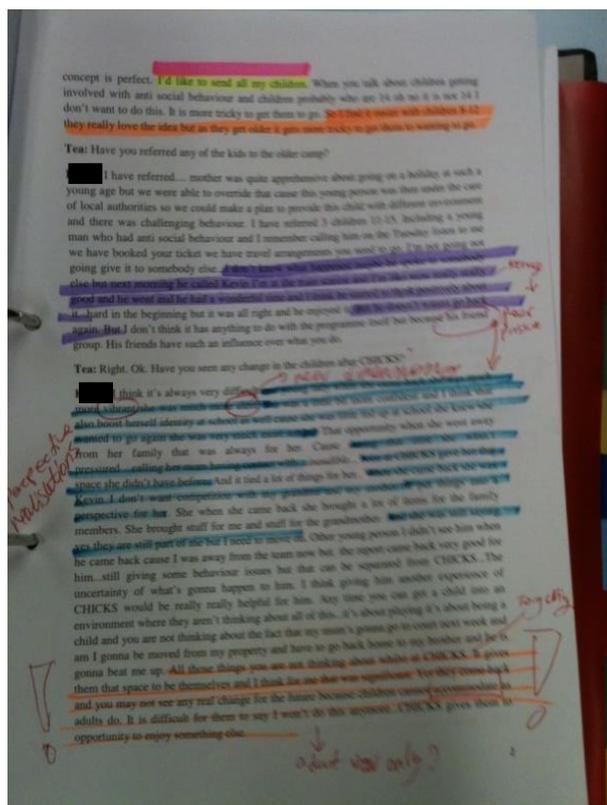


Figure 3.21. Page of an interview transcript with highlights and comments (Source: Author).

I chose to do this by hand instead of using a software, such as N-VIVO, because the lack of (substantial) previous experience, and since learning to do so would have been time consuming (Cook, 2005). Additionally I felt that this kind of engagement with the data rather than a mechanical one allowed better reflexivity.

The next part of the analysis further used the techniques of thematic analysis, but also some aspects of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The next part was simultaneously going through the colour coding by looking at the words scribbled at the earlier stage and by using the technique of IPA; *translating* some of the scribbled words as well as the wider categories into an academic concepts. For example by doing this my category love/affection became geographies of love. IPA is often used in qualitative studies to examine peoples' perceptions on

issues of health and well-being (e.g. Osborn and Smith, 1998, Brocki and Wearden, 2006) so its use was appropriate here. I also continued using the thematic analysis to determine which concepts belonged into which categories. At this stage of the analysis figure 3.22. below was produced.

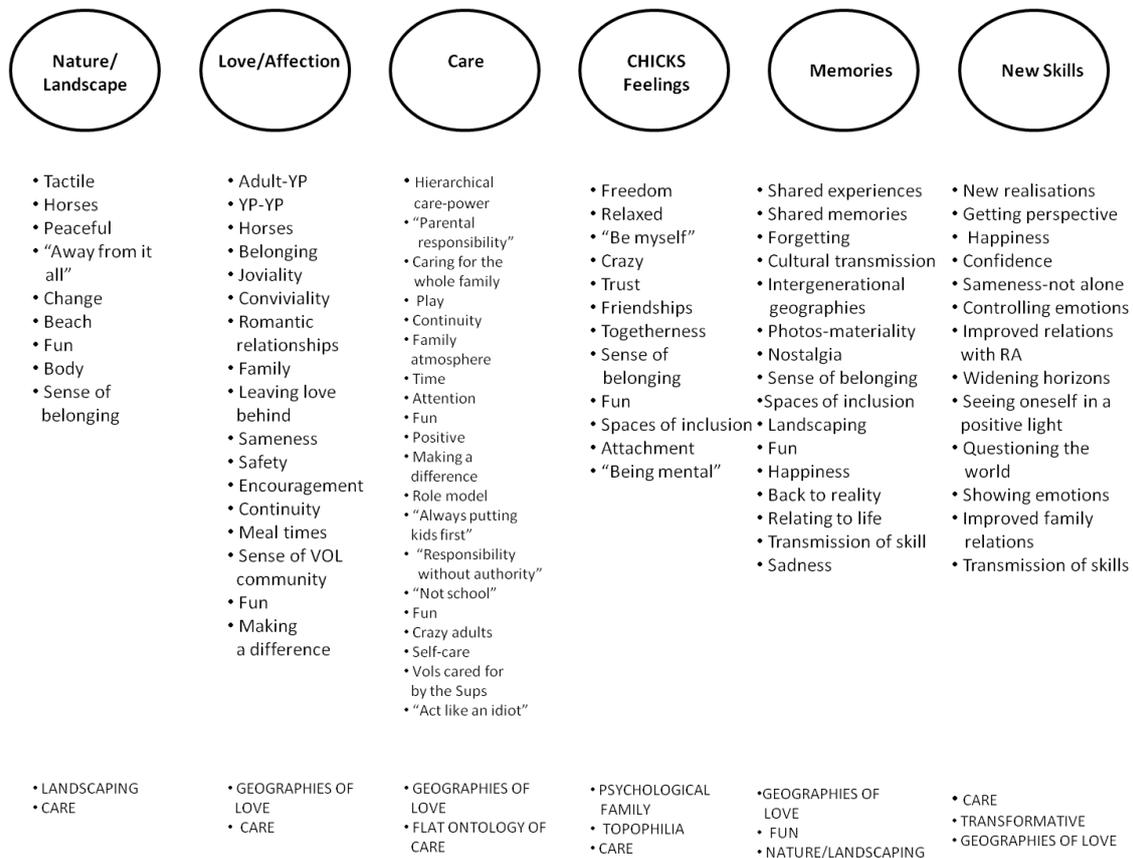


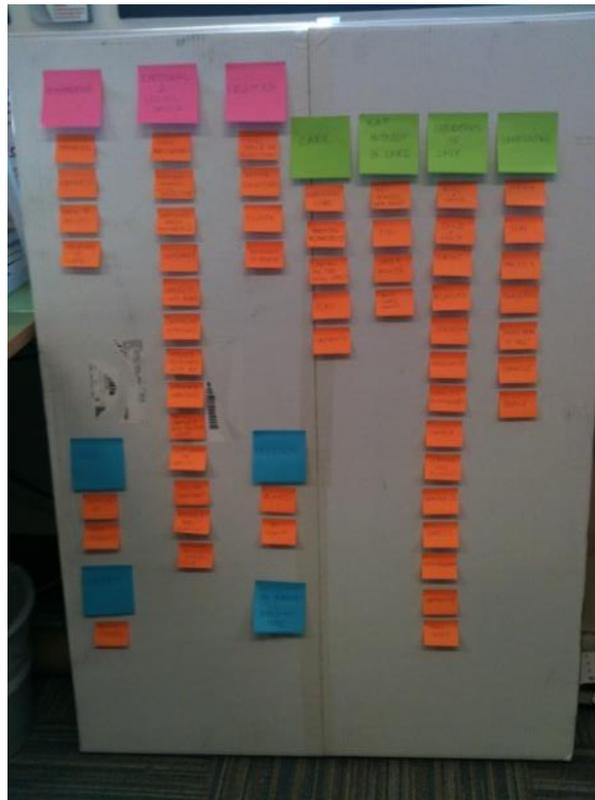
Figure 3.22. A visual representation of the 6 major categories and the themes within (Source: Author).

At this stage I also created tables, as can be seen in Figure 3.23., of each theme with corresponding participants so I knew who had said what related to each theme. Underneath the names of the people the corresponding page numbers were written so that I could then find a passage linked to that theme.

Green	Pink	Yellow	Orange	Purple	Blue
<p>g p 3,7</p> <p>en p 3,7</p> <p>m p 3</p> <p>p 3,4</p> <p>r 1,2</p> <p>l p 3</p> <p>ess p 6</p> <p>di p 3</p> <p>ce p 1</p> <p>ra p 5</p> <p>ta p 2,3</p> <p>nel, p 5,6</p>	<p><del>Sam</del> Danni p 6,4</p> <p>Becky p 3,4</p> <p>Jason p 5</p> <p>Jake p 5</p> <p>Princess p 2,6</p> <p>Sondi p 1</p> <p>Laura p 3,4,5,6</p> <p>Aylan p 1,3</p> <p>Emma p 4,6</p> <p>Jess p 3</p> <p>Kat p 11</p> <p>Jessica p 5</p> <p>Michael p 7</p>	<p>Danni p 6, p 3,4</p> <p>Becky p 2,3,5,8</p> <p>Jason p 5</p> <p>Carman p 10</p> <p>Ally p 2</p> <p>Jim p 1</p> <p>Jake p 1,2,3</p> <p>Princess p 2</p> <p>Sondi p 2,3</p> <p>Reece p 2</p> <p>Laura p 3</p> <p>Aylan p 2</p> <p>Emma p 1,6</p> <p>John p 1</p> <p>Sam p 3,0</p> <p>Jade p 3,8</p> <p>Rachel p 3,8</p> <p>Tom p 8</p> <p>Jessica p 2,3</p> <p>Michael p 2,5</p>	<p>Becky p 1,5,7</p> <p>Carman p 1,6</p> <p>Jason p 7</p> <p>Ally p 1,4</p> <p>Jim p 2</p> <p>Princess p 4</p> <p>Reece p 3,4,5</p> <p>Laura p 3,2,5</p> <p>Dylan p 2,4</p> <p>EM p 1,2</p> <p>Emma p 5</p> <p>John p 2</p> <p>Jess p 6</p> <p>Jade p 2</p> <p>Kat p 4</p> <p>Tom p 14</p> <p>Rachel p 0</p> <p>Sam p 0</p> <p>Jessica p 3</p> <p>Michael p 4,6,9</p>	<p>Becky p 3,6,7</p> <p>Carman p 2,8</p> <p>Jason p 8</p> <p>Ally p 4</p> <p>Jim p 1,2,3</p> <p>Jake p 4</p> <p>Princess p 4,6</p> <p>Reece p 4</p> <p>Laura p 2,6</p> <p>Dylan p 3</p> <p>EM p 1</p> <p>Emma p 3,4,2</p> <p>John p 1,2</p> <p>Jess p 1,4</p> <p>Jade p 5,0</p> <p>Sam p 0,9</p> <p>Kat p 9</p> <p>Tom p 12</p> <p>Jessica p 2,4,6</p> <p>Armani p 2</p> <p>Michael p 5</p>	<p>Danni p 5</p> <p>Becky p 9</p> <p>Jason p 9</p> <p>Carman p 7</p> <p>Jake p 5</p> <p>Princess p 5</p> <p>Reece p 4</p> <p>Laura p 6</p> <p>Dylan p 3,4</p> <p>Emma p 0</p> <p>Tom p 3</p> <p>Kat p 12,0</p> <p>Jade p 0,5</p> <p>Rachel p 0</p> <p>Sam p 0</p> <p>Jessica p 6</p> <p>Armani p 2</p> <p>Michael p 0</p>

Figure 3.23. Passages ordered according to themes (SOURCE: Author).

This process was then followed by a more of a discursive analysis of the actual passages as well as looking for relations and non-relations. Discourse Analysis can be an effective tool to ‘hearing children’s voices’ (Allred and Burman, 2005); to really try and understand how children create the world around them in discourse. A good way of visualising the relationships between categories and themes is to draw diagrams or mind maps (Crang, 2005). I used a data board, pictured below, where I stamped different coloured post-it stickers to separate the themes. Using these stickers allowed me to move them around and so constantly re-organise and re-contextualise my data in an iterative manner.



*Figure 3.23. My analysis board (SOURCE: Author).*

These mind maps helped me to see what and where the genuine connections were, and what were possibly due to coding errors (Crang and Cook, 2007). In addition to my analysis board multiple hand written maps (see figure 3.24.) were drawn to see which categories were related to each other. By doing that it became apparent that although in my initial analysis six categories had emerged the categories love, care and feeling were strongly interlinked to not only to the other three categories but also to each other. Furthermore both fun and forgetting seemed to be concepts that ran through all the three categories. Additionally the idea of memory as an intervention was born by analysing the sub-categories where they all seemed to be pointing at the same direction of fun, well-being, resilience and social capital. Since of the strong connectivity between the key categories as well as the sub-categories I decided to structure the thesis so that all the empirical chapters together as a whole provide answers to the research

questions as well as explain the idea of memory as an intervention rather than any one chapter doing it on its own.

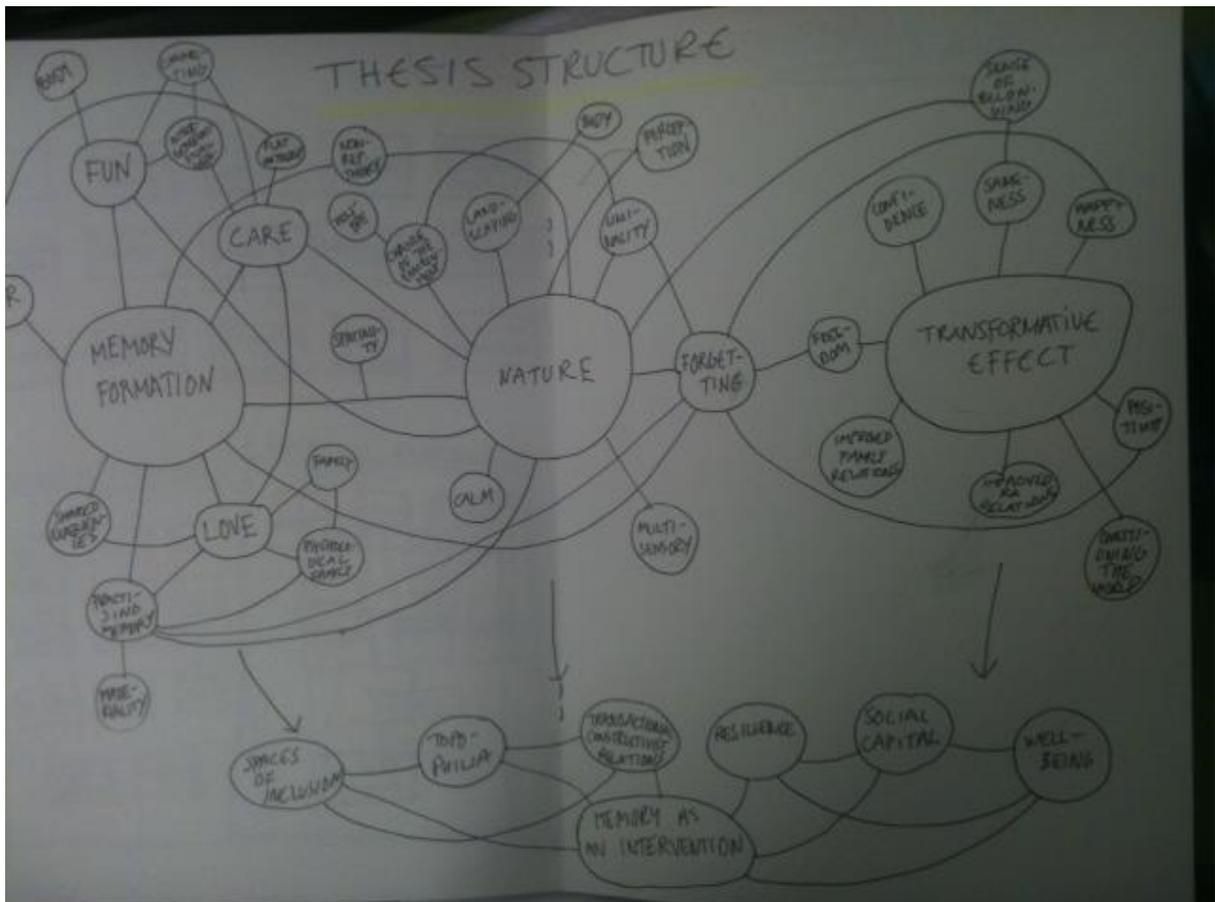


Figure 3.24. Mind map demonstrating the connections between the key points and categories (SOURCE: Author).

As mentioned earlier, methodological triangulation was used as one of the quality assurance checks. Since the multiple methods as well as the multiple sources were producing similar data I could be assured of the quality of the methods used to collect the data. Additionally at the analytical state the iterative-inductive style was applied. In other words I would constantly throughout the analysis go back to the initial text, rather than just looking at my analysis sheets, to make sure that the analysis was a true reflection of the way the participants experienced and described CHICKS.

In terms of the constraints in analysis, English as a foreign language could perhaps be seen as one, since analysing text demands a good knowledge of the

language specific to the way it is being produced. However I would argue that through my involvement with CHICKS, in particular the camps, I had a good understanding of the context and CHICKS specific language (for example the supervisors tended to use same sayings and phrases on each camp). Also when I first started the data collection at the camps I had been in an English speaking environment for more than 6 years. Hence I had a good grasp of the English language. Additionally Alvesson (2000) argues that researchers often struggle to find blind spots in their own language and culture so perhaps this actually worked to my advantage.

### **3.8. Conclusions**

In this chapter I have opened up, discussed and evaluated my chosen methods in ethical, positional, theoretical and analytical frameworks. This way I have opened a gateway to my empirical data that will be discussed in the following next three chapters. This concluding section will draw together the chapter on methodology.

Positionality was one of the key concepts when carrying out this research. I was constantly negotiating and re-negotiating my subject position. Although it takes practice to effectively manage multiple roles and responsibilities the many subject positions can enhance knowledge production if used efficiently. Within this research I had multiple layers of loyalties and responsibilities, and although it was not always easy to navigate through them the fact that I attended so many camps allowed the development and progress of my research skills as well as providing great amounts of data.

One of the keys in ensuring and strengthening the reliability of the data was the building of trust and rapport. Before one endeavours to build a relationship with a particular group of young people I feel that it is vital to build the same level of trust one would build with the actual research participants along with those who have control either over them or over the research arena. In my case by first immersing myself within CHICKS at an office and supervisor level I was able to build relationships that carried over to the actual research arena. In other words by ensuring that I was seen as a trustworthy member of the CHICKS community

I was then trusted to carry out the research with the young people and with their best interests at mind.

Working with, not on people was the key to this research and in this case was relatively easy to do since CHICKS ethos is to do just that. In this type of research though where one is constantly occupying multiple roles, as well as being emotionally involved, frequent reflection of one's thoughts and actions is imperative. Being reflective is a skill like any other and takes practice to master. What helped me were my past experiences from nursing where I was encouraged to practise self-reflection through exercises as well as real life experiences. I would claim that in an environment like CHICKS, or any other unique and emotional research environment, reflection becomes part of critical curiosity.

Intersectional and intergenerational factors get diluted in a research environment that is like CHICKS; less authoritarian and more authoritative. In other words where traditional adult roles do not necessarily apply but where sameness rather than otherness is pervasive. The resilient ways of working with young people at CHICKS opened up research spaces rather than closed them down. In other words access to young peoples' world, and through that to their experiences and feelings, is granted easier if done in ways that young people find respectful and culturally credible.

Therefore it is important for a researcher working with young people to make an effort to know one's participants. Also what helped me to interact rather seamlessly with the opposite sex too was to display some non-traditional gender roles. Since young people can be very sensitive to any un-authenticity this type of behaviour should only be exhibited if it actually portrays the personality of the researcher. Similarly being a foreign researcher can be an asset instead of burden if utilised correctly, providing that the language and cultural knowledge are at adequate level. Additionally for an adult researcher to enter the spaces of young people can be difficult. In a purpose built environment like CHICKS it was less challenging because the atmosphere as well as the physical spaces invited

everyone to explore and play which then further helped the gathering of rich data as well as writing a rich account.

In this research, as in any sensitive and unique research setting, carrying out the research is a delicate balance of ethics, positionality and knowledge production. Ethnographical methods allowed more of this flexibility than quantitative methods would have. Time constraints at CHICKS however perhaps prevented the use of more creative research methods. However ethnographical methods still allowed a richer glimpse into the lived experience on camps than for example a questionnaire would have.

Access to interviews with young people as well as referral agent recruitment was extremely challenging and even frustrating at times. In hindsight the best approach might have been from the onset to initiate this contact through CHICKS and do it mainly by telephone rather than the email since those two approaches seemed to yield the best results. The interviews themselves ran relatively smoothly and I managed to navigate through sensitive spaces as well as spaces of silence effectively. In terms of the young people, a big help was the already existing relationship built at CHICKS as well as active engagement and listening.

Using a multitude of methods can be confusing but also allows triangulation hence strengthening the reliability and validity of the data produced. Similarly analysing masses of different types of data is always challenging and it wasn't without those challenges in this research either. But with careful reflective engagement and re-engagement with the data, as well as iterative inductive practise, helped me to open up the data so that it reflected, to the best of its ability, the true experiences of the participants.

The next chapter on care and memory formation will be the first of three empirical chapters in this thesis. It will bring many of the methods discussed here into light as well as give context to them.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Memory Formation within the Emotional Landscapes of CHICKS**

In the last chapter I discussed the various methodological techniques used within this research in order to unravel the research aims and explore the various landscapes of care at CHICKS. In this first of three empirical chapters I will begin to unpick the memory formation processes by looking into the emotional landscapes of CHICKS. I will do this by providing a rich evidence based account of those CHICKS experiences and observations that together form part of the memory formation as well as simultaneously demonstrating how the young people utilise their narratives of CHICKS as well as visual reminders to sustain the memories. Furthermore this chapter will illustrate how the emotional landscapes at CHICKS are created and how they influence both memory formation and recall. However all the concepts and themes discussed in this thesis are strongly interconnected, making it challenging to simply focus on one theme or topic at the time. Hence occasional references will be made to the later chapters. The current chapter will focus on the emotional landscapes of care within memory formation.

My aim here is to illustrate here how memory is mobilised into the practice of 'active care' both in the creation of memories as well as the recall of affect. Further, this chapter illustrates how memories are infused with the 'now' as much as the 'then' and are in a state of temporal and spatial becoming, often without intentionality. This understanding of memory and identity affects the ways in which young people understand themselves, sociality and the spaces they encounter. Further arguments will be displayed before each section of the memory formation process. In addition to this I will also explain how one builds onto the other.

#### **4.1. Creation of memories at CHICKS**

In this section I will draw from the empirical data to explain and examine the memory formation processes embedded in active care on CHICKS camps. This chapter focuses on the emotional geographies created at CHICKS and their

relation to memory whereas the next chapter will expand this investigation on memory formation to include spatiality of care especially the natural environment. Together these two chapters will demonstrate that new memories at CHICKS are produced in a complex web of social transactional interactions not only with CHICKS staff and volunteers but through an emotional engagement with rural/natural places. Furthermore in this chapter I will show how memory is mobilised into active care and hence start to be conceptualised as an intervention.

First I will discuss the production of fun at CHICKS relating it to how young people perform, experience and embody fun whilst on a CHICKS camp. I will then demonstrate how those geographies of fun aid in producing a particular landscape of power that fosters co-operation rather than resistance. Together that particular landscape of power and fun allow the emergence of landscape of care that is organised in a flat manner with multiple centres and directions. And finally that then further produces geographies of love which open up various emotional landscapes for memory formation and recall.

#### **4.2.1. Fun Memories-Memories of Fun**

This first section is about the production, display, performance and perception of fun at CHICKS. Fun seems like a logical place from which to begin, since it is probably the most visible aspect of CHICKS as well as possibly the most cited word in conjunction with CHICKS. However there was also another data driven reason; throughout the analysis of the memory formation the word fun appeared scribbled on the margins or written in bold letters thus becoming apparent that it would be one of the central concepts within memory formation (and sustainability). Hence this section argues that fun is the base, the platform for memory formation at CHICKS which allows both the emergence of the geographies of love and flat ontology of care as well as the efficient use of adult power. Furthermore it is argued here that fun at CHICKS becomes embodied, internalised and shared hence going beyond a temporally limited experience but rather creating a longer lasting effect. This section on fun is deliberately longer than the other sections because it is the underlying construct on which everything else is built on and hence deserves a thorough investigation.

When, for the first time ever in February 2010 I was taken around the Moorland retreat by the CHICKS executives, it was truly exciting. Every corner of CHICKS seemed like an invitation to do something fun, as can be seen from the photos below. By the time I was taken outside to see the trampolines I had to exercise serious self-control to not to run off and have a bounce. Since part of the main ethos of CHICKS is to offer a fun holiday for those who attend it is not surprising that the purpose built environment is full of opportunities for enjoyment.



*Figure 4.1. Coastal retreat's main play areas; an indoor play barn (left) and trampoline barn (right) (Source: CHICKS).*

Powell (2009) writes about Johan Huizinga's (1950) observations of Greenlandic Inuit Society's spaces of play and quotes Huizinga "One of the most important characteristics of play was its spatial separation from ordinary life. A closed space is marked out for it, either materially or ideally, hedged off from everyday surroundings. Inside this space the play proceeds, inside it the rules obtain." (1950:19). Both CHICKS centres are removed from the everyday in a secluded rural location in a world that is not only spatially different but has a totally unique emotional landscape where silliness, excitement and joy are constant occurrences and where laughter and yelps of glee are the most common sounds. Below is a short narrative from Becky recalling a sunny Sunday afternoon during her CHICKS camp.

*“Team games in the garden were so funny. The tube that had holes in it (laughs)...and the water fight... The guys in the office (laughs) and we were like I don’t know who you are (laughs)...and it was like ha ha ha. It was amazing; I loved it and definitely go again”.*

*Personal Interview with Becky, 14*

She is referring here to a team game where each team has to fill a plastic tube full of holes with water. The team who fills their tube first wins the game so the holes need to be blocked with various body parts such as fingers, legs and tongues. After the tube game an impromptu water fight broke out with two unsuspecting CHICKS office workers in suits caught in the middle. This was unusual maybe outside of CHICKS, but a rather ordinary event on a camp and something that even a year later brought a huge smile on Becky’s face and made her laugh so hard she had trouble getting her words out. I joined in with her reminiscence of the water fight and soon we were both giggling at the memory. Blythe and Hassenzahl (2003) describe fun as a fleeting and amorphous experience during which we experience a temporary disengagement from the self, allowing separation from worries and troubles. They argue as a fleeting experience fun is short lived and temporary. Although I agree with their notion of temporary disengagement I argue that even brief moments of fun can leave emotional traces that surface weeks, months, years later hence making fun a much more than a temporary experience but instead something that can have longer lasting effects. This fun becoming more than fun will be discussed in detail later on in this chapter.

Fun and play tend to be associated with certain places such as playgrounds or children’s rooms. Punch (2000) discusses the ability of children in rural Bolivia to create their own play places as a means of demonstrating their spatial independence from adults. Similarly Matthews et al. (2000) noted that many public areas such as community playgrounds are appealing to young people because they are out of the gaze of adults and create spaces of social inclusion with peers. In their investigation into commercial playgrounds McKendrick et al. (2000) noted that although designed for children those playgrounds tended to be very adult led although the adults rarely took part in play. Also these playgrounds

were often intended for younger children suggesting that older children might not enjoy such places.

CHICKS differs from these observations into children's spaces of fun and play in many ways. Firstly, at CHICKS the adults are in the middle of the play, blending in (on occasion it was even difficult to physically distinguish the adults from the young people), laughing, joking and very much being part of the experience hence blurring the line between an adult and child space. Secondly, although there are rules and power relations, as will be discussed later in this chapter, the young people are very much encouraged to use the space whether on or off site in whichever way they like (within reason) reducing the adult control over space. Thirdly, the use of these play spaces on and off site seemed to be equally enjoyed by the younger (8-11) as well as the older (12-15) age group. These shared spaces of fun shone through at interviews with the young people like in this dialogue with Football Man (FM). FM is a young man with learning difficulties who could hardly contain his excitement when talking about CHICKS. This is what he told me before I had had a chance to ask anything.

*Tea: So have you decided on the name for me? (Note: I asked the young people to choose a pseudonym for themselves at the onset of each interview).*

*Football Man: Yeah Football Man cause I played football and I played pool with Jeremiah (volunteer) every day, remember? And I played around with... When we went to Crealy (a theme park), that was classic. I wanna go back to CHICKS. I have only been once. I really miss Lynn (supervisor). And Charlie (supervisor) yeah... I bet Jeremiah is missing me. Well the good thing about CHICKS is that the food was brilliant. The trampolines... I got a bigger trampoline home, it takes my whole garden. The best thing I loved about CHICKS is playing pool. I liked all of it.*

*Tea: Anything negative about CHICKS?*

*Football Man: No it was fun. I like the buses. What was Charlie's bus called... Yeah Imogen... Aarrgh (shouts excitedly)... Can't remember but the buses were brilliant.*

*Personal Interview with Football Man, 12*

FM here makes multiple references to the adults on his camp and the shared activities as well as the enjoyment. His thoughts and memories seem to bounce from one thing to another from activities to people to food to the minibuses whilst he is shifting and moving on his seat and wildly gesticulating with his hands as if

he is back at CHICKS doing all the activities he is talking about. The movement and visible excitement might also have something to do with the fact that FM has an Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and has been described by his teachers to be emotionally younger than his 12 years. Greenfield (2000) argues that the conscious thought processes of an adult act as a buffer of some sort when trying to recall childhood events and hence inhibit the access to the “buzzing, booming, confusion” of a child’s thought. As scattered and buzzing as FM’s memories seem to be he certainly did not seem confused but made statements that seemed to make sense to him. Bell (2003) argues that our memory resides within and is shaped by both social circumstances as well as personality. So FM’s recall is erratic and excited because he is too. And maybe he brings up food because it was in a stark contrast to what he eats at home or might be that he is really interested in food in general and maybe he remembered the trampolines because he has one at home. These things reside in him and are him and CHICKS resides in him. The bigger point I am making here in relation to the concept of fun is that fun can also reside within in a variety of forms depending on the person. This embodiment of fun and the recall processes will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. For now I want to highlight the role of fun in these recollections.

Harker (2005) described a brief joyful affect flowing through him and the children he was observing in a classroom. At CHICKS those occurrences were rather regular and usually occurred at the end of an activity or a game where the fun experienced during the activity seemed to culminate to one moment. One such moment is described below.

*“Canoeing. There was quite a lot of apprehension at first. Kayla didn’t wanna do it at first and Tess started crying when playing fruit salad<sup>4</sup>. But it turned into a shared fun experience! Almost like electrifying joy/fun swept over covering everyone when we swam in the lake. Shared experience and bonding.”*

*Research Diary extract 30.04.2010*

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<sup>4</sup> *Fruit salad is a game played with kayaks. The boats get tied together and every boat gets assigned a fruit. The instructor then yells names of fruit and people then have to swap places accordingly between the boats.*



*Figure 4.2. Photo of Michael and I swimming in the lake after kayaking sharing a fun moment between us but also with the rest of the camp as described above (Source: CHICKS).*

Shared experiences do not necessarily produce shared or collective memories in the same sense that a historical event for example might but still have the capacity to connect people to each other (Kong, 1999). At CHICKS I argue that fun is the driving force of this connection. When interviewing Michael at his school without prompting from me he described the same event that is photographed above.

*“You went down with me and I liked it at the end of canoeing cause there was this ball and we had to jump and try and get it and I did it but I missed it and then I dropped. When you did it yeah...when I did it...when I did it you were underneath me and I didn’t go and you said come on I’ll catch you so I just went wiuhhh and...”*

*Personal Interview with Michael, 9*

He used a different rhetoric than I would have to describe the experience. His focus was on the activity of trying to touch a ball tied to a tree above a lake whilst jumping in the lake whereas my focus in my field notes was the shared bond. However he is also describing our shared moment of me encouraging him to jump in and promising to catch him. We shared a moment and for as long as we

remember, it will remain. Stern (2004) discusses present moments in relation to a novel type of psychotherapy bringing about change through present shared moments. He writes: "During these moments "a real experience" emerges, somewhat unexpectedly. This experience happens between two (or more people). It is about their relationship. It occurs in the very short period of time that is experienced as *now*. That *now* is a present moment with a duration in which a micro-drama, an emotional story, about their relationship unfolds. This jointly lived experience is mentally shared, in the sense that person intuitively partakes into an experience of the other" (2004:22). Further Stern (2004) argues how these moments are encoded into memory so as long as Michael and I remember that shared moment the experience lives within us and stirs and wakens those emotional and affective landscapes.

Those shared moments however weren't always bathed in bonding and affection. This is what happened at one camp pick up on the minibus when three 15 year old boys unknown to each other were collected from the train station into the waiting minibus.

*"Seamus hops on. Ronald continues telling stories about drugs, fights, knives, delighted when he realizes he has people's attention. Wallace comes on. "Fight" for the alpha male begins. I'm dancing, tapping my foot to the music on my seat. Ronald goes "You are embarrassing". And a second later "You are seriously starting to bug me now".*

*Research Diary Extract 31.03.2011*

I found Ronald's aggressive response to my dancing surprising. Perhaps he wanted to play it cool in front of the other older boys but he had been at CHICKS the previous year and thus was aware of the routine of partying on the minibus. On the following morning Ronald was sent home because of his disruptive behaviour. The reason I wanted to share this story here was to question what had happened to prevent Ronald from being able to embrace the fun? Maybe he wasn't able to let his 'cool' exterior to drop. And even after the countless efforts, from the supervisors and volunteers on that first day, to engage him in fun-filled and funny activities he did not improve his behaviour (he swore at people, was being disrespectful and set the fire alarms off with a secretly smuggled lighter) and so had to be sent away. In addition to this incident I witnessed two cases

where a young person opted to leave on the first/second day due to home sickness. Could it be that in all of these cases the fun could not find its way to penetrate? However most shared moments at CHICKS are positive and happen in multiple directions. They can occur between the young people or between the volunteers, as we will see later on in the section of geographies of love, but now I want to focus on the adults and their relationships with the young people and in particular the role of the adult in the production of fun.

When I attended my first camp at CHICKS in March 2010 I wasn't entirely sure what to expect from the whole experience not just in research terms but as being part of CHICKS. However I was confident in my ability to interact with the young people having worked with children for years in a variety of settings. The field notes from that very first camp reveal that despite all of my experience I initially struggled in my role as a CHICKS volunteer.

*"Kids definitely starting to come together (more so than the volunteers). People have different child rearing practises. I personally struggle with the volunteer position. Lunch was quite chaotic, the volunteers could not really control the kids!"*  
*Research Diary Extract 05.03.2010*

*"At Crealy: Quite difficult to stop the kids in your group running all over the place"*  
*Research Diary Extract 06.03.2010*

I remember those first moments well and the frustration of what I felt was not having clear boundaries or frames to work within. I kept feeling like I was failing when I was not able to control the young peoples' excitement and even at lunch they kept shouting loudly between tables and turning and twisting on their seats. By the third or fourth camp I was the one running at Crealy urging the young people to follow me. I had internalised the CHICKS way of caring for young people.

However I was not the only adult finding it difficult to embrace the fun(ny) atmosphere and care at CHICKS. Volunteer Harry was one of them. This is what he told me during an interview:

*“That took me by surprise initially was the style the camp was run that it was run almost like a very child centred in terms of very Blue Peter-esque... It is very loud very sort of in your face. At first I was very sceptical of that... I don’t know... I guess I was expecting more discipline but it worked and I could see how underneath cause my first impression was that that it is showing lack of organisation but that wasn’t the case and actually they have tried and tested it and it does really work and the kids respond to it well. It is rewarding if you just go with it. Bonding process was so quick...it was effective and that surprised me....they said how they bring kids back to being a child and I suppose it served that function as well. Usually the cool gets into a way but after a few days the kids enjoy it. And that was the case for me to I suppose cause I am not that old so my first response is to be a bit standoff-ish...”*

*Personal Interview with Volunteer Harry, 24*

This demonstrates well the style in which these camps are run and the atmosphere that is created over and over again camp after camp. It is loud and it is in your face and it takes adaptation to be able to function in it but it creates emotional bonds (as shown earlier) and is rewarding. All the volunteers that I interviewed had had fun on their camp regardless of these role struggles like described above by Harry (more on this when discussing the landscapes of power). Whereas at times seemingly chaotic style was a surprise and hard work for Harry, Olivia below found the whole experience rather relaxing and described it as a holiday.

*“It was like a holiday to me to be honest. A break from usual work. I don’t really do stuff like that on a holiday. To be there with a group of kids and to know that you are there just to have fun. All the activities and stuff.”*

*Personal interview with volunteer Olivia, 29*

Olivia wasn’t the only volunteer who described the camps as a holiday for the adults too. I personally was always rather surprised by this choice of words and conceptualisation since after all going to CHICKS is a voluntary working position. But although I personally saw CHICKS as work I can relate to the feeling of fun and at times a total disengagement from the “real life” and its stressors as Hazel (2005) notes holidays provide. The picture of me on the next page is a good demonstration of this complete disconnection from the everyday. Henderson (1979, in Henderson, 1984) investigated the perception of volunteerism amongst 4H (global youth organisation focused on teaching citizenship) -volunteers in Minnesota and discovered that only 6% characterised their volunteerism as work,

8% as purely leisure and 86% saw it comprising both. Henderson (1984) points out that leisure is a subjective state of mind and as such could mean a variety of things to different people. So in this light the adults conceptualising CHICKS as leisure or a holiday is not that surprising especially when the emphasis is on activities that many of us associate with leisure.



*Figure 4.3. Me embracing the fun on camp (Source: CHICKS).*

Whether a volunteer conceptualised CHICKS as work or leisure we were all told over and over again that the most important thing we can do to help on camp is to be with the young people as much as possible and “get stuck in” with absolutely everything. And although it was well understood by the supervisors that all the volunteers are different and valued in their own way, from the behind the scene discussions I overheard when filling in as a supervisor I could deduce that those volunteers who really embraced the silliness and “got stuck in” seemed to be particularly valued. This is not to suggest that the input by everyone was not appreciated but highlights the importance that was placed on not only on the active engagement with the young people but on the displays of fun and silly behaviour. The two quotes below from supervisors Marvin and Beth describing a good volunteer demonstrate this emphasis on getting involved and embracing the spirit of CHICKS.

*“Everyone who gives up their time is important enough... People who come with an open mind. And they get stuck in...Playing with kids or washing cups and getting to know everyone. And relax... You do get all sorts of experiences but I don’t think any experience is a bad experience I think it is a learning curve for yourself and for that person.”*

*Personal Interview with Supervisor Beth*

*“To get into the spirit of it. It can take a while that is fine. To get involved and put the kids first... Volunteers coming up for food before the kids no no... You would go last in your table, you eat whatever is left. Large amount of them won’t do that.”*

*Personal Interview with Supervisor Marvin*

Beth and Marvin here seem to be describing a certain type of a person who would be a successful volunteer. Someone who first and foremost puts the young people first and willingly gets involved with everything. They do not explicitly mention funny or fun demeanour as a desirable trait but “getting stuck in “ and “getting into the spirit of it” suggest that an ideal volunteer would be someone who is willing to engage in silliness since that is the spirit of CHICKS. The three narratives below from a personal interview, diary room chat and a focus group illustrate that fun and silliness as traits seem to be leaving strong memory traces in the young people attending CHICKS camps.

*“Matthew, Lynn and Colin (naming the supervisors from his previous camp). Yeah Colin didn’t really do much (he stayed behind as the camp support). Matthew was nuts. He was off his tree... yes in a good way. He went to Crealy dressed up as a girl; he had a bra and everything. Red dress and make up and people kept looking at him in the car. I don’t really remember much about Lynn. I remember Matthew cause he was nuts.”*

*“People who work here are funny and crazy... Most of them are anyway like you... you are crazy, you hug poles and you think chickens are vegetables”.*

*Personal Interview with Jim, 13*

*Tea: How did you find the supervisors?*

*Oliver: All they are totally mad. Funny, but still mad. They are so energetic! We are so knackered but they are still dancing and stuff.*

*Diary room chat, Oliver, 14*

*Tea: Who you remember the most?*

*Rachel: Brian (supervisor). Not normal.*

*Tea: Not normal in a nice way?*

*Rachel: Yeah.*  
*Tea: Why you remember him?*  
*Rachel: He was different...*  
*Tea: How you think he was different?*  
*Rachel: He just was.*  
*Tea: Jade what do you think?*  
*Jade: Brian as well cause he was like more fun out of...he was like the more childish...*  
*Tea: Yeah he gets very excited...*  
*Jade: He was more like a friend...*  
*Kat: Nina (another young person) for me because I got along with her the most.*  
*Tom: Paula (supervisor) cause she drove us and had better music...she is childish too...*  
*Tea: Yeah I guess you can say that when they are walking around in these massive pants...*  
*Kat: I was there when they bought them. They tried them on and everything.*  
*Tom: They put them on and said we wanna buy them.*  
*Kat: And outside the thing they started dancing and stuff. Everyone was staring at them.*  
*Sam: I just wanted to walk away...*  
*Jade: We were dancing around the bus...*  
*Tea: Would you do that here?*  
*All: No (laughter)...*  
*Tom: I would.*  
*Sam: I wouldn't just in case someone sees me who knows me.*

*Focus Group with Sam, 13, Tom, 13, Kat, 15, Jade, 12 and Rachel, 14*

The young people above make references to silly, crazy things that the adults have said or done during their camp. These crazy and silly behaviours have clearly left emotional landscapes within the young people that are on the forefront of memory when asked to describe the adults at CHICKS. Neurologically, emotion slows the process of forgetting (Reisberg, 2006) and similarly from a geographical point of view Jones (2005) argues that emotion is what maps memories into our minds and bodies. Hutchings et al. (2007) investigated year 3 pupils' perception of their teachers and discovered that one of the most admired qualities in male teachers was being funny; the same did not apply to females. In the young people's narratives from CHICKS there didn't seem to be much of a gender difference with regard to who was described as funny or crazy indicating that these perceptions were not gender specific but rather based on something that went deeper. In this section adults as the manufacturers of fun were discussed. Next I want to demonstrate how the perceived adult silliness was

transferred into the young people and more specifically how young people performed fun at CHICKS.

As described above, CHICKS as a physical place was inviting and exciting and I heard many yelps of excitement on arrival when the game areas were first seen. The extract below is recorded on the first day of that particular camp at Coastal retreat, soon after the young people have arrived. I was at the trampoline barn (pictured on page 142) supervising a few young people when they took their first bounces. Calvin, aged 12, was bouncing up and down on the trampoline, while I was on the sidelines watching.

*Tea: Yay! You are on a holiday!*

*Calvin: This is not a holiday.*

*Tea: Yeah it is...*

*Calvin: No it is play time.*

*Tea: What do you usually do on a holiday?*

*Calvin: Can't afford it this year...*

*Tea: How is this holiday different?*

*Calvin: It's a play holiday.*

*Research Diary Extract 02.05.2010*

Here Calvin is clearly trying to fit CHICKS into his frame of reference of a holiday. He seemed happy and was all smiles when bouncing but kept insisting that CHICKS is play time rather than a holiday. I wasn't able to find out what he usually does on his holiday with his dad since he was more focused on bouncing than chatting, but the reference that he made here to play is interesting. CHICKS camps are action packed whether on or off site and although there are quieter periods during the day most hours are filled with doing; whether swimming or climbing or playing table tennis onsite most time spent at CHICKS is being actively engaged in an activity. Thompson and Philo (2004) argue that playing for young people is not always active engagement or doing but that staying still, hanging out also counts as playing. In other words simply being (especially with peers) can be a form of playing. At CHICKS there seldom was time for simply

being, apart from a few short periods daily, and the evening and morning routine. In this way the whole time spent at CHICKS can be characterised as playing. Winnicott (1971) writes: "Playing is an experience, always a creative experience" (1971:50).

Conceptualising playing as a creative experience fits well into the CHICKS framework. Brace and Johns-Butra (2010) examined the creative processes of writers and saw creativity as "lively and excessive, something unpredictable and emergent, which is both a product and process of the human imagination" (2010: 2). The aim of this section however is not to define creativity or discuss it as a concept but to explain the spaces and processes of fun at CHICKS and how creativity and play are embedded in that landscape of fun. The above notion hence captures well the countless moments on a CHICKS camp when something imaginative and unpredicted happened in an excited and lively manner like for example the event described below.

*"Swimming is always good fun → electric fun → balls flew, splashing, laughter, screaming. Finn (young person) dumped a bucket of water on Jenna (supervisor) who wasn't swimming. Everyone roared with laughter.*

*Research Diary extract 26.10.2010*

At CHICKS playing and having fun are intertwined concepts that are nearly impossible to examine separately. Fun at CHICKS is performed in an active way, whether playing team games or climbing walls, that usually engages the whole body. The body then becomes an active agent in the production of fun and furthermore the fun becomes embodied. Aitken (2001) argues that young peoples' bodies are not just an extension of them but part of them, part of who they are. Fun then it is not just something that gets imposed on the passive body but the body as an active agent absorbs the fun. Damasio (1999) argues that feeling and emotion can be unconscious fleeting occurrences but to gain full lasting effect those unconscious occurrences have to become conscious. It is argued here that at CHICKS fun takes a form of that fleeting even unconscious occurrence since the packed schedule does not allow any time for active conscious reflection. However these occurrences are so regular that they are

starting to push through to the surface maybe still being unconscious but approaching consciousness by becoming an embodied experience of fun.



Figure 4.4. Performing fun (Source: CHICKS).

This embodiment of fun, this multisensory experience is starting to break out of a temporary fleeting experience and take a different form, a different shape and open other perhaps undiscovered emotional spaces as can be seen from Michael's quote below. As Damasio (1999) argued these experiences of fun are made conscious by practising the memory, by recalling those funny, silly and memorable moments, re-entering into those emotional spaces. These recall discoveries can take the form of a self-defining memory (Singer, 2006) that will have a further role in well-being, processes which will be discussed in depth in chapter 6.

*"Well I learned that like it is no good like being boring so like why don't I just like explore, find new things and be fun."*

*Personal Interview with Michael, 9*



Figure 4.5. Experiencing fun through the body (Source: CHICKS).

The fun allows the young people (and the adults) to enter into such emotional landscapes that might not be accessible in an everyday environment. The feelings of freedom and being able to open up, letting oneself go start to emerge as described below by Jason and Carmen.

*Jason: ...Cause it is like no one really lives in Cornwall. No one lives there...weird people no offence... (laughs). So like you don't have any regrets cause you are not gonna go back there so you don't have to meet the people and stuff. You are not really gonna go... You will get to know everyone so quickly so that you can just be so open to everyone and everyone is like all crazy so... It is like the atmosphere the main thing just like makes you feel a bit crazy...*

*Tea: Yeah I know what you mean...*

*Carmen: Yeah like freedom really. Freedom to just dance around in a middle of a shopping centre if you like.*

*Interview with Carmen, 16 and Jason, 12*

This type of rhetoric and behaviour also highlights the particular social spaces that CHICKS embodies that perhaps would be seen as transgressed outside CHICKS. This line of argument will be further developed in the next chapter when I will discuss liminality and CHICKS as a liminal space.

In this section the production and performance of fun at CHICKS was explored. It was demonstrated that not only CHICKS on and off site is a fun place but that the concept of fun is the basic premise of operation at CHICKS. Adults, supervisors and volunteers alike become instrumental in the production of fun. By acting in a silly and fun manner they encourage the young people to do the same and so become liked and remembered. Fun at CHICKS is mostly performed

through the body; the body thus becoming an active agent in the production, performance and recall of the fun. This embodiment of fun pushes fun beyond the temporal into a longer lasting emotional landscape. The adults are the engineers of the fun but simultaneously the guardians of fun; making sure it is practised in a safe and controlled manner. The next section explores these landscapes of power at CHICKS.

#### **4.2.2. Landscapes of Power**

This section builds on the previous section on fun. In this section I will demonstrate how landscapes of power are embedded in the geographies of fun allowing the power to be exerted within the framework of fun so that instead of creating resistance it creates co-operation and fosters empowerment.

Adult-child relationships are always embedded in power relations (e.g. Cox, 1996, Punch, 2002, Barker and Weller, 2003) and although the previous section highlighted the importance of fun at CHICKS there are rules and regulations that are followed and enforced. The adults are in charge of the daily schedule, the bed time routine, the food that is being served and so on. This was also the standard operational policy on camp E-Wen-Akee young people with behavioural differences that Dunkley (2009) observed. On camp E-Wen-Akee adult control and surveillance were part of the tools used to shape campers conduct and behaviour. However at CHICKS power is for functional purposes and the landscape of fun allows the power to be exercised in such ways that instead of creating resistance collaborative landscapes are created. It was shown in the earlier section that most adults at CHICKS were perceived in a funny and silly manner. This perhaps somewhat un-adult like perception can also be seen in descriptions of CHICKS adults as the leaders, as those in charge, as those in power.

*“...I expected them kind of to be more like teacher...but they were just happy and fair and you could get away with doing stuff but not like too much stupid stuff. I see you like you are really like at our level. Like if someone would have a problem they wouldn't really hesitate to go and speak to one of you. Seeing more like friend rather than a figure of authority”.*

*Personal interview with Laura, 15*

*Reece: Been with Beth (supervisor) for more than once and Leo (volunteer)... Yeah he is cool. Basically they are like teachers in school but they let you mess around and have fun so it's better.*

*Tea: Are they like supportive or...?*

*Reece: You gotta gain their trust and like you get used to them...*

*Tea: What about the volunteers?*

*Reece: Yeah they are good. They are funny.*

*Tea: Would you say they are any different from the supervisors?*

*Reece: Some are more kids and some are too serious so that is different. But yeah everybody fits in...*

*Interview with Reece, 15*

Here both Laura and Reece are comparing the adults at CHICKS to teachers. Laura sees vast differences and although Reece is saying both CHICKS adults and teachers are the same he does mention the fun and “letting to mess around” as differentiating characteristics. They both are emphasising the differences in terms of authority. As mentioned before child-adult relations and interactions are embedded in the landscapes of power and often in intergenerational clashes. Throughout history there have been specific differences between the different generations for example each generation seems to have their own specific values and norms and for example a certain way of dressing or expressing themselves (Vanderbeck, 2007). The term *generation gap* stems from this difference and is widely used in everyday language and refers to misunderstandings or even tension between different generation groups. Hopkins and Pain (2007) suggest that this tension is produced by perceived sameness within the same generation group and simultaneously perceived difference from a different generation group. In other words those belonging to the same generation group are perceived to be like oneself and sharing lot of the same ideologies whereas those belonging to another generation group are seen as different or unlike oneself.

This premise along with the unequal power relations were at the forefront of my mind when I started my research at CHICKS. Not only I was an adult amongst young people, I was also a researcher and a foreigner, attributes that could have

put me solely in the category of the other. At CHICKS through the landscape of fun and the adults' active participation in it, these perceptions of otherness are dissolved to certain extent. So the young people tend to describe the adults at CHICKS rather in terms of sameness as seen above in Laura's quote and below in Emma's short statement.

*"Volunteers act like kids. Volunteers are like big kids. It's funny".*

*Personal interview with Emma, 13*

I argue here that this conceptualisation of adults as not the other, but as something that is in many ways like the young people bridges the generation gap and brings the adults closer to the young people at CHICKS. Jones (2001) discusses the otherness of children and the social and emotional divide between children and adults that can never be fully bridged since adults are not (any longer) capable of entering the world of children. In similar vein Lee (2001) talks about finished adults and unfinished children indicating that there exists a large divide between the two. At CHICKS, as was shown in the previous section, the landscape of fun acts not only as a joining force but also freeing the adults (to certain extent) from the traditional adult role as an overpowering and controlling authority hence allowing the use of power in ways that engage and acknowledge the young people as active agents rather than merely telling them what to do. Principle that Foucault (2007) would have seen conceptualising power as a positive rather than dominant force.

Many young people attending CHICKS camps have been within the social care system for years and have been subjected to various "treatments" within it often with very little personal control. Philip and Hendry (2000) conducted a qualitative study looking at mentoring relationships between disadvantaged young people and their adult mentors. They concluded that the most important aspect of those relationships to young people was having a choice and personal control in developing the mentoring relationships as well as being active participants in the project instead of mere subjects to "treatment". Dunkley's (2009) work at camp E-Wen-Akee further highlighted that with a sense ownership and control young

people are capable of controlling themselves and peers through self-governance and discipline. Although at CHICKS the activities are pre-set the young people are in control of how they approach the activities, as well as with whom they are choosing to interact giving them that sense of personal control.

It is not of course automatically given that the landscape of fun and sameness make the use of authority, or any interaction, between young people and the adults at CHICKS effortless but it is a testament to the capable supervisors who navigated through these situations extremely well. Arendt (2002) argues that personal presence becomes strength and authority and further respect is required to retain that strength and authority. All the CHICKS supervisors had (different degrees) of presence and seemed to always know how to use it in any given situation. Just one of many such examples is presented below.

*At first dinner time Tom (12) had a bit of a strop cause he didn't wanna eat anything, Marvin (supervisor) handled it beautifully: "Why don't you give that food a go for now cause we didn't know what you liked but we can have a chat later about food that you like and sort something out for the rest of the camp".*

*Research diary extract 05.10.2010*

This incident happened during a loud first communal dinner, by the time the volunteers came and got Marvin to help, Tom had already worked himself into a state where he sat his arms crossed at the table staring at his feet completely unresponsive. Instead of forcing Tom to eat or refusing to give him anything else Marvin opened a dialogue that acknowledged Tom's individual preferences (see above). He leaned down so that his eyes were at the level of Tom's, put his hand on Tom's shoulder and spoke kindly and clearly. Tom listened, sat quietly for a moment then tasted his soup, declared he didn't like it, Marvin praised him for his effort and went to fetch him toast. This resilience enhancing (Hart, Blincow and Thomas, 2007) way of working with the young people was standard practise amongst the supervisors at CHICKS. It was part of the supervisor training, but often it seemed that the standard to which the above type of situations were handled was so high that instead of being purely the result of training it was a reflection of the supervisors as people and as professionals.

Morriss (2002) discusses the semantic and epistemological difference between power and influence. He asserts that since power is derived from the Latin word *potere-to be able* and influence from *influere-to flow in* “power might be a dispositional form of influence” (2002:13). Further he postulates that power merely refers to one’s ability to do something—whereas influence carries the causal weight. I agree with Morris’ assertion that influence can reside within an individual i.e. be dispositional but I argue that only when that influence is used efficiently does it become power. In other words as the Latin meaning suggests to be able to do something does not automatically give one power, but merely a certain position, however to flow in implies an action or an effect some sort and perhaps a subtle one. The supervisors at CHICKS are able to influence the young people in ways that that the young people find culturally credible. Not only they are experts in the current youth culture in terms of music, television and films but they always treated the young people with respect and affection as can be seen below from my research diary:

*“The way Paula (supervisor) speaks to the young people is inspiring → soft, dulcet, hush tones, smiling, joking but the message is there loud and clear”*

*Research Diary Extract 21.10.2010*

However of course there were instances where the young people tested the patience and the skills of the adults and it was often the volunteers who encountered most resistance. Below is a record from my research diary of one such encounter with a 15 year old Matilda who quite angrily expressed her displeasure at me supervising the girls getting ready in the morning. The recording below is the comment by Elsa and Caitlin, 14 and 15 respectively, to Matilda. They are referring to an incident that happened the previous day; they walked into the sea and were shouted to come back by adults since this was forbidden.

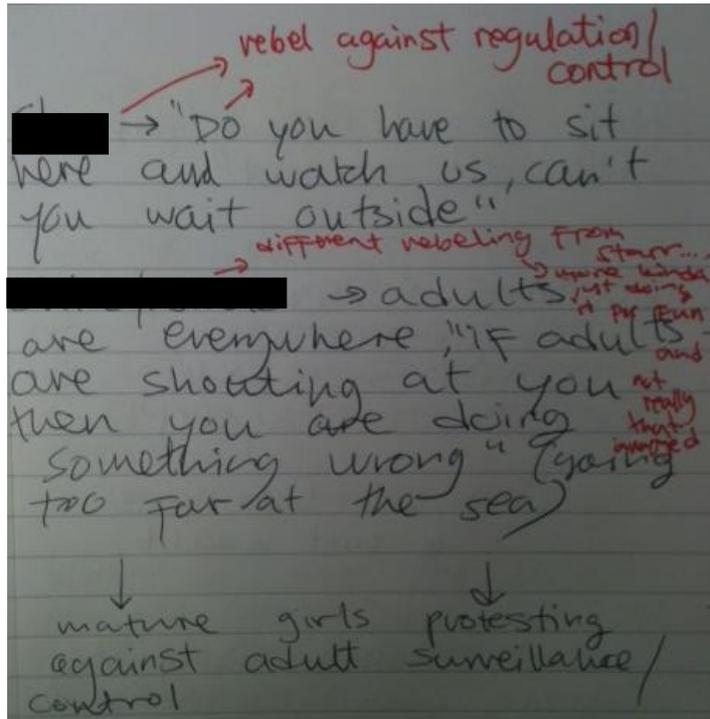


Figure 4.6. An extract from my research diary (Source: Author).

Obviously the volunteers had not received the same training than the supervisors had and hence might have not possessed the same tools to deal with the young people. However often resistance occurred before any action had been taken by the volunteers. In other words the mere absence of a supervisor in a scene could cause resistance. Already on my first camp I observed this perceived hierarchical landscape of power between the supervisors and the adults.

*"...quite a strong hierarchy though. Kids pretty much only listen to those in blue t-shirts. How could this be changed? Does it need to be changed?"*

*Research diary extract 07.03.2010*



Figure 4.7. Me as a supervisor in the Blue Shirt (Source: CHICKS).

Navigating these hierarchical roles as a volunteer presented its own set of challenges. Oftentimes as described below supervisors, when any situation that required power occurred, would interfere or repeat what the volunteer had already said or done.

*Girls at archery. Some “fighting and disagreement”. I handled it, but the supervisor came and gave them the same talk anyway... Not undermining as such but still what does that say to the child? (My reflection written on afterwards: Hierarchy again. I do understand why they do it and would probably do the same).*

*Research diary extract 19.03.2010*

These situations repeatedly left me frustrated especially as someone who had years of experience working with young people, often many more than the supervisor in question, but in reflection it was mostly my pride that was hurt. Samuel was the only volunteer whom I interviewed who linked the use of power with likability:

*“(I am) ...probably too authoritarian and disciplinary, I haven’t got the balance right yet. I kinda feel maybe I am a bit paranoid but I feel by the end of the week I am their least favourite volunteer. The volunteers that let them get away with things*

*are their favourites. And I've tried to be reasonable but maybe I have been too strict, I'm not sure."*

*Personal interview with volunteer Samuel, 42*

In the previous section I discussed the fact that the funny and silly adults seemed to be the most fondly remembered so in this light Samuel might be right in thinking that he might have left different memory traces in the young people. I do remember the camp with Samuel fairly well and he did seem to struggle at times with the relaxed and loud atmosphere at CHICKS often showing his displeasure through verbal and non-verbal communication. This highlights what I am emphasising here; the power at CHICKS works the most efficiently when it is within the landscape of fun. Additionally it was generally acknowledged by the supervisors that the supervisor status and the distinctive blue t-shirts they were wearing seemed to assign them in a different category in the eyes of the young people. This is what supervisor Marvin had to say about that:

*"...other common complaint is that we told a kid to do something and they won't and then you come along and they do it. Kid knows a hierarchy...but I don't believe it is always necessarily true here. You have to make your own presence. And you can do that as a volunteer. Talk to them; get to know them, make them respect you. And the way you approach them not to do something. Always go down to their level...but the volunteer who hasn't taken the time to do that and then tries to tell them to stop and wonder why it doesn't work. To a degree there is a hierarchy but also they have not put the work in."*

*Personal Interview with Supervisor Marvin*

Just as I acknowledged at the end my account of the archery incident of the reasons for supervisor control so too did the other volunteers I spoke to. Below is volunteer Erin's recall of the hierarchy.

*"I think the girls who had been before knew the score in terms of the volunteers. They were ready to test you to see what you were like. There was one night when they wouldn't settle down...couple people in particular....that was tricky cause the really big threat was Amelia (supervisor). Amelia will come. I felt it was tricky cause you had to evoke Amelia, do you want me to go and get Amelia cause I will but that was your only resource. The authority was interesting cause... I sensed the responsibility without authority. You have the responsibility but absolutely no authority and the only thing you could do is to go and get someone else. It was okay, but it was a challenge cause I am not used to people not doing what I tell them (laughs)..."*

*Personal Interview with Volunteer Erin, 40*

Like Erin most volunteers occasionally found it difficult to navigate in those hierarchical spaces but like Erin there seemed to be an understanding that someone has to be in charge overall. Additionally there seemed to be a collective understanding between the volunteers that they are there to support the supervisors rather than being the supervisors. Regardless of this hierarchy the supervisors over and over stated to the volunteers on the first night that all the adults are a team and work together towards a common goal of providing the best possible holiday for those who attend. Morris (2002) argues that the power of a group can be greater than an individual power but only under conditions where all the members of the group know exactly what they are doing and the cooperation is seamless. He further postulates that the larger the group in power the less power they actually hold because of the inevitable break downs in cooperation. Below volunteer Christopher describes his perception of this supervisor co-operation:

*"In comparison to the two other camps I'd say hand on heart this was the best. Really liked the way the three of you guys worked well together and that comes across, shows through and gives me a lot of confidence to do the job that I'm here to do I suppose having fun. And yeah been a good really good team, very supportive so yeah the best camp that I've been on."*

*Last night chat, Volunteer Christopher, 45*

The point I want to make here is that the landscape of power that the supervisors were capable of creating often also acted as an example and a driving force for the volunteers as well. The volunteers could and would emulate supervisors' way of interacting with the young people and would in most cases quickly get immersed into the CHICKS way of dealing with young people. At CHICKS the overall (adult) perception was that the ultimate power lay within the three supervisors but as Goldman (1972) pointed out, a majority can overpower the controlling minority if they together create resistance. So thinking in this vein it was the young people who ultimately were in power and surrendering that power to the minority; the adults. And although the volunteers at times found it difficult to function in the somewhat hierarchical landscape some of the young people that I interviewed had not noticed a difference like Princess below.

*Princess: I think they are actually quite funny cause they don't mind making a fool out of themselves, they act like a weirdo and they don't mind it. They are quite funny and energetic actually. They act like kids.*

*Tea: What about when they tell you to do something?*

*Princess: I think like you can have a laugh with them but they still be adults and you still have to listen to them and be serious when they are telling you stuff.*

*Tea: Do you think the supervisors are different from volunteers?*

*Princess: I think the volunteers and the actual like staff the supervisors or whatever they are...they are actually equal cause they are all like basically they can tell you what to do but then they can act like kids and they can smile with you and they can have fun still.*

*Tea: Some volunteers can be like in their 50's....*

*Princess: And they still act like young kids and they mess around and still have fun and it is quite nice. It is like cause on my first camp cause I was only 8 they all seemed quite old to me and it was nice then realise that you spend there like two days and you realise that actually they act like kids and are just having fun.*

*Tea: Would you say they are different from other adults?*

*Princess: Yeah. I think most of them I don't know what it is called... They like have been with kids like before...*

*Tea: Experience?*

*Princess: Yeah that's the word experience. Most of them have had experience with kids so they act like kids. They like know how to work with kids and like... even those without the experience still manage to fit in. Yeah everybody fits in... They might seem a bit weird but then they are not...*

*Personal Interview with Princess, 14*

Princess's quote emphasises the landscape of fun and the hybrid role that adults often got assigned as CHICKS; funny and crazy to play with but also as someone who is in a position to tell them what to do. Becky below had noticed there were differences between the two adult two groups but did not seem fazed by it and rather described it as sameness, as something to relate to.

*"I think the supervisors kind of knew what they were doing (laughs)... The volunteers are just like oh I am not quite sure how this works and where we are actually going today... But it wasn't weird...it was like some of them were new to it so they were just like...they helped us cause they didn't know what they were doing and we didn't know what we were doing (laughs). So we can relate to them as well and then it was like Marvin (supervisor) yes we are doing that (laughs)..."*

*Personal Interview with Becky, 14*

What I have shown and discussed in this section is that although the supervisors were responsible for the overall running of the camp the power at CHICKS was de-centralised in the sense that the young people were always heard and their opinions and individual preferences and differences were valued as were those of the volunteers. Despite the hierarchy that existed amongst the two adult groups the landscape of power was such that despite of some occasional confusion everyone felt comfortable within it. Essentially this type of landscape of power created a flat ontology of care and this will be discussed next.

#### **4.2.3. Flat ontology of care**

This section will build on the notions of power landscapes at CHICKS. As was shown above power relations at CHICKS are built on the landscape of fun and power is dispersed in multiple directions and accepted by all the agents thus emphasising shared agency rather than the hierarchical relationships. This section discusses in the light of the empirical data on how such landscapes of power affect the care and care practises creating a care that is organised in a flat manner thus allowing the geographies of love to emerge that further produce strong emotional landscapes and memories (geographies of love will be discussed in the next section).

Scale in the geographical understandings and research has been heatedly discussed and debated in recent scholarly literature (e.g. Marston et al., 2005, Leitner and Miller, 2007). Similarly the (re)conceptualisation of care has received a lot of attention in the last decade (see Milligan and Wiles, 2010 for a comprehensive review). Here I will discuss the interplay of scale and care at CHICKS to show how a flat ontology of care is produced. The aim of this section is not to extensively take part in the either debate but to show how at CHICKS the landscape of care has multiple directions and centres that create not only a unique caring environment but also produce geographies of love that have a profound effect on memory formation (and further on transformative effect as discussed in chapter 6).

The literature of scale tends to circle around political, economic and feminist geographies and focus on the debates such as the local and the global, colouring

and shaping many geographical notions. As Marston et al. (2009) note, scale in geographical thinking does not have a clear definition or consensus and this automatically makes it a contentious concept. Perhaps the most common conceptualisation of geographical scale is a nested hierarchy Russian doll example where each component is a whole but only work as one when put together in the one and only way possible (Herod and Wright, 2002). The main issue for those who object the use of scales tends to be the restricting nature of it (Marston et al., 2005): not only in clearly defining the boundaries of a phenomenon but consequently limits thought, research and writing on the topic.

DeLanda (2002) and Latour (2006) for example have been amongst those who have offered a flat ontology alternative to scalar thinking. Flat ontology postulates no clear movement in the direction of agents, interaction or ideas hence is neither horizontal or vertical but always dynamic always re-creating (Marston et al., 2005). Ansell (2009) describes flat ontology as a self-organising system that holds many complex relations within it, relations that are fluid and mobile and have the capacity to create new entities. Although there are certain hierarchical relationships at CHICKS they are not clearly defined or bound but rather are dynamic and changing. Below is Jane's description of her role as the supervisor.

*“Positive role model. To show them that you can be comfortable in who you are completely and not worry about what others think and be confident. If you are not worried making a fool out of yourself they can see that... and will come out of their shell. And providing fun family atmosphere. Making an environment where there are no worries where they know that everything is taking cared off where they can just relax. And be there to support them no matter what and to be understanding and empathetic.”*

*Personal Interview with Supervisor Jane*

Here Jane lists a rather exhaustive list of roles or duties of a supervisor indicating the hybrid role of a CHICKS supervisor. Countless different situations require countless different roles and often the change can be instant as are demonstrated in two separate quotes below.

*“Like one minute you gotta be like a clown having you face painted and laughing and joking and next minute it's quite a serious matter.”*

*Personal Interview with Supervisor Brian*

*Emma (12): "You're a bit strange"*

*Beth (supervisor): Why?*

*Emma: Because you were so mad and now you are singing and dancing.*

*Research Diary Extract 17.07.2010*

Because the care at CHICKS is so fluid it does not just take one form but instead forms and reforms constantly and is situation as well as person specific. Although the *care programme* i.e. the activities is one size fits all, the *caring actions* are individually tailored to suit the needs of the young person in any given situation.



Figure 4.8. "Unusual" caring at CHICKS (Source: CHICKS).

This constant moving of the caring role demonstrates the fluidity of care and it also makes it mobile. Care at CHICKS moves from one agent to another creating multiple centres and directions emphasising shared agency rather than hierarchical nesting (Marston et al, 2009). Volunteer Anna below told me about how she feels at CHICKS and what the volunteering experience means to her.

*"...This is a bit going off track but I have suffered from eating disorder so I go to CHICKS and I know I have to eat the food to show the kids and it is so good to leave all that behind and just be at CHICKS and it sounds bizarre... it sounds a bit selfish cause I do go there for the kids (laughs)... I feel a bit... not a different person but you see it in the kids as well that you get to be a different person... they feel at home. So I can see how the kids can see different parts of them self..."*

*Personal interview with volunteer Anna, 24*

Of course not all the adults at CHICKS have experienced in their personal lives what Anna had but it was clearly visible that many adults at CHICKS experienced personal and psychological benefits beyond the usual care giving rewards (Milligan and Wiles, 2010). Both the quotes from supervisor Molly and volunteer Graham further demonstrate that.

*“There was a kid on camp and she was brilliant and she was the wisest and we spent ages talking and I felt like I was just chatting with a mate and she would always ask these questions like what was your childhood like... And I said my big sister has had rough time with drugs and we didn’t really get on but got through it and then two days later in a complete different conversation she was asking how I got involved with CHICKS and I said I don’t really know I just found out that I was good with young people and she was like perhaps it is your relationships with your older sister, you’ve learned a lot to have to deal with those situations and I was like... I have never ever thought that and you are fourteen and you just made that connection for me (laughs)...”*

*Personal Interview with Supervisor Molly*

*“(CHICKS) Makes me feel alive. I’ve had bad times and it makes me feel really alive. It tells me I am okay and doing all right.”*

*Personal Interview with Volunteer Graham, 60*

Molly and Graham above are describing how it feels to be cared for. Although technically in a position of a carer they have both had experiences at CHICKS where care moves beyond epistemological notions toward (flat) ontology, how does it feel to be cared for and what is the essence of that feeling (this line of thinking will be expanded in chapter 6). Similarly the young people had those experiences as Armani below verbalises.

*“I felt happy. All the adults care about us made me happy.”*

*Personal Interview with Armani, 10*

Care practises are often two directional because they are performed in a dyad; between a care giver and a care receiver and it is widely accepted that care practises are relational (e.g. Conradson, 2005). At CHICKS however care is multidirectional and has multiple centres and hence spreads out of the traditional dyad. At CHICKS the care giver often also becomes the care receiver. This dissolves power and hierarchy emphasising the shared agency as Carmen below notes:

*“You realise that most people the volunteers as well all open up a lot. I remember I said things that I don’t talk about... I talked about things I wouldn’t normally talk about. You can talk about sensitive things and don’t have to be upset to talk about your memories which was good”.*

*Personal Interview with Carmen, 16*

Flat ontology of care does not postulate a complete absence of power and as Ansell (2009) notes young people are not autonomous albeit they are active

social actors. At CHICKS there are rules and even somewhat strict schedules at times. However, the ever changing nature and direction of care puts power and hierarchies in the shadows making both the power and the care less scalar and more flat.

Scale is now widely accepted as a social constructionist or as a network (Marston et al., 2009). At CHICKS these networks are not limited between the child and the adult but extend between the young people as well as can be seen below.

*Noah (15) went and sat down. Female volunteer went with him. Head on his hands, sitting there suffering in silence.*

*Kim (14): Is he afraid of the activity?*

*Tea: Yeah he might be. Why don't you go and ask him. I'm sure he would really appreciate it.*

*Kim: He is so quiet and doesn't talk.*

*Justin (volunteer): He'll answer when you speak to him.*

*Kim didn't go at that instance but went a bit later and put her arm around him.*

*Research Diary Extract 30.08.2010*

At CHICKS there are also opportunities for animal care as horse riding and stable management is one of the most favourite activities. This care outside of human human connection formulates yet another centre for care. And also gives the young people a change to explore perhaps new dimensions in their personality or those that have been hidden (these will be further discussed in chapter 6). Furthermore animals (Elder et al., 1998) and animal care (Gilligan, 2000) are not just landscapes of care but can potentially shape identity and enhance well-being; this also will be further discussed in chapter 6.



*Figure 4.9. Riding and caring for horses is a popular activity at CHICKS (Source: CHICKS).*

This section discussed the production of care in a flat manner. This flat ontology builds on the landscapes of power and emphasises shared agency and sameness building networks of care that bounce and move from one to another shifting in direction and intensity adapting to whatever comes its way. This type of landscape of care gives birth to geographies of love.

#### **4.2.4. Geographies of love**

This section is about geographies of love. In this section I will demonstrate that together fun and its embedded landscapes of power and flat ontology of care produce an emotional landscape that fuses together the self and the other in affective ways. And further that that emotional landscape that geography of love create memories that are embedded not only in emotional caring spaces but of love and affection that are present even when physically absent.

Love and geographies of love are slowly emerging into geographical debates and discussions. Thrift (2004, 2008), for instance, discusses romantic love as something that can be non-representational as well as well as everyday and

political. Narratives of love beyond romantic relationships are starting to emerge as well. For example love between mother and a child (Gabb, 2004), love for animals (Nast, 2006, Brown and Rasmussen, 2010) and love for God (Smith et al., 2011) have all been explored by geographers. Wylie (2009) in his examination of love, absence and memory in Mullion Cove memorial benches described geographies of love as the polar opposite of segregation, division and separation. This polar opposite, this unison or fusion of people, is virtually touchable at CHICKS as can be seen from my research diary extract below:

*“Sitting all together in the lounge, very relaxed, no worries, no rush, everyone chilled, smiles on their faces, adults kids all as one. It’s quiet. Stuart (volunteer) and his guitar, plays a few notes, someone requests something. A song begins, a few adults join in, then the kids, everyone singing, smiling, chilling, enjoying. Fun, relaxed”.*

*Research diary entry 28.08.2010*

This sense of togetherness and the unity was seen both during the CHICKS breaks as well as in the narratives after (more about this later on this section). The narratives below all describe the sense of togetherness and the bond that is created between the supervisors, the volunteers and the young people on a CHICKS camp.

*“...On my first camp two boys constantly had arguments and actual physical violence... and on the last night we were sitting on the carpet playing team games and one of the boys is sitting cross legged and the other boy came and put his head on the other boys lap and the first boy started stroking his head (laughs)...Us volunteers just looked at each other and laughed...”*

*Interview with volunteer Mick, 27*

*“It’s good to be here and meet you all and make new friends cause in the city I didn’t have so many friends and my friends made me do bad things and we are like a family now for 5 to 6 days”*

*Research diary recording of Seth, 15*

*“... to give each kid the time when they ask for it is hugely important even if it is sitting and talking nonsense or they wanna show you something. It is so important to give them the time they are obviously craving for.”*

*Personal Interview with Supervisor Matthew*

Harrison (2007) suggests that geography of love is a gathering of people where affective bonding happens and where we reach across the space between us.

Through this reaching, he argues, we open our selves not only to those who are like us but also to those who are not. Most people coming to CHICKS have never met before. Some young people might know each other from young carers club or from school and sometimes volunteers come with a friend or a partner but mostly these bonds are created quickly between total strangers as Peter describes here:

*"... On a first day it's a bit daunting, then you find out everyone's names and then it's like you have known them your whole life. You can't tell who you knew before..."*

*Personal interview with Peter, 12*

Geographies of love at CHICKS create what Peter is describing above; a strong sense of connection with the others. At times it was difficult for me personally to separate myself from the others because such was the intensity of the camps. The activities were done together, the accomplishments and joys experienced together as well as the arguments and niggles and virtually all the time was spent together. Almost as individual feelings became one, felt and experienced together. However these affective landscapes should not simply be examined as a sense of belonging or intergenerational transmission but it is argued here that geographies of love go beyond that affect. Gabb (2004) suggests that just as there is passion and desire in romantic relationships the same are present in mother-child relationships in a non-sexual form. She further argues that passion and desire make this love exceptionally intense that goes beyond sexual love, beyond affect. At CHICKS that passion and desire in the adults was often present in the narratives when enquiring what CHICKS meant to them or why they had chosen to volunteer in the first place.

*"The place means a lot to me and I have seen from a lot of different angles. It is not an ordinary job. It is more than just messing around with kids. This job has taught me so much..."*

*...It is much more than a job. Don't care about the money cause I am doing what I want to do... I have never woken up thinking I can't be bothered."*

*Interview with Supervisor Marvin*

*"Wanted to do something useful with my holidays. I think it's really good that CHICKS give opportunities to kids who wouldn't get a holiday... I am all for equal opportunities and I think it is really important... so yeah big factor with CHICKS. I*

*come from quite privileged background and it seemed cruel to me that kids wouldn't get that so to be able to assist in that was a big decision maker."*

*Interview with volunteer Olivia, 29*

*"(After the first camp) It was a massive eye opener. I was in my own little world, my own little bubble and I didn't realise that some children have lives like that. I found it so educational, so moving, so much fun non-stop and it was phenomenal and when I left I cried for ages because I didn't want to see the kids go back to their hard lives so it was hard to say good bye. Just remember thinking that the staff were so amazing and I didn't know that anything like this existed in the world, this sort of a place. And these types of people, and I was in awe."*

*Interview with volunteer Martha, 31*

Of course not everyone was there because they shared Olivia's, Martha's and Marvin's clear passion for disadvantaged young people, although many did and all the supervisors felt very passionately about their work, but many also volunteered to get work or childcare experience or volunteering was a compulsory educational requirement (e.g. social work, nursing or childhood studies). Although most people that I volunteered with were good volunteers and interacted and developed bonds with the young people most of those who struggled or weren't rated that highly by the supervisors<sup>5</sup> were those who had volunteered for an external reason (compulsory degree requirement, Duke of Edinburgh Award, friend persuaded to go etc.). This might suggest that geography of love does not only get formed in an affective interaction but is something that is carried inside of the adults from the beginning which then intensifies and gets directed towards the young people.

Morrison et al. (2011) argue that it is more fruitful for geographers to focus on what love does rather than what love is. I agree with their aim to mobilise the discourse of love beyond definition into active functionality but I argue that in a place like CHICKS also the processes of creation of that love are important. For operational practises it is vital to understand the processes so that care can be

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<sup>5</sup> *After each camp the supervisors rate the volunteers on a scale of 1-5 as well as write a short description of why a certain score was awarded. When I attended camps as a supervisor I went through some of these scores and evaluations.*

optimised to produce the kind of geography of love that enhances the fusion of the self and the other. At CHICKS acts of care become the primary expression of love. Morrison et al. (2011) further argue that love should be examined as its own entity rather than a component of something else. However at CHICKS care and love are strongly entwined concepts. At CHICKS care is emotional labour not only in an affective sense but also in the sense that care actually produces the geographies of love at CHICKS. This is how ten year old Armani described feeling before the camp and whilst at CHICKS:

*"I was nervous. I didn't wanna go. I was homesick as well. But then it went away cause the adults were all happy and asking every ten minutes if we were okay."*

*Personal Interview with Armani, 10*

*"Yeah...lot of people I suppose like Natasha and Colin and like Marvin (all supervisors) they are kinda like your mum and dad or something (laughs)... So it is like a big family. I think the first day you don't know anyone but then an hour later you know like completely everybody..."*

*Personal interview with Emma, 13*

Above Emma talks about the supervisors as the parents and the rest of the CHICKS campers as a family. These discourses of family were fairly common when young people were asked to describe CHICKS as can be seen below in the quotes from Laura and Reece as well as in the camp diary drawing.

*"(Meal times) ...that was really nice cause at home we sometimes eat together but not always so it was nice to sit down with everyone and it was like a little family it was. Everyone sat down and ate."*

*Personal interview with Laura, 15*

# Your Picture of the Week

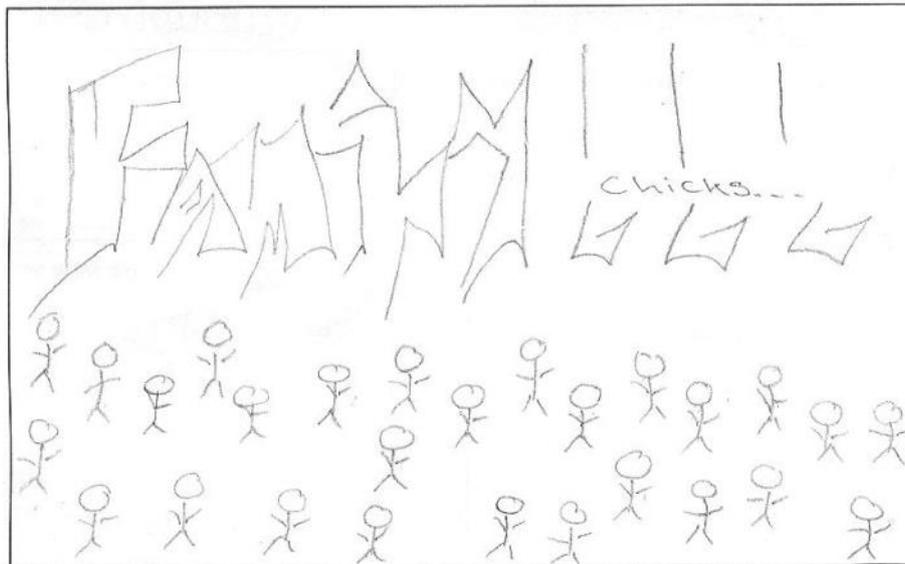


Figure 4.10. An Extract from Vivian's (15) camp diary (Source: CHICKS).

*"It's like you are a big family. It's like in the middle of the week you respect each other and it is big happy family."*

*Personal Interview with Reece, 15*

Family geographies centre around the notions of attachment, emotional support and sense of belonging (e.g. Hallman and Penbow, 2007). CHICKS is not a family in a traditional sense of the word but centres around similar notions. However the way families are conceptualised has changed during recent years due to multiple non-conventional ways of being and becoming a family (e.g. gay and lesbian partners with children, collective living) and it is now acknowledged that families, both in a scholarly literature and in every day narratives, come in a variety of forms (Duncan and Smith, 2006). Shaw (1992) argues that family that plays together will stay together. As seen earlier in this chapter most time spent at CHICKS is play time or leisure time. Hallman and Penbow (2007) argue that being a family is practised through such leisure activities. Many young people coming to CHICKS do not get the opportunity in their everyday lives to do such activities, and spend that type of family time with their own families as described below by 15 year old Polly at the end of the camp.

*“The best bit of the week was having opportunities to do stuff I wouldn’t normally do. There are no waves in the city (referring to body boarding)”.*

*Research Diary record of Polly, 15*



*Figure 4.11. Family time at CHICKS, adults and young people showing off a long finger weaving done together (Source: CHICKS).*

At CHICKS being a CHICKS family is being practised through the activities. Not only do the activities offer opportunities for new experiences and fun but they help to bond people together and nurture that family atmosphere. The concept of family time is a part of pro-family ideology and tends to focus on the good times (Shaw, 1992). But like in all families also at CHICKS there were times when things were less than smooth and there were obstacles on the way. On rare occasions amongst the young people I witnessed some bullying, arguments, mild violence towards the staff and a fight between two young men. All of those issues were always handled very professionally and resolved. The quotes below describe more of a regular type of occurrence that threatened the family time and harmony.

*“Like Julie seemed to get left out quite a lot so like when she pretty much got made to sit at the table with us we were like come sit with us...and she did and it wasn’t that bad. We were like she is not sociable, she is weird...but I was like give her a chance and see what she is like she could just be nervous...and she actually was cause then she got louder and louder and louder! (laughs)...It was like be quiet. I am quite glad we weren’t with her on the bus ride home that would have been torture (laughs).”*

*Personal Interview with Becky, 14*

*"I have not particularly not liked anyone...but out of the people sometimes there are some people...they don't know that I don't like them and I don't wanna tell them because it is CHICKS so I still act like I like them and stuff"*

*Personal Interview with Danni, 10*

What is especially interesting in the above quotes is the statement Danni makes about pretending to like someone or not revealing her true feeling because "it is CHICKS". Through the geographies of love a specific geography of inclusion is created. Geographies of inclusion have mostly been examined in the context of political marginalisation such as in disabled children (Holt, 2003), mental health (Parr, 2000), learning disabilities (Hall, 2004) and religion (Begum, 2008). The young people attending CHICKS camps are marginalised in the sense that all of them are disadvantaged either economically or socially which alone can be bases for exclusion. Furthermore it gives the young people an opportunity to feel a family connection and inclusion. Going back to Danni's quote perhaps through the geographies of love and inclusion Danni gets to explore new dimensions to her personality and exercise understanding towards people simultaneously showing her the meaning of family.

I will finish this section by discussing the practising of memory and the role of geographies of love in that. Each camp I attended had an emotional last day. There were usually tears, often from both the adults and the young people, or at least lot of hugging and promises to stay in touch. Also many of the young people whom I interviewed reported a temporary sadness few days after CHICKS due to the loss of friends and CHICKS fun. The data below demonstrates the anticipation of that loss and the loss felt during a journey home.

*Tea: How was the last day?*

*Kat: I cried and I made Sam cry (laughs).*

*Sam: She did.*

*Tom: I think we all cried.*

*Kat: You cried the most. All the way to here (laughs)...*

*Sam: One person starts crying and then the next and the next...all the bus was crying...*

*Tom: It was funny!*

*Tea: Why was it so sad?*

*Kat: Cause you know you are not gonna see some people ever again.*

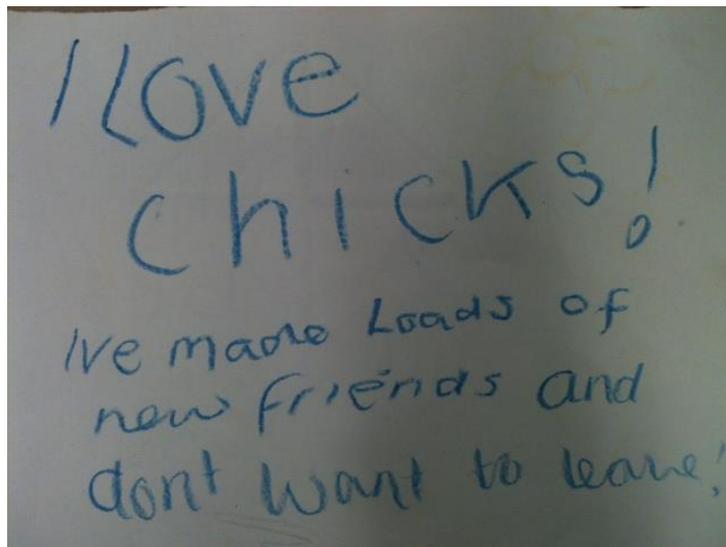
*Tea: Yeah I guess you became so close... How was it for you Rachel?*

*Rachel: Upsetting...*

*Tea: What about when you got back home like a week after?*

*Jade: I wanted to go back.*

*Focus Group with Sam, Tom, Kat, Jade and Rachel*



*Figure 4.12. Declaration of CHICKS love by an anonymous young person written on the camp notice board I had set up (SOURCE: Author).*

This temporary sadness and the sense of loss was described by the majority of the interviewees most reporting it as lasting anywhere between a day or a few days. Further many young people managed to stay in touch with the friends they made in camp mostly through social media and in some cases this was so months even a year after the camp. When asked what type of things were usually discussed between the two CHICKS friends the answers circled around the everyday rather than the shared CHICKS experiences indicating that the bonds made are possibly more salient or important than the shared experiences i.e. activities. However the good times at CHICKS, the fun, the care and the

geographies of love were often brought to surface by looking at the camp photo collage.

Like Wylie's (2009) memorial benches at Mullion Cove the CHICKS photos collages acted as a memento, something to bring back that geography of love and remind of that psychological family. Below Michael and Armani talk about what the CHICKS photos and the accompanying messages from the adults mean to them.

*Tea: Do you still have the photos and do you ever look at them or...?*

*Michael: Yeah I have the photos of me and Hugo (friend from CHICKS) under my pillow and every night I look at it. I look and remember what I did and all that.*

*Tea: How does that make you feel?*

*Michael: Well I'm...like it makes me feel sad because I can't like play with him anymore. It makes me remember of him but it makes me sad that I can't play with him anymore. We came close except when we fell out at the carnival...cause he kept on trying to push the bus and I tripped him up but we made up.*

*Personal interview with Michael, 9*

*"Yeah I look at the pictures every day and I read what they put at the back. Brian said well done, good bravery and Jane said thank you for coming I had a nice time and Jenna said well done for coming and having a good try. I felt quite proud. I did activities that I felt scared of doing. I was scared of horse riding."*

*Personal Interview with Armani, 10*

These two youngest of my interviewees both referred to looking at the photos daily and there were others who also reported having the collage for example taped onto their wardrobe. Additionally most young people had shared the photos with their family and friends. Rose (2004) suggests that family photos carry with them lot of emotion but simultaneously are seen as banal. The women that she interviewed described the act of putting the photos up as a task and the photos at times as embarrassing. Most young people that I spoke to about their photos viewed their photos not as banal but as a treasure, as something that fosters those emotional bonds through visuality (Hallman and Penbow, 2007). But there were some who weren't entirely sure where their photos were or some whose families didn't express much interest toward them like Jim explains below.

*"I showed the photos to my brothers and sisters but my mum doesn't wanna see any of that anyway...they said nothing. I put them like in this folder thing that I have. Sometimes I look at them."*

*Personal Interview with Jim, 13*

Anderson and Harrison (2006) argue that love is always material and practised and felt through materiality for example such as bodies or love letters. So although Jim did not have the privilege of sharing his photos with his family and was not in a habit of looking at them he too carries that love inside of him. Moreover the family atmosphere that was created whilst at CHICKS created a psychological family, emotionally present even when physically absent (Boss, 2007) like described by Jessica.

*Tea: CHICKS ever pop into your head?*

*Jessica: Yeah like all the time. It makes you like feel happy that I went somewhere and did stuff and that.*

*Tea: What types of things you remember?*

*Jessica: Like eating like at dinner and going places and hanging out with each other and everything and making new friends and stuff.*

*Personal Interview with Jessica, 14*

It was discussed in this section how out of the flat power both landscapes of fun and geographies of love emerged. At CHICKS most adults show the devotion and passion that goes beyond the usual care relations. At CHICKS emotional professional distance is discouraged whereas togetherness and unity are encouraged and used as a tool to produce affective memories. Family atmosphere creates a psychological family, felt not only during CHICKS camp but also afterwards through the photos and affective narratives.

#### **4.2.7. Conclusion**

In this chapter in the light of the empirical evidence I have discussed the memory formation processes at CHICKS. That formation is embedded first and foremost in the landscapes of fun that allow the use of power in an affective rather than controlling way. The concept of fun and is then intertwined into a network of care as a flat ontology as well as geographies of love lightening and opening it up to further production of positive emotion and affect.

I set out to examine memory as practise and a potential tool for an emotional intervention and enhanced well-being of young people. I argued that memory can be used as an effective intervention in the care of disadvantaged young people but there are caveats on this understanding. First, it is vital that care practises are set out in a manner of a flat ontology. Through this understanding decentring the power relations between carer and cared-for is important by recognising that care is not one-directional and is reciprocal. Hence, caring and being cared-for is co-constituted and relational. Second, the experience of fun by the young people and adults alike, allows the positive memories to emerge on a memory trajectory. This chapter made a few reference s to new dimensions of selfhood or self discoveries and these will be expanded in the next two chapters in order to fully examine and discuss memory as an intervention or a tool for well-being.

As Read, MacFarlane and Casey state “Fun is a concept that seems to comfortably belong in a child’s environment” (2002:2). Regardless of that there is very little written on fun as a central and vital experience in the lives of children and young people. This thesis will contribute to that literature by demonstrating how fun and play become embodied and can take on an affective form that carries way past the six days at CHICKS and contribute to well-being. Moreover it was demonstrated here how fun can be the connecting force between adults and young people enforcing perceptions of sameness. Together that perception and the somewhat unusual practises of play at CHICKS are contributing to our knowledge of intergenerational geographies. Moreover it was showed here how fun can be practised and re-constructed in recall allowing re-entry to those affective states.

Additionally this chapter argued that power exerted within the landscape of fun promotes co-operation and shared agency and is a useful tool when working with and caring for (disadvantaged) young people. It was also discussed here how through trust and respect the young people are willing to give the power to the adults. Furthermore it was discussed here how flat ontology of care produces care that has multiple centres, care moving and bouncing from one to another, shifting in direction and intensity transforming caregivers into care receivers.

Additionally this chapter demonstrated how geographies of love emerge at CHICKS and as such contributed to those emerging knowledges. This chapter showed how a family atmosphere is created at CHICKS that goes beyond the six days creating a psychological family that can be present when absent.

This chapter showed how fun and affect penetrate from the adults into the young people and back again creating multiple shots of laughter, humour and smiles that gain in power and effect along the way but never arriving or exhausted but always moving creating new paths and directions, new networks of affect. The young people and adults are co-creating a network of affect that is embedded in care and has the capacity to transform lives.

The next chapter will build on this emotional understanding of the memory formation at CHICKS by looking at the role of the landscape and the natural environment. Additionally it will demonstrate how the spatial landscapes are tied to the emotional ones discussed here and how together they open spaces for forgetting.

## Chapter 5

### Memory formation and Nature

The previous chapter focused on the emotional landscapes at CHICKS within memory formation processes. This chapter will expand that investigation into memory formation at CHICKS. Whereas the previous chapter discussed the memory embedded in multiple affective landscapes at CHICKS, this chapter will primarily look at the spatiality of that memory formation. By focusing here on the natural environment as the setting of the CHICKS holidays I will empirically examine the role of that environment in creating a space for care and *therapeutic* CHICKS holiday experience as well as examine nature's role as a producing a sense of place and memories.

I will discuss perceptions, experiences, liminality and belonging in the natural environments in the light of the empirical data. This chapter will be concluded by looking at the role of forgetting in CHICKS memory production and the role of the natural environment in that process. The main argument, and a thread that is carried through all the sections, in this chapter is that at CHICKS the nature of nature is the nature of care. What is meant by this is that the effects of care actions and relations between people are stronger than the effects of the natural environment. In other words this chapter as a whole argues that at CHICKS experiencing and being in nature is doing nature relationally embedded in emotional landscapes of care, liminality, sense of belonging. Furthermore this chapter will demonstrate how those experiences in and of the natural environment aid to create a sense of place that is characterised with a separation or change from the norm and seen as peaceful and calm.

#### 5.1. Nature at CHICKS

These following sections of the chapter will be based on the empirical findings gathered both at CHICKS as well as through the interviews and other forms of data collection introduced in the methodology. The section is broken up into four

distinctive parts: perceptions of nature, doing nature, sense of belonging and liminality and nature. These parts represent the four themes that rose from the analysis. Although they each address distinct issues and arguments as well as theoretical registers; together they form a cohesive picture of how the young people at CHICKS experience nature not only whilst physically there, but how the natural environment plays a role in their narratives of CHICKS both as an emotional as well as a descriptive concept.

### **5.2.1. Feeling Nature at CHICKS**

I will start by exploring how the natural environment is perceived and understood by the young people attending CHICKS. Additionally the nature understandings and conceptualisations of adults who refer the young people to CHICKS as well as the adults on camps will be discussed. The purpose of this section is to begin to explore the role of nature in the CHICKS experience. This section is somewhat descriptive because it mainly focuses on cognitive representations of nature and landscape.

This section will show that both the adults and young people seemed to attach nature with care. However these links or attachments were qualitatively different. This section demonstrates that the adults at CHICKS (including the referral agents) seemed to describe nature as a source or force of care, suggesting that nature is seen as a form of good care for disadvantaged young people. In other words their narratives of nature circled around nature of nature. Whereas the young people at CHICKS conceptualised nature as a change from norm and their care narratives emphasise that change as care rather than nature. In other words the young peoples' narratives of nature circled around nature of care (both of these terms nature of nature and nature of care will be opened up and dissected further not only in this section but in the remaining parts of this chapter). Hence it is argued here that nature is part of the conceptualisation of CHICKS at all levels, regardless of the differences in those conceptualisations nature at CHICKS is meshed with care.

In this part I will discuss the ways natural environment at CHICKS is conceptualised by the CHICKS adults. Additionally the emphasis here is on highlighting the care narratives on their nature descriptions.

As discussed in the main literature review, in the nature section, there is a vast literature both academic and non-academic that highlights nature's benefits to human health and well-being. According to the UK Office for National Statistics (2013) the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century showed a trend of internal migration from urban environments to rural. This suggests that people are favouring rural spaces over urban to live, work and raise their children. This type of ideology or thinking of rural spaces or the countryside is not new. Bunce (1994) writes about the poet William Cowper who over two hundred years ago said "God made the country, man made the town". So rural spaces have always been seen and imagined as idyllic and harmonious as well as purer, calmer and more innocent than the urban counterparts (Valentine, 2001). Moreover urban life and life style has often threatened the rural landscapes by privatisation of land and deforestation (Aalen, 2001), hence making the urban the villain or a menace.

The academic literature on nature is starting to include, for example, the concepts of blue space (e.g. White et al., 2010) and green gyms (e.g. Pretty et al., 2005) in addition to therapeutic landscape discourses and physiological measurements. The blue space research circles around appealing and *cool* concepts such as seaside, surfing and sailing. In this sense the natural environment is not only being portrayed as healthy but as trendy; a trend that is not necessarily available to everyone. Already twenty years ago Philips (1993) noted that the countryside had increasingly become a positional good, not only a sign of consumption and purchase power, but a hierarchical divider. In other words being able to move to the countryside or go on a country holiday would depend on person's position in the society.

*"The whole factor of taking them away and giving them that whole experience of a holiday I think the word holiday was always very clear to them. We always say holiday because that's I think... that's the really strong word. And some children feel really different by the fact that they don't have holidays so we never say it's a trip... but we always say it's a holiday and it's a holiday like everyone else has."*

*Personal Interview with RA Isabelle, School worker*

The above quote, as well as the CHICKS acronym standing for Country Holidays for Inner City kids, indicates a mind-set that is against such elitist thinking. In fact CHICKS is committed to bridging the gap by offering an opportunity for a countryside holiday for some of those who might never otherwise have a chance to experience one. Referring back to the literature review there is a host of literature demonstrating the importance of the natural environment in a child's life. Based on the name and the location of CHICKS centres alone it would be fair to say that CHICKS are firm believers in the physical and emotional well-being benefits of the natural environment. This view seemed to be shared by the referral agents too, one such example below.

*"I think what inner cities sometimes do for kids it's to desensitise them quite a lot and you know they begin to think noise and chaos in constant perpetual motion is normal. If you take them out of that and put them into a different environment where things are lot more slower and focused and I think it teaches them that actually the everyday experiences are not the only experiences that exist in the world."*

*Personal Interview with RA Gary, Social worker*

Gary is contrasting here the chaos, noise and motion of a city in the everyday with the slowness and calmness of the countryside. Ingold's (2011) suggestion of movement as a making of a place contradicts with Gary's view of movement in a city as chaotic and even deranged. Whereas the countryside, in his view, offers more focused and measured experiences. This type of rhetoric was very prevalent amongst the referral agents. Countryside was perceived in almost a romantic and an idyllic way. Moreover many of these statements echoed the innocence of nature and rural spaces in relation to the innocence of childhood (Cloke and Jones, 2005). On some occasions this innocence, this essence of being a child was linked to play.

*"(It's an) environment away from the trouble and just play. Cause lot of the time children are not having the opportunity to go outside to play in the woods... in the field wherever. So taking a child into a country area and giving them that experience is something that will be with them forever"*

*Personal Interview with RA Henry, Social worker*

Above Henry, who couldn't remember the actual number of young people referred but said *"there has been a lot"*, is highlighting the fact that the young people he

works with in a major city do not have the opportunity in their everyday surroundings to enjoy the natural environment as an arena for play. Cloke and Jones (2005) discuss this adult tendency to attribute the rural with opportunities for successful play whereas urban spaces are seen as improper, even dangerous and somehow lacking in that innocence in the core of childhood. In the last chapter play was discussed in relation to play spaces but here, although still heavily linked to a space in Henry's narrative, he also seems to refer to play as a childhood in a larger sense. What I mean by this is the idea of play as the right of a child or a young person. Play, in this sense, conceptualised as what is good for children, what they should engage in and have the opportunity and the means to do. Such importance this notion holds that the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) article 31 advocates for children's right to play. UK government having ratified the convention is hence accountable for protecting and promoting play opportunities. In many narratives with the referral agents play seemed to be conceptualised as something that the inner city young people in their care lacked.

*"They might never have a chance to do it but might just come out of it and think actually I wanna do something like that, doing something they have never done... jump out of a tree. Lot of the kids we work with they don't get a chance to play."*

*Personal Interview with RA Larry, Social worker*

Here Larry contrasts CHICKS as a place where play happens and the city, the everyday environment where there are fewer opportunities for such activity. Both Henry and Larry conceptualise nature as a place for play, for a care free childhood. Lester and Maudsley (2007) postulate that children and young people use play as a medium through which the innate drive to affiliate with nature is fulfilled. This connection of play and nature is clearly seen in the quotes above. Below Harriet highlights another aspect of the countryside that came out strongly from the narratives with the referral agents; a total separation from the everyday.

*"Getting them outdoors (laughs)... Lot of the children I see just sit in front of the telly all day and... It's back and beyond to them it's completely different world which I think what they need, they need to completely separate. I don't think a camp in the city would really have the same effect...because their friends and all the other occurrences in their life are just around the corner. That total separation I think is fantastic for them".*

*Personal Interview with RA Harriet, Social worker*

*“It’s back and beyond to them it’s completely different world”*. This comment from Harriet emphasises the physical distance from the city to CHICKS, to the countryside, but equally if not more importantly the emotional distance; being in a completely different world. Many referral agents conceptualised the countryside and CHICKS in this manner; a place far away where one has opportunities to experience novel things as can be seen below.

*“Most of them haven’t left the City. That reason it is beneficial... Or just like never had any opportunities to do things that enhance self-esteem and just try new things.”*

*Personal Interview with RA Lily, Youth worker*

What is common in all the referral agent narratives above is the notion of care. The countryside is perceived to be good for inner city young people offering opportunities that the city does not, as well as offering solace. Caring is also an instrument in giving the young person something that they might not otherwise receive. And caring is freeing the young person to play as a child should. Many referral agents interviewed went above and beyond the call of duty to make sure that the young person they were in charge of would get an opportunity to go to CHICKS; to go to the countryside.

Amongst the referral agents nature was seen as something that was far away, something that was almost not tangible at all but more like an idea or ideology of purity of childhood. But despite of the countryside being this idea, this different world far away it was very much part of the idea of active care giving. Next section will examine the young people’s perceptions of nature.

This section moves the discussion from the nature perceptions of adults into the young people. Although brief, this section is important in two ways; first it will act as a base onto which to build the next section on liminality and second it will show some qualitative differences between this research and lot of the existing literature on the conceptualisation of nature as the ‘other’. The main point and argument in this section is that young people at CHICKS conceptualised (and

experienced) nature as the change from the everyday. This 'otherness' of nature, although unfamiliar, was perceived as comfortable as well as unthreatening and created emotional geographies that aided in the opening of liminal spaces.

A vast literature exists on the rural-urban binary, as mentioned earlier. Furthermore there seems to be a tendency both in academic as well as in everyday rhetoric to associate rural spaces simultaneously as idyllic and better for health and well-being than its urban counterparts, but also as isolated thus lacking access to the same services than more urban concentrations. In other words rural places are concurrently seen as good and beneficial as well as having a certain difficulty or negativity attached to them. However if natural spaces indeed are subjective and imaginative as well as in a perpetual process of making, as suggested by Ingold earlier in this chapter, then perhaps one's perception of such spaces depends on individual experiences both past and present. For example for those who experience rural areas for the first time, rurality might not be more than a mere concept not eliciting much affect but when presented with the actual physical space the 'otherness' of it can be astonishment embedded in rich emotional geographies. Such example is seen below in referral agent Naomi's description of the train journey and arrival down to Devon with her three inner city young people.

*"I mean it's funny so I took them down for the first time and they were like oh my god Naomi where are we going...all these animals (laughs). Like what are these sheep I don't get it. Where is the building... So yeah I think that was different for them and I think it is bit of a change of scenery..."*

*Personal Interview with RA Naomi, Social worker*

Kaplan and Kaplan (2002) postulate that people are attached to and like places where they understand its functioning and the ways to operate within it. Similarly Kong et al. (1998) argue that nature for urban young people can be conceptualised either as familiar or other. They assert that conceptualisations of familiarity are based on images or experiences that have been experienced before and are the ones that carry no threat. Correspondingly Milligan and Bingley (2007) found that in their sample of young people those who had in the course of their lives played or otherwise being exposed to woodlands showed

little or no apprehension toward such places whereas those young people who were unfamiliar with woodland as a space reported a lot more unease and even fear. These types of findings and arguments suggest that urban young people may find this 'otherness' of natural environments frightening and challenging. This could obviously create a barrier or hindrance toward likability and attachment to such places. Type of rhetoric implying anxiety, fear or nervousness toward natural environment was almost completely absent at CHICKS or at the interviews that followed. My only experience of such feeling toward nature was the conversation below with a 13 year old Holly who had left her home city for the first time in her life.

*Holly (13) at breakfast:*

*Holly: Countryside is nice but it's little bit scary cause it's in the middle of nowhere.*

*Tea: Why is it scary?*

*Holly: Because it is in the middle of nowhere.*

*Research Diary Extract 22.10.2010*

Perhaps I should have continued that line of questioning to get her to expand why she found the physical location to be frightening but at the time it seemed that Holly wasn't actually particularly concerned about it and by the time I was ready to ask further questions she was already chatting away to her friends about the activities ahead. Holly didn't mention this or anything similar again to me and certainly did not behave in any ways on camp that would have implied anxiety toward the environment she was in.

Although this 'otherness' of nature did not take a form of fear, hesitation or anxiety at CHICKS it is not to say that nature or the countryside did not take a form of the 'other'. Comparing the natural environment to one's own home environment in the city seemed to be the narrative that occurred most often as can be seen below in the short discussion at dinner table with 14 year old Bailey from a big city.

*Bailey: I can't believe how different this place is from the city*

*Tea: What is the biggest difference?*

*Bailey: The traffic. There are convoys of cars in the city.*

*Tea: Where would you rather live? There or here?*

*Bailey: Don't know... Mum doesn't have a car and couldn't even go to a shop here...*

*Research Diary Extract 06.06.2010*

This type of rhetoric was typical amongst the young people at CHICKS. The countryside was often compared to the life back home in the city. For example Bailey above contrasted the countryside to the city in terms of the traffic simultaneously implying that although the countryside was more peaceful it was also impractical since even a trip to a shop would become a challenge without a car. Vanderbeck and Dunkley (2003) discovered within their sample of both urban and rural young people that the urban young people tended to hold a somewhat negative view of rural areas in terms of their lack of activity opportunities or sophistication of the *country people*. No such references occurred in my data, apart from Jason's: "*No one lives there (Cornwall)...weird people*", nor was I privy to the information that such rhetoric was used by the young people before, after or at CHICKS. Nor was there any evidence in my data that the urban young people would see their urban identities somehow superior or rural identities as unwanted and *other* (Vanderbeck and Morse Dunkley, 2003). Actually there was some evidence that can be said pointing to the contrary. Here is a short extract that I almost accidentally heard amongst all the chaos of getting ready to go horse riding.

*Jake (12): I want to live in the countryside cause there are no cars and it's less noisy.*

*Reece (15): I like Coastal (CHICKS Cornwall centre) better cause it's like there...you look and the smell.*

*Research Diary Extract 02.04.2011*

Jake and Reece discuss the benefits of living in the countryside and just like Bailey Jake refers to the lack of cars and the tranquillity of the rural. Reece who had been to CHICKS many times expresses his preference for Coastal over the Moorland retreat where he presently was. He explained his preference in aesthetic terms favouring the distant sea view and the scent of the sea over the purely green view of Moorland. Reece who had been coming to CHICKS ever since he was 8, and so was on his 8<sup>th</sup> visit, did not conceptualise the countryside

as the other but rather seemed very comfortable with the idea of immersing himself into a rural living. So perhaps it is like Milligan and Bingley (2007) argued that the otherness of nature diminishes with repeated exposure. This itself is not a striking discovery but what makes it interesting in the context of CHICKS is the ease with some of the urban young people discussed about moving to and living in the countryside. This is at odds with for example the young people at Vanderbeck and Dunkley's (2007) study who were very protective of their urban identities. This difference could also merely be explained by the fact that at CHICKS there is always something to do and someone to do it with hence making the countryside or rural as an idea more appealing.

The second way in which the otherness of nature was present at CHICKS was in relation to its calmness and quietness, maybe as a binary to the everyday loudness and chaos.

*Tea: What you thought about CHICKS being in the countryside?*

*Bondi: Both centres are close... it is peaceful and all that. In here (in a city) you have... rushing everywhere. There are like busy roads and stuff here... One sheep is there (CHICKS) every year I go there and (it) jumps over the fence and that lot. It's the same one cause it's got like the same spot.*

*Personal Interview with Bondi, 13*

*"I wouldn't normally be in the countryside. It was very different from the city. It was a nice change. It wasn't really loud and you could actually see green, at home is just like in the gardens."*

*Personal Interview with Jim, 13*

Both of these narratives by Bondi and Jim emphasise again the difference with urban environment focusing on the silence and calmness of the countryside. Both boys also commented the visual side of the natural environment although later in this chapter I will discuss how I and some other adults thought that the visuality of nature didn't penetrate beyond the activities.

Kong et al. (1998) found in their sample of young people in Singapore that young people valued and found pleasant the openness and space of natural environments. Cloke and Jones (2005) argued that it is indeed the openness and freedom to roam in a disordered place that intrigues urban young people. Further

they postulate that urban environments are often adult regulated and under adult surveillance inhibiting children from fully being themselves. Further, they argue, the disordered otherness of nature is where children are free to be children and where the multiple processes of the self take place. Although flat ontology of care decentres power it does not mean that CHICKS was a disordered space. Quite the contrary, the young people were always given strong spatial boundaries especially when out and about in nature. However as the next section as well as chapter 6 as a whole will demonstrate CHICKS offered plenty of opportunities for identity development. Below is an example how the unique otherness of CHICKS was meshed with an opening of a liminal space where identity development happens.

*Tea: What you thought about CHICKS being in the countryside?*

*Princess: It is different there are not like loads of people talking and it is nice and quiet and quite calm so that you can be yourself and be funny and like...*

*Tea: What would you think about CHICKS being in a big city?*

*Princess: Don't think it would be the same...there are like loads of people around and it would be busy. You got like your own space and not like loads of people around then it is quite nice and peaceful.*

*Personal Interview with Princess, 14*

Creswell's (1996) work highlights what he calls the *out-of-place phenomena*. Essentially what he argues is that the otherness of a place makes us question the appropriateness of our behaviour. If we conceptualise nature as partly socially constructed it would make sense that at CHICKS nature gets embedded in the network of love, care and fun. In essence the natural environment becomes the picture of CHICKS itself and helps opening up spaces where new dimensions of personality can be explored; as Princess explains above *it is nice and quiet and quite calm so that you can be yourself and be funny*. I will expand on this in the next section on doing in nature but for now the quote below further describes this meshing of *out-of-place behaviour* and the natural environment.

*"You are in the countryside but it is all like owned land and fields and cows and stuff cause you can't really go in it...London like you have like random people everywhere looking at you and it would be like we are in daddy day care (using baby voice) kind of thing...it just seems like a holiday that you are free and you*

*don't see anyone else in a public place so yeah going to Crealy is fine cause you are like a one big family by the time you do that cause it is end of the week.... it just looks like you are tourists...yes I come for a great big family and there are like so many parents that it is impossible (laughs)..."*

*Personal Interview with Becky, 14*

This section on the *otherness* of nature discussed how that otherness manifested at CHICKS. Lot of the existing literature on urban young people shows that there is often fear toward the natural environment or a lack of identification with the rural. However neither of those was present in my sample of young people. The young people at CHICKS had the tendency to conceptualise otherness as a change, a difference to their everyday environment. That difference was mostly positive. The rural was seen as calm and peaceful and as a place where one could explore new activities as well as new aspects of personality. The next section on liminality will expand this line of thinking.

This section will explain how the natural environment aids in the production of a liminal space where new dimensions of one's personality can be explored. Further this section links the processes of forgetting with those liminal spaces and states.

The concept of liminality was first used by anthropologist Arnold Van Gennep (1960) to explain a transition in one's status from one to another during a rite of passage. These rites of passages could be life events such as coming of age and were often tribal in nature. Victor Turner in his 1982 book *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* expanded Gennep's original ideas of liminality into the Western context. Turner argued that these rites of passages had three distinctive states. When changing a status during a particular rite of passage an individual first goes through a separation during which there is a parting from the old status or identity. The second state, according to Turner, is the liminal state when an individual is no longer occupying the old status nor yet the new one but rather is in a limbo in no-man's land (Spariosu, 1997). And finally the third state is the post-liminal state of incorporation where the new identity or status is taken. The focus of this section is on the state of liminality; being in between identities and the role that the natural environment plays in that construction.

Geographers have explored liminality in a variety of contexts for example in relation to the beach (Preston-Whyte, 2004) and cyberspace (Madge and O'Connort, 2004), young people's liminal role as a political and legal agents (Skelton, 2010) and arts and health as practise of liminality in a school context (Atkinson and Robson, 2011). All these examinations have enhanced geographical knowledge on liminality as a transitional, performative and embodied space and state, but so far both the natural environment and disadvantaged young people have been missing from these investigations. And so this section, in part, is aiming to fill that gap.

Liminality, a transitional space, and the period of adolescence sit quite comfortably together since the whole period of adolescence is often considered a rite of passage or a liminal state because of the apparent shift from childhood toward adulthood (e.g. Banister and Piacentini, 2008). I argue here that liminality also sits comfortably together with a CHICKS camp since the camps are a space of *abnormality*; a separation from social order which Turner (1984) argues is needed for the creation of liminal state. In other words some sort of a separation not only from the norm, but also from *normality*, has to happen. The emotional geographies at CHICKS, as described in the previous chapter, are such that they offer countless opportunities for that separation This happens through the embracement of fun and silliness in a physical (natural) environment that is the other, the unknown hence the liminal and the platform for discovery. The photo below is just one of countless like it and demonstrates nicely this separation from the social norm.



Figure 5.1. An army theme day on camp (Source: CHICKS).

On this particular camp the whole camp dressed as soldiers and that is how we visited the Crealy theme park in full camouflage running around “shooting” and ducking behind buildings for “safety”. Turner (1984) argued that when one is in a liminal space in a liminal state of mind subjunctive mood overtakes. Subjunctive mood in this context refers to an imagined or wished for reality. Although it is difficult to imagine that the young people would want to spend their futures being silly in fancy dress, the carefree, playful and supportive environment that is underneath every CHICKS interaction is easy to imagine desired for. Becky’s reply below, when asked how she would describe CHICKS to a young person who has never been there before, demonstrates the difference between her two environments CHICKS and home.

*“I guess because they have good time and it’s away from family troubles and you don’t have to talk about family troubles. It is just like an escape from it and when you are back then you have to face it that you are back there but you also had really good time so I guess it is like two clashing things.”*

*Personal interview with Becky, 14*

Becky here clearly differentiates between the two environments in an emotional way. CHICKS is described with positive rhetoric whereas the home environment is characterised with troubles and as something that needs escaping from. The

role of the natural environment in the creation of this separation from the social order and from normality is two-fold: firstly it offers an environment which is both physically and emotionally different from the routine and from the everyday. This, Turner (1984) argues, is the key for accomplishing liminality. Here Laura describes how the natural environment offered that otherness and liminality even for someone who had lived in such environment before, but now experiencing it in a different light without the everyday context of her family.

*“I don't know...I have been where CHICKS is....I lived there but going without family makes you think different things as well as well and it would be different in here cause like there would be lot less to do. The main part of that holiday bit was the fact that it was so open so like outdoorsy that is what made it really nice and different than being here.”*

*Personal Interview with Laura, 15*

Whereas Becky before compared home and CHICKS in an emotional frame, Laura here makes a clear distinction between the two as a physical space. Secondly that emotional and physical change from the routine opens a liminal space where one feels free and capable of trying on new dimensions of the self (Turner, 1967). In the quote below Jason describes a funny story from his camp.

*“Me and Charles went to the girls and we saw them singing.... And we started signing to the girls like Justin Bieber and it was quite funny and they were like... and everyone was at the door.... Yeah we went to that indoor market and I got the ring and it got stuck on and then ripped it off... Yeah we danced on the parking lot and everyone was like okay special people... (laughs)”*

*Personal Interview with Jason, 13*

These types of occurrences were fairly common on CHICKS camps. The young people participated in (silly) activities that they would have not done in their everyday environments. In fact many young people mentioned that at home these types of behaviours would be embarrassing and not something they would wish to openly engage in within their everyday environments. These types of alternative social encounters in liminality are through which, Winnicott (1971) argues, one can change their story. In other words in these liminal states one can find new possibilities for action and identity (Atkinson and Robson, 2012). Michael's quote below demonstrates this point nicely.

*Michael: It was nice view and everything. It was like when I am down... before CHICKS I didn't like getting dirty and now I like getting dirty.*

*Tea: So was that something you learned at CHICKS?*

*Michael: Well I learned that like it is no good like being boring so like why don't I just like explore, find new things and be fun.*

*Personal Interview with Michael, 9*

This changing one's story, as Winnicott put it, is not just necessarily fleeting and transient but can have long lasting impacts on identity and well-being. This line of thinking will be expanded and further discussed in the next chapter. What is also important in the quote above, and there were many similar stories which will be further explored in the next chapter, is that it is not only about Michael finding something new within himself but it is very much about being in the here and now. In the main literature review I discussed how young people are often conceptualised as being in the state of becoming rather than valuing or emphasising the being in the present. Bannister and Piacentini (2008) used a term *delayed adulthood* or *not yet adult* to describe young people studying in a university. This type of rhetoric and conceptualisation is very becoming oriented and bypasses and devalues the being in *the here and the now*.

However at CHICKS these *here and now* moments were frequent. Nature as a space allowed these moments of being *here and now*, moments of discovery both in terms of oneself as well as the surrounding nature. One of the main purposes of CHICKS is to offer fun filled 5 days; a goal that very much emphasises being in the present. And although all the adults at CHICKS are hoping for long lasting effects, on camp the weight is on the production of fun, care and love at the present time. I argue that although liminality has potential for (future) transformation the liminal state itself is about the present, the being. Further the natural environment offered Michael, here and now, an opportunity to visit an emotional as well as a physical space that perhaps was not open to him elsewhere. And although there is no data on Michael now, 4 years after his CHICKS camp with me, to show whether or not he still enjoys getting dirty or exploring new things CHICKS placed something on his memory trajectory as well

as on his emotional trajectory. Massey (2005:130) writes: “To travel between places is to move between collections or trajectories and to re-insert yourself in the ones which you relate”. In this sense liminality at CHICKS offered a multitude of opportunities for the young people to re-insert and re-invent themselves.

Furthermore what I argue here is that the natural environment at CHICKS in its liminality is disorienting and separative hence allowing the spaces of forgetting to emerge. As discussed earlier in this thesis care, love and fun all aid in the process of forming memories by creating an interconnected dynamic loop. Lee and Yeoh suggest (2006) that both remembering and forgetting seem to be woven together. Further Legg (2007: 460) states “What we actually remember is that which we do not forget”. As Legg (2007) notes memory and forgetting have always tended to be examined together, often as polar opposites. However within the CHICKS context I argue that both are part of the same affective network. In other words nature as the liminal space and care as the liminal state opens up spaces of forgetting or disengagement that then further allow the formation of happier memories. Essentially it can be argued that the young people at CHICKS have to forget in order to remember. Total forgetting of one’s past or home life, of course, is highly unlikely but forgetting has historically be seen as a reaction against a determinative past (e.g. Hoelscher and Alderman, 2004). Many of the young people at CHICKS have pasts that could dictate or dominate their future options, paths and decisions hence these moments of forgetting could be critical in well-being. Bondi below describes this disengagement or temporary forgetting that is typical during a CHICKS camp.

*“They (other young people) should go cause you go like rock climbing, making new friends. And people are nice and it is peace time and that. You don’t have to worry about...family and all that lot.”*

*Personal Interview with Bondi, 13*

I am not claiming here that the natural environment alone is capable of producing such forgetting, but rather the disconnect or forgetting happens in the midst of life on a CHICKS camp in which the natural environment plays a role. Further, since liminal states are disorienting and dissolve the normal (Turner, 1984), it is easier

for the mind to forget and disconnect, and experience the present with more intensity (Legg, 2007). Both Bondi earlier and Reece below link the forgetting strongly with the activities. The active, the doing keeping both the body and mind engaged aiding the forgetting.

*Tea: What does it mean to you to go to CHICKS?*

*Reece: Break from all your worries and enjoying the life and relax and people.*

*Tea: So you don't think about your worries...?*

*Reece: Yeah you do but you do the activities and just forget about that for the whole week and it makes it lot easier.*

*Personal interview with Reece, 15*

What Reece is saying and what will be expanded and further discussed in the next chapter is the notion of freeing oneself from the past events or experiences, even if for a week. Sigmund Freud's (2005) famous argument was that forgetting was the mind's defence mechanism against events that were too awful or upsetting to remember. Although this type of suppression is not necessarily the healthy way of coping, however in the context such as CHICKS forgetting can be liberating (Legg, 2007). An example would be an incident that I witnessed on the first day of one camp. After the evening meal the whole camp travelled to Par beach to play games and spend some time by the seaside. Whilst on the beach the supervisors asked the young people one by one to go and use the phone to ring home, letting their families know that they had arrived safely. One young man refused to make this phone call. He wasn't doing anything particular at the time but said something along the lines of "I'm on a holiday and don't want to speak to them now". Again this goes back to Legg's (2007:461) assertion of "the forgetter could experience the present more intensely, recalling only what she or he wanted to know, filling between simultaneous modes of self without being tied to the memory of a persistent identity".

As mentioned before it seldom is unlikely that one could totally forget sad or upsetting events and their everyday realities especially if something had happened very recently as was the case for Emily as demonstrated below.

*Emily (14) and Ally (14) opened up at bed time about their mums leaving them because that's what happened in the bed time story. Emily said she really misses her uncle who died a week ago from a brain tumour. She has been acting out and being aggressive the whole time and obviously not forgetting. She said at Crealy "How can I have fun when I'm thinking about my uncle all the time".*

*Research Diary extract 27.05.2010*

Although Emily was very upset that night and throughout her camp she mentioned her uncle and her grief she was still seen on many occasions enjoying herself, smiling and excitedly talking about the day's activities. Our memories are our living past and they are often involuntary (Edensor, 2005) even amongst the fun. There were a few other occasions that I witnessed when a young person experienced a sudden moment of sadness or upset but these were always immediately responded to by the adults and often resolved in a few moments. But it wasn't only the adults who made these moments of sadness better but as Ally describes below it seems that there was some self controlling as well.

*"I was really excited. Even if it was bad there would still be something good (laughs)... Even if I didn't like enjoy it, it would still be a nice experience, but I did enjoy it, every minute of it, it was amazing. At first I was a bit worried about my dad and like being away for a week. I didn't speak about it cause I am here to have a break and have a good time so I told myself to stop worrying. I spoke to him and he was fine so..."*

*Personal interview with Ally, 14*

Ally was the only one who mentioned (to me) this type of active or controlled forgetting. Bishai (2000, in Legg, 2007) states that in order to know who we are we must remember, and to become what we may be we have to forget. So in other words forgetting, whether active or passive, can enhance transformation. Next chapter will discuss these transformative spaces and further the role of memory, forgetting and care in creating those.

In this section on feeling nature I discussed the affective and perceptive notions of the natural environment within the CHICKS context. I demonstrated here how nature was linked to the concept of care both in rhetoric and action (as I will further demonstrate in the next section). It was also discussed here how that change, that *otherness* of nature created liminal spaces that were disorienting and new

hence opened up explorative spaces for new possibilities and dimensions within oneself. The discussion will now move toward more of an active engagement with the natural environment at CHICKS. The next section will explore how nature was used and engaged with at CHICKS.

### **5.2.2. Doing nature at CHICKS**

This section on doing nature will tie together sections on perception and liminality by conceptualising nature at CHICKS as an active construct. This section is divided in two parts: utility of nature and dwelling in landscapes. The section on utility moves away from the referral agents to the volunteers and supervisors who actually were at CHICKS in person. This section specifically focuses on their perceptions on how the natural environment should be used so that it would be most beneficial for the young people as well as how it was used on camps. The two sections on landscaping further highlight how nature was incorporated into CHICKS activities. I will argue in this section that nature at CHICKS was used in active and emotional ways that fostered the connections between people.

This section moves away from the offices and work places of the referral agents into the natural environment and into CHICKS. In this section I will discuss how both the supervisors and the volunteers thought about, perceived, experienced and constructed nature. It is essential to establish how nature was conceptualised and used or utilised by the adults on camps in order to demonstrate the main argument here; at CHICKS it is not about nature of nature but nature of care.

The earlier sector highlighted that the referral agents tended to view the countryside as beneficial, and as a part of good care, for disadvantaged urban young people. Their view of nature was idyllic and characterised with a notion of innocence and childhood. Before I move on to the views of the supervisors and the volunteers it has to be pointed out that there weren't that many references to the countryside or nature at the interviews with the CHICKS camp attending adults. For the large part the interviews would include a question or a discussion topic on nature but often times a short answer was given. Additionally it was fairly unusual that at the interviews with these two adult groups nature, natural environment or the countryside was mentioned without any prompting from the

interviewer. However there were references to nature and there were some who seemed to be on the same line with the referral agents in conceptualising nature as a calm place, binary to the urban like Nick and Claire below.

*"I think it's nice for the kids to go away from the hustle and bustle to a nice relaxed area cause it was relaxed area even just looking out of the window, such a nice view. It's not like when you are travelling through a city, so much traffic so it's just boring but driving there was relaxing and enjoyable"*

*Personal Interview with VOL Nick, 21*

*"Having it out in the country is great because lot of the kids are proper inner city kids and they don't really... And even if we are not actively doing anything in the field it is nice having greenery around and pretty scenery for them to see".*

*Personal Interview with VOL Claire, 28*

Both of these views are on the line with Ulrich's (and others') line of thinking that even a mere exposure to green or natural environments could be beneficial to well-being. Both Claire and Nick here also seem to conceptualise nature at CHICKS as a separate entity from people, something that can be seen out of a car window, a visual landscape rather than an embodied active one. I had a similar visual landscape ideology at my very first camp. It was a surprisingly hot March day and we, the whole camp, were cycling down a forest path following an old train line. The trees were showing signs of spring, the sun was shining and apart from the occasional excited yelps all we could hear was the sound of pedals and chains going around and around. We came to a clearing with a bridge. Having crossed the bridge we could see the river underneath, the fields around us and most amazingly a waterfall. All of us adults gazed at the beautiful scenery in awe and intensity whilst the young people were whirling around us chatting and shouting. Below is a short passage describing that experience.

*"The kids weren't interested about the beautiful scenery at all. I was trying to point it out to them, but they were all about the bikes".*

*Research Diary Extract 05.03.2010*

Even now I remember the frustration of not getting the young people to focus on what I thought as an exceptional piece of natural beauty. This experience was later repeated on multiple occasions where young people rarely seemed to take in their surroundings, apart from reports of animals spotted. I suppose my

frustration rose from what I perceived to be an underutilisation of the countryside. Or more specifically it rose from the young people not entering into that space where the self and the landscape connected; the place where, I interpreted, self-growth happens. I was not the only one who experienced such aggravations.

*"We were on the minibus far too much. Constantly in and out of the minibus. They could have done a lot more with the surroundings. Oh I am sounding really negative now... I feel that it was little bit OTT\* we are doing horse riding, we are doing theme park and this and that..."*

*Personal Interview with VOL Jo, 40+*

*\*Over The Top*

Jo here expresses her view on what she perceived to be an excessive use of manmade entertainment or activities and simultaneously this underutilisation of the countryside as an activity in its own right. Almost as she feels that there isn't a balance between merely doing in nature and doing with nature. The latter will be discussed in the next section. Below volunteer Samuel is fairly critical of the lack of countryside focus.

*"I don't think CHICKS focuses on the countryside aspect. Most of the countryside the kids see is out of the window on the minibus. We spent lot of time taking them to Plymouth. Again we don't know the reasons behind that. Canoeing and horse riding is on the countryside. I asked one kid if he had been to countryside before and he didn't know what it was; he did not understand the question."*

*Personal Interview with VOL Samuel, 42*

Contradictory to Claire and Nick Samuel does not feel that simply driving through the countryside is a full use of the potential of the natural environments that surround CHICKS. The fact that the boy he talks about did not even seem to understand the concept of being in the countryside Samuel seems to interpret as evidence of underutilisation of the surrounding environments. The quote from Supervisor Matthew echoes the same line of reasoning.

*"The biggest frustration for me is driving around backwards and forwards... it is good to go to places but not overly necessary...we are country holidays for inner city kids but often we drive into a town or a city or can we not do these things here and utilise the countryside."*

*Personal Interview with SUP Matthew*

Although there were adults who voiced these frustrations with the underutilisation of the countryside there was no one else than Charlie who made direct links with emotional well-being.

*“I personally think that is missing something for them to take away... It all happens someone goes to the sea but then how do you feel when you go out, they know they feel great but they are not sure why and it is because they have just broken through a barrier. A lot of it happens already.”*

*Personal Interview with VOL Charlie, 32*

Charlie’s take on the underutilisation of the countryside seems to be a view of a missed opportunity of almost what could be categorised as a therapeutic intervention. Hinds (2011) states that explicit therapeutic methods often only have moderate success when dealing with under privileged young people. My argument here is that the evening ‘best bit of the day’ discussion and the less formal discussions between adults and young people during and after an activity all provided opportunities for reflection, but perhaps in a less implicit way that Charlie would have hoped for. Because this section is about the utility of nature I will show here a couple of examples of how nature and an action or an activity came together at CHICKS; a more thorough discussion of this merger will be in the next section.



*Figure 5.2. An evening activity of pass the parcel on a hill at Dartmoor National Park (SOURCE: CHICKS).*



Figure 5.3. A horse ride through the woods (SOURCE: CHICKS).

Both of these photographs above show the merger of a camp activity and the surrounding natural environment. What these photographs illustrate is the movement, the action, the creation of simultaneously fun and an emotional landscape that takes place within a natural environment. However just by looking at these two photos there does seem to be a certain detachment from the surrounding environment. The action and interactions seem to be between people, or between people and animals, and the natural environment seems to merely serve as a backdrop.

As mentioned earlier many of the adults would not naturally produce narratives of the countryside. The natural environment was probably most often mentioned in conjunction with a memorable occurrence. On one of the promotional CHICKS videos on their website a CHICKS worker remembers a young person making a comment of “which one is the shallow end?” when they saw the sea for the very first time. Similar emotionally charged comment was remembered by volunteer Micky.

*“Went up a hill and a boy made a comment “Wow this is all England! You can see for miles...” Never seen the open countryside and amazed about the green and land (laughs)...”*

*Personal Interview with VOL Micky, 28*

There were many of these memories, these moments of discovery that were almost as magical and entertaining yet alluring and emotional like described below.

*“Funny one would be this kid we took horse riding and we saw a chicken who had just laid down some eggs and he couldn’t figure out why there wasn’t a line mark a stamp on it...it is those little moments... I mean he was 12 or 13....every week it happens when someone experiences something or mini achievements...and hopefully they take something back...”*

*Personal Interview with SUP Noah*

It was discussed here that although there were somewhat different conceptualisations of nature by the adults on camps the actual use of the natural environment seemed to remain the same throughout the camps. It can be said that the natural environment was deployed in two different ways; as a backdrop or almost as a stage on which activity happened, and as a physical space that allowed opportunities for discovery. Both these notions will be further discussed later in this chapter. In the next section I will explore in the light of empirical findings how the young people at CHICKS actively engaged with nature.

This section on dwelling in landscapes discusses two separate but interconnected concepts; tactile nature and socially constructed nature. I argue in this section that being and doing nature at CHICKS happens within an emotional framework between the young people and their bio-socio-physical environment. Further the main argument here is that nature as the physical environment becomes (an affective) landscape when it is interacting with other concepts. This section will demonstrate through empirical findings how the young people at CHICKS engage with nature in multi-sensory ways through movement and body. Additionally it is argued here that this tactile engagement happens in and further reinforces the landscape of fun. The main argument, however, is that through this tactile engagement the young people are being in the world not in a state of becoming but here and now.

Landscaping is generally used to describe the human landscape connection. John Wylie, for example, discusses landscaping as a solitude activity in his 2007 paper on walking a coastal path in countryside. He describes his solitary walk

through Devon countryside as an embodied performance meshing the self and the landscape. He also makes multiple references to the different things that he sees and hears to the pain that he feels in his legs (Wylie, 2007). This section focuses on the part of landscaping that seeks to explain how humans through senses gather information about the landscape they interact with. This fusion of senses creates a tactile relationship with the individual and their physical environment.

Ingold (2011) argues that seeing or viewing a landscape is always a lived experience. This experience, he further argues, can be negative, positive or indifferent but always has a component of affect attached to the perception. Additionally he argues that landscape as a lived experience is constantly evolving and changing. As I will later discuss in further detail this constant action shapes the landscape, but the landscape can also shape the actions. In other words the landscape dictates, to certain extent, what actions can be performed on it and with it. At CHICKS landscapes were used both creatively and in imaginary ways. For example the same landscape could act as a quiet slow space where to admire the sunset or as a loud one where pass the parcel was played in ever faster and faster manner (see figure 6.1.). Although a landscape might be filled with potential sensory elements and tactile components I argue here that the young people at CHICKS are choosing when to engage with the natural environment. I will discuss all of this in detail a little bit later on, but now I want to focus on the notion of fun in natural-human interactions. As discussed in the literature review the self and the landscape can be understood to mesh in tactile ways. Although slightly different ontologies both highlight the importance of affect. At CHICKS there were many examples of such an affective mesh, one described below by Jason.

*“I had a seafood crab in my hand....(laughter) I went into the sea and got out and there was this crab...you could see its eyes...it looked like a tad pole, got weird legs...”*

*Personal Interview with Jason, 12*

Jason is describing an experience that is simultaneously tactile and fun. A pleasurable encounter with nature that he, many months after his CHICKS camp, recalls. The notion of fun seemed to be the identifying feature of the landscape

self interaction at CHICKS. As mentioned in the previous chapter the adults at CHICKS are the architects of fun. The role of the adults in creating a connection with the landscape will be further discussed in the next section but here I want to highlight the role of fun in creating the landscape experiences at CHICKS.

*“I did like canoeing. It was you...it was at the lake and I kept falling in and there were like little baby frogs (laughs). Jumped in and everyone was like yeah... and yeah you fell in (laughs). You slipped over it and it was like aahhh... (laughs). You just did that. Complete amazement (laughs).”*

*Personal Interview with Becky, 14*

Here Becky describes an event that meshes the landscape of fun with the natural landscape. The incident that she is referring to happened after canoeing. After the formal canoeing instruction was finished it was customary for the instructors to invite anyone who wanted to jump into the lake. When it was my turn to do so I ran and tripped and instead of jumping into the lake legs first I tumbled in it head first after a few rolls on the ground. She is simultaneously talking about an experience of a natural environment where her senses were engaged, she felt the water and saw the baby frogs, and where fun is wrapped around the whole experience. Although the natural environment offered many moments like above the natural environment alone did not guarantee good times. Below is an example of an impromptu evening activity of crabbing in a picturesque village of Feock in Cornwall. It was a warm autumn evening bathed in a beautiful sunset surrounded by a stunning view of the tiny boats and rainbow coloured houses. We, the whole camp, were crabbing of the pier.

*Cooper about crabbing: “This is the most boring activity so far”.  
I think things like that get compared to the cool stuff like Crealy/body boarding. No one mentioned crabbing later on the camp.*

*Research Diary Entry 19.09.2010*

Cooper was not the only one who found crabbing slightly boring since there were many young people who told me that they would have rather done something a bit more active or engaging. What the above story demonstrates was that nature alone was not necessarily enough to entertain or engage. Anderson (2004) argues that boredom is a form of sadness born as a result of an action stalling in

a time space yet simultaneously it has potential to become an affective action again.

The engagement with one's physical environment at CHICKS was often tactile and dynamic so perhaps in the case of crabbing it was the slowness of the activity that induced boredom. At CHICKS the adults often encouraged the young people to use their senses, mostly that of a touch or a smell. Lot of the literature discussing human experiences in the landscape, as mentioned before, describes the human nature connection in a somewhat philosophical pondering manner. In other words the emphasis tends to be on the merger with the natural environment in such ways that implies nature is the active agent in this connection. Further, almost as if nature is happening to you, overtaking and powering the human will.

At CHICKS the interactions with the natural environment were largely manufactured or instigated by the adults. What I mean by this is that at CHICKS the engagement with the natural environment is usually a planned one, something that, initially at least, is constructed by the adults embedded in the general affective network of care and fun and the young person either chooses to participate or not. That is to say that at CHICKS one chooses to engage with the natural environment rather than the natural environment just being something that is happening to you.



*Figure 5.4. Tactile landscaping within a fun social network (Source: CHICKS).*

Since this tactility is an active moving connection bodies are essential in it. The young people are sensing through their bodies whether feeling the movement of

a horse underneath them or being submerged in the sea. Again this sensing is seldom accidental but encouraged, and often shown how, by the adults. Burying oneself in the sand, stopping to examine bugs, diving head first into the sea or rolling down a grassy hill are all everyday occurrences at CHICKS. Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1968) argued that our bodies are the agents through which we experience, sense and perceive the world. Additionally he postulated that bodies, rather than consciousness, are the primary sites that consists our knowledge of that around us. This corporeality was often apparent at CHICKS as can be seen in my research diary entry here.

*On their first day, just after the arrival: Boys on the trampoline bouncing, swirling, whirling, smiling, laughing care free. Taking it in with every fibre of their body.*

*Research Diary Entry 05.10.2010*

There were multiple examples of such corporeality as can be seen from the photos here as well. The relationship with the natural environment was dwelling in the sense that it was material, tactile and enduring often giving experiences that were remembered afterwards on camp or in the interviews. But the experiences were also simultaneously embodied in the sense that they were often fleeting sensory experiences creating a multitude of affective and emotional responses. Ingold's (2008) notion of *zone of entanglement* fits quite well into this picture as it postulates that when one inhabits a life that is open; that is something that is flexible and fluid constantly in the making rather than occupying something that is ready-made and static, organisms become a bundle of tangled entities. The *zone of entanglement* is then these fluxes made of growth and movement. To put this in another way, Ingold seems to suggest that inhabiting the world is favourable to merely occupying it since a world that is inhabited is "woven from the strands of their continual coming-into-being" (2008: 1797) and further to inhabit or to live life in the open "suggests the absence of limit" (2008:1797). Although I agree with Ingold's premise of how continuous making and re-making of the world is likely to offer richer experiences than static entities, at CHICKS as mentioned before there were physical limits so perhaps this notion would be better applied to mental ones. In other words the openness of the experience with

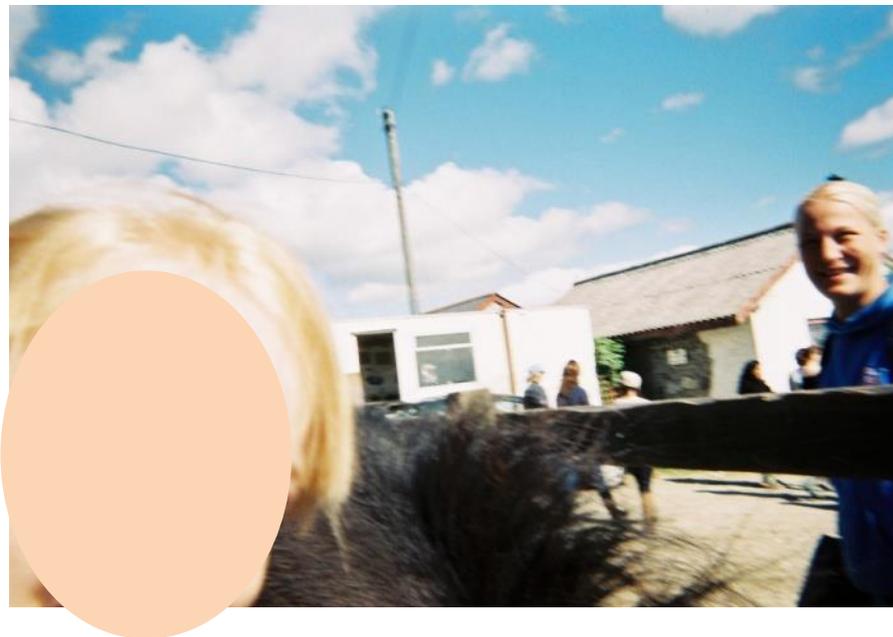
landscape allowed limitless imagination to take place and could even transform the land into a giant drawing board as seen below.



*Figure 5.5. Feeling and feeling the landscape (Source: CHICKS).*

Another key aspect of the engagement with natural environment at CHICKS is that it emphasises the here and the now, being rather than the becoming. As mentioned in the main literature review of this thesis young people and children are often conceptualised as human becomings rather than human beings. This stance is very future oriented. Although it is widely known and accepted across disciplines that traumatic childhood experiences can have an adverse effect on person, adulthood still tends to be viewed as the ultimate target and being a child is less important than becoming an adult. CHICKS to a certain degree challenges this view. Obviously CHICKS are hoping that what they are doing for the young people would have long term benefits, but the focus of everything that is done at CHICKS is on the here and the now. For example body boarding in the waves, cycling through a forest or picking flowers is happening at the present time. The young person is being in the world right now, the future at that precise moment is meaningless and invisible. So in the sense the young person is arriving in the future right now, or making the future present, or perhaps actually making the present count. This line of argument will be further expanded in the next chapter on transformative spaces.

As briefly mentioned in the previous section in many scholarly writings nature is described or examined as a solitary space; a space for thoughtful time seeking solace or restoration. At CHICKS, however, the natural environment is very much part of the social camp experience. Indeed it can be argued that CHICKS lacks the opportunities for the young people to explore or be in nature alone since the presence of other people is unavoidable. However this is the CHICKS way and it was very much echoed through in the interviews. What is meant by this is the young people seldom mentioned or brought the natural environment into their CHICKS narratives as its own entity, but rather the stories of the natural environment were coloured with other people and the landscape of fun. This photo taken by a young person further demonstrates this point rather nicely.



*Figure 5.6. Socially constructing nature (Source: Young person's disposable camera).*

She insisted on having me on the background behind the horse she was grooming and photographing. The end result was that only the horse's mane was visible and the photograph is dominated by her own face and mine. And although it might be instigated by the adults oftentimes the young people are the ones who develop the engagement with the natural environment through creativity and imagination, nature thus becoming a co-creation. As mentioned in the main literature review young people are often conceptualised in relation to adults or as opposites of adults or somehow less than them. At CHICKS however this co-creative attitude (re)conceptualises young people as level with adults. Below Ally

describes an affective embodied experience with the landscape. And although the stars of this narrative are Ally and the giant wave, Colin the supervisor plays a significant role too.

*“I loved like being on top of the wave and Colin (supervisor) got this amazing picture of me. I was on top of the wave and he was in front of me and it is an amazing photo cause there is the wave and then me.”*

*Personal Interview with Ally, 14*



*Figure 5.7. Fun, others and the natural environment coming together (Source: CHICKS).*

Similarly to Ally's story Carmen's narrative also features a CHICKS adult.

*Tea: Who do you remember most from your CHICKS camp?*

*Carmen: The volunteer Ruby cause I was really scared to body board because I did this test and it got stuck in my head that we had to go into the sea and it freaked me out and she like stayed with me til I did it properly which was really cool. She could have just done her own thing or help someone else but she stayed with me so that made me happy. I did it properly like one go. I liked it but I didn't wanna go out too far. Like Sheldon (a volunteer) went out very far, he looked like a little Polly Pocket (laughs)... I like the feel on your fingers when you are holding the board...like ticklish but really fun...*

*Personal Interview with Carmen, 16*

Carmen describes the tactile interaction with the natural environment but the thing that resonated the most in her was Ruby's willingness to stay with her. Stedman (2003) argues that physical places can in an academic rhetoric become too socially constructed thus forgetting that the physical attributes of a place also

impact our sense of place. The two quotes above bring together this fusion of physicality of a place and the social constructionist way. It is the social at CHICKS that makes the physical affective. In other words the physical environment caused affective or emotional responses most when other people were part of the experience. As Tuan (1977) suggests an individual interprets the place within their frame of reference hence these two narratives (and countless more) reflect the CHICKS atmosphere of social constructionist fun nature. In other words it reflects the nature of care rather than the nature of nature.

In this section I discussed the tactile and social landscaping at CHICKS. I will now bring this whole chapter to a close.

### **5.3. Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the perceptions, constructions and conceptualisations of nature or the natural environment at CHICKS. In this chapter the main point that I have made is that at CHICKS the interactions with the natural environment are characterised with geographies of fun, play and love which are all embedded within a framework of care. And although the natural environments have been widely reported to be beneficial for humans, in particular children and young people, at CHICKS is it not about nature of nature but the emphasis is on the nature of care.

CHICKS adults tend to share the view of the most media, public and scholars that being exposed to natural environments is beneficial for young people especially for those from urban environments. The utilisation of the natural environment at CHICKS was closely linked to activity and play. The natural environment provided opportunities for discovery, magic and interaction. In this manner the natural environment constructed the social. But similarly the social interactions and the adults' active engagement constructed the physical environment in ways which allowed the young people to form a sense of connection both to nature and to other people. These spaces of care, the adults created with the young people, were created and manifested through movement. This movement became landscaping; an active tactile engagement not only with the natural environment

but with those in it. Nature was experienced through the movement, through the doing in a new way that opened up liminal spaces for the young people. This liminality or otherness of nature allowed the mapping of the experiences in a way that was unfamiliar but positive and affective. In other words the new experiences in nature were contributing into the affective web of liminality, and the geographies of fun and love. Nature and CHICKS were bound together in this social and emotional constructionist way.

In the next and final empirical chapter I will discuss the transformative spaces that shaped identity processes at and beyond CHICKS. By doing so I will bring together all the empirical chapter to demonstrate how care at CHICKS can have a transforming and positive effect on identity.

## Chapter 6

### Transformative spaces

In the previous chapter I discussed the natural surroundings at CHICKS and their role in the memory production and care. Together chapters four and five have provided answers to the research questions on the care and creation of happy memories and the role of the natural environment in that production as well as nature's overall contribution to the 'therapeutic' CHICKS experience. This chapter on transformative spaces will provide answers to the research question on the emotional geographies produced by care as well as transformative effects in relation to the self and identity processes. Although shorter than the two previous empirical chapters, this chapter is an important one since it is the final piece in the CHICKS puzzle; this thesis has gone from the intention of CHICKS through the care on camps and has finally arrived at the effects. Hence this chapter's main aim is to demonstrate through rich empirical data that the embedded emotional and physical landscapes at CHICKS create positive changes or realisations in the young people, who attend, both short and long term.

The data section in this chapter is divided into two parts: positive spaces including happiness and confidence and new horizons containing new selves and new directions. All the parts together seek to explain not only what kind of transformative effects CHICKS holidays can have, but also how those effects have or can impact identity processes and how they fit into the greater debates on care and well-being. As previously, all the parts will outline their separate arguments at the beginning of each section.

#### **6.1. Identity at CHICKS and beyond**

I will show here how CHICKS produces both happiness and confidence; positive emotional spaces that can be returned to even when back home. Furthermore I will show how CHICKS offers opportunities for (re)discovery of new dimensions of the self as well as imagined futures and directions. Essentially I argue here that what CHICKS offers for identity making is a caring environment that allows

the exploration and examination of all of those personality traits, and their nuances, that one possess or has the potential to possess.

### **6.2.1. Positive Spaces**

Here in this section on positive spaces I will discuss the two positive transformations that most rose out of the empirical data; happiness and confidence. I will discuss them in the light of well-being and resilience.

It is argued here that CHICKS produced spaces of happiness that can be returned to even when back home and that can foster change. Research in positive feelings and emotions has dramatically increased in the last decade or so. With the positive psychology movement the focus in psychology has shifted from clinical psychology towards psychological strengths. In human geography emotional geographies have found their way into most investigations into the lived experience. There is even an academic journal called *The Journal of Happiness Studies*. However, as with well-being research, there still is some reluctance to include happiness into academic investigations. Averill and More (2000) suggest that this is due to the hugely subjective nature of happiness that makes it difficult to define and measure. It is true that people find happiness in a myriad of things that vary considerably, also what gives happiness to one might not necessarily cause the same effect for someone else. Although sources of happiness come in multitude there are some that are found cross cultures and generations, for example, personal control (Nettle, 2004), quality of one's environment (Pacione, 2003) and religion or religious beliefs (Diener and Seligman, 2004) can all make a person happy.

Happiness is such a part of everyday life that it is somewhat surprising that it has not been looked at more, especially in human geography. Maybe it is in fact this certain banality or everydayness why happiness does not feature much in human geography. However since it has such strong links to well-being it should not be overlooked especially in investigations into children and young people.

Is it not surprising that the young people are happy at CHICKS since the focus is on fun activities and experiences. Furthermore the adults on camps are committed for offering a great holiday for all of those who attend. Smiles, laughter,

joking around and general joy are all characteristics of a CHICKS camp regardless of weather. I remember how the wind was so strong that it made the arrows at archery fly to whichever direction or when it rained so hard during a cycling trip that one had difficulty seeing; however everyone still had fun and enjoyed themselves. Similarly at the interviews there wasn't a single young person, supervisor or a volunteer who would have not smiled or laughed more than once due to a happy fun memory or reminiscence. Below Ally explains her perception of CHICKS as a (happy) place.

*"It makes kids happy (laughs). CHICKS is a place where kids go to be happy (laughs). Yeah...I don't know what it is about it...you can't point it on one thing...lots of different things it is really yeah just really kind of a happy place (laughs)...."*

*Yeah when we go to bed each night my cheeks are hurting from always smiling. Yeah I smile more here".*

*Personal Interview with Ally, 14*

Ally's perception of CHICKS as a happy place is not surprising but still interesting and potentially significant. Since places can play an important role in identity development the value and label attached to a place surely is meaningful. Ally is attaching strong positive feeling to CHICKS as a place. Csikszentmihalyi (2003) found in his sample of American 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders that feeling good, excited, proud, sociable and active were all associated with higher trait happiness scores. In other words there is a link between a host of positive emotions and happiness but more importantly this link can extend beyond the moment. In fact, Csikszentmihalyi (2003) argues that when a young person experiences these positive feelings it opens up potential spaces for vitality or at least offers an understanding of the link, thus leaving a mental map of sort. CHICKS offers constant opportunities for these types of positive emotions (I will expand on this in the next section) and hence can strongly affect how we view our emotional states even long after the actual event. Of course there is the argument that the initial happiness will fade away and life gets in the way back at home.

*"I was really excited and my mum was like calm down you are very loud. You are shouting and I hadn't realised cause I was so excited and I was like CHICKS...you just get used to being loud and shouting...we got in the car and was shouting and mum was like calm down...but then I calmed down and it was back to reality."*

*Personal Interview with Becky, 14*

This is Becky recalling her mother picking her up after her CHICKS camp. In the last sentence it almost seems that she lets go of some of that CHICKS happiness and enters back into her usual life. However below is a quote from Becky when I asked her to describe CHICKS.

*"I always smile...and I wanna go again and I remember the memories and I am happy again...it's like win win. I just think there is always CHICKS next year again....and I can always go... I'd be really sad if I can't go."*

*Personal Interview with Becky, 14*

She clearly seems to be able to return to the happiness in her mind and memories and uses them as a strength right then and there. These explicit narratives of happiness above came from two older females in my sample of young people perhaps suggesting that some are more in touch with their feeling and emotions. That however does not mean that the feelings do not exist. Below are two referral agent narratives describing the higher happiness levels in the young people they had referred.

*Tea: What did you hear about CHICKS from him?*

*Duncan: Really positive. He wanted to go back and he had a great time. He came back with lots of certificates and medals and stuff which is obviously fantastic for his self-esteem and his sense of worth. Morris didn't have a bad word to say about CHICKS and keeps asking when he can go back so you can't get better recommendation than that I suppose.*

*Tea: Would you say that you saw any changes in him?*

*Duncan: Emotionally a lot happier definitely.*

*Personal Interview with RA Duncan*

*"The families say what a change in the child after they've come back. How positive the child is. How much more happy they are."*

*Personal Interview with RA Olivia*

As mentioned earlier in this thesis emotional events (positive or negative) produce stronger and more vivid memories so even when the memory fades and time passes the seed of the feeling has been planted. Some referral agents, one example in the next section, commented that the happiness fades quickly once back home. A few volunteers and supervisors told me of people who had questioned the meaningfulness of CHICKS since they give this wonderful experience to the young people and then send them back to their homes that are not always ideal for development and well-being. Example of such scepticism below.

*“A girl said to me on camp it was the first time she could be free and like other children. I’ve had people say that it is quite cruel giving children a taste of what they can’t have. And I said no I can understand people having that view point... But you give them hope and having those memories... positive memories. One girl told me that for once she had something to share when the teacher asked what you did on Halloween”.*

*Personal Interview with VOL Verity, 23*

I would tell these sceptics that it has been found over and over again that affluence or material wealth does not have links with happiness ratings (Graham, 2009). Secondly most of these young people are surrounded by people who are in the same position than them hence their relative well-being can be at *normal* levels. This is not to suggest that difficult and adverse life events would not have an effect on your well-being, but to argue that even a brief exposure to happiness can lead to further positivity. Below is one such example that shows that CHICKS happiness can be a start of something greater and long lasting.

*“Yeah we had one boy and he just came back and he said you know he had the most amazing time and he was much more positive at school. His behaviour improved in school from that we could built on that and get him going out to school to mix with other people. It was always a struggle his social skills and we then managed to get him on catering course with students from another school and he has been very successful on that to the point that he is now leaving school and he is going to a catering course at University provision in the county.”*

*Personal Interview with RA Mary*

What she is describing here is a variety of positive experiences brought upon by an initial positive experience. Kahn and Isen (1993) found that positive emotions make people more disposed to variety which then further broadens their behavioural options. In the face of hardship and difficulties positive emotions and

positive thought can then be the force that pushes people through. For example many bereavement studies (e.g. Kivimäki et al., 2005) have shown that those bereaved whom show optimism, and positive affect, cope better with their loss. Additionally Fredrickson (2002) asked a group of undergraduates to think about the most important problem or issue that they had dealt with in the past year. It was found that those students who scored higher on positive affect tended to use more effective and broader coping techniques than those who had low scores on positive affect. Of course all these findings, and the research methods used in these studies, are susceptible to scrutiny and criticism, but what they essentially are saying is that people with positive thoughts have tools in their emotional or psychological toolbox to deal with stress and hardship. Happy memories can this way be transformed into a psychological buffer or a shield that can protect us against adversity (Fredrickson, 2004).

Furthermore the Broaden and Build Theory (Fredrickson and Joiner, 2001) postulates that positive emotions trigger an upward spiral toward emotional well-being. The theory is based on the assumption that positive emotions change and enhance one's cognitive repertoire as well as build up their personal resources. This then creates a cycle where positive emotions turn into creative and flexible new ways of thinking. These enhanced thought-action repertoires then give birth to more positive emotions and thoughts. This cycle or upward spiral then has the potential to build psychological resources and resilience to adversity. Through positive emotions and positive way of thinking one can build the personal knowledge base, become more creative and build up psychological resilience. One example of a new way of dealing with a familiar situation is below.

*"It's like...I did self-harm pretty bad and it looked scratches and then she goes like and then I had and she had and you go like why did you do it and I got help now so there are all these other sides to it. So if you are looking at the right side. Other peoples' stories and how they have coped like...if you need time out to calm down...which is what me and mum do now....if one of us blows up it is like yeah have half an hour to ourselves...if we are having an argument...you have to get stuff out...like friends they are there for you but when you really need them they are actually not...but family you can't choose..."*

*Personal Interview with Becky, 14*

Becky is describing here a new technique of dealing with her emotions. She mentions the other young people at CHICKS and how their experiences maybe helped her to understand hers better. Feeling good and happy at CHICKS and 'fitting in' is also apparent in the two narratives below.

*Michael: Yeah me and Angus we both live with our Nan and we were talking about like what happened to brothers and sisters and what is going on in our family.*

*Tea: How did you find that?*

*Michael: It was quite nice.*

*Tea: Have you done that with friends from school?*

*Michael: No.*

*Tea: Why did you feel that you can speak to Angus?*

*Michael: I don't know. I just felt there was something inside me that I could trust him.*

*Tea: And how did that talking make you feel?*

*Michael: Really happy cause like I kept it in all my life and like when I let it out I feel really happy. And all the other times I felt really sad.*

*Personal Interview with Michael, 9*

*"Everyone had kinda like oh my mum is ill kinda thing. Like everyone's mum was ill or whatever. I don't know it was just like normal. I wouldn't say like here oh no I am the only one who has it. I wouldn't say that cause that is just like part of me and I don't really see it different but at CHICKS like everyone just had it so it wasn't like a big deal if you know what I mean."*

*Personal Interview with Laura, 15*

Michael expresses feeling happy when he was able to share something to someone with whom he felt a connection and sameness. Laura realised that having an ill mother can be a normal thing and not necessarily marginalising. So happiness at CHICKS could also come from these specific moments of connectedness and belonging. Being happy to be oneself can be hugely beneficial for identity development and open further positive spaces (Hart et al., 2007). Happiness at CHICKS is an emotion that is constantly present. What I have discussed here is that those moments and feeling of happiness can give birth to new realisations, or way of dealing with adversity, or simply being more

content being oneself. The next section on confidence will continue the exploration of the transformative effect CHICKS can create.

This section on confidence will demonstrate how attending a CHICKS camp can increase and grow confidence. I will discuss this space of transformation in the light of general well-being as well as something that can open up avenues to resilience. Confidence was something that was frequently brought up by all the CHICKS adults. There seemed to be a common understanding or belief that CHICKS offered many opportunities for confidence building, and was positive for one's experience of self-confidence. Since CHICKS is full of activities that offer opportunities for skill development or for showing off talent, it is an optimal place for confidence development. However, as in the example below, there were many occasions where a young person was reluctant to engage or try something at first.

*“At circus skills he didn’t wanna try anything... And then he did and was amazing in everything and all the other kids were encouraging him and from then on he got more involved and that for me represents CHICKS on a bigger scale. They come with baggage but get shown that they can branch out and not everyone will have that opinion on them. He is really really cool. That sticks out for me... Noah on a pogo stick (laughs).”*

*Personal Interview with SUP Natasha*

The above incident was not an isolated one but rather I would say there was a similar story at least once in every camp. But as in the story above such anxieties to engage were almost every time overcome and was often the results of, like in the narrative above, encouragement from the rest of the camp. There was one particular incident when the whole camp came together to encourage a supervisor to complete a high rope course. The supervisor was visibly scared of climbing up and actually started crying half way up. One of the young people spotted this and organised the rest of the camp to cheer her. Everyone started to shout words of encouragement and the supervisor managed to climb all the way up the rope. In this case the target was a supervisor but most often it was a young person. As discussed in the other two empirical chapters the affective network at CHICKS was very young person oriented. Hart et al. (2007) put forward an argument that by fostering young person's interests through encouragement and

support can increase their self-esteem, as well as widen their opportunities for exposure to positive reactions thereby fostering resilience. In other words by giving the young person experiences of mastering or learning a skill, as well as showing an interest in them and their skill, a seed of confidence is planted. This is not to say that this alone will be sufficient to increase very low confidence, for example, but to plant a seed of resilience that can then further grow. Below is a narrative that nicely ties CHICKS experiences together with the rest of young person's life.

*"I don't know if I can just put it down to just on that holiday...his confidence has grown, he is 13 now I mean he is there is great change in his life anyway turning from a little boy into a young man so he is changing quite a lot anyway so there are changes but I don't know whether that's to do with the CHICKS holiday or to do with other things."*

*Personal Interview with RA Dana*

As mentioned one cannot claim that all the positive changes in a young person would be due to CHICKS, but rather that CHICKS plays a part in opening up a possibility for new and positive experiences (this will be develop further in the next section); showing them that they have abilities and skills, giving them the experience of success. Below are four examples of such realisations and experiences.

*"I think that CHICKS builds on your confidence. Cause afterwards I volunteered in classes instead of like hiding my head and trying to get out if there (laughs). If I know the answer now I will say it. Depending on what they want us to volunteer for I will stick my hand up."*

*Personal Interview with Carmen, 16*

*"Yeah I look at the pictures every day and I read what they put and at the back. Nate said well done, good bravery and Gemma said thank you for coming I had a nice time and Kelly said well done for coming and having a good try. I felt quite proud. I did activities that I felt scared of doing. I was scared of horse riding."*

*Personal Interview with Armani, 9*

*"I learned that I can do something if I try like oh I can't do that and I give up like. But if I try I can do it and that is how I learned how to swim cause I just tried and kept trying and then I managed to do it."*

*Personal Interview with Jessica, 14*

*Tea: Learned anything about yourself?*

*Jake: Like you never knew you can do that but you can do it all the time...*

*Tea: Do you carry that over anywhere else?*

*Jake: At CHICKS yeah... Sometimes it does carry over but when you get to CHICKS you are confident every time you go there.*

*Personal Interview with Jake, 13*

Carmen clearly has been able to transfer her experience of confidence at CHICKS to everyday life. Armani goes back to those feelings of confidence daily by reading the messages from the supervisors and Jessica learned to swim whilst at CHICKS. Here was a young lady who had not had opportunities for swimming in her everyday environment. At CHICKS she was apprehensive of water at first but practised relentlessly the whole week and with the help, support and encouragement of the CHICKS adults she, at the final swimming session, had both the courage and the skill to swim unaided for a few meters. Needless to say she received a huge cheer from everyone on camp. She learned the value of persistency and hopefully is able to apply that later in life. Jake's story is slightly different. He has been to CHICKS many times and associates CHICKS as a place where his confidence is high. He doesn't necessarily think that he is able to keep it up back in the everyday, but again he has that experience of confidence and he knows he is capable of it. However there is the argument to be made that once back in the everyday, in hardship and adversity, it is difficult to sustain confidence.

*"I think that at the end of the day they quickly subdue back into what is their everyday existence and I suppose opportunities just like that are amazing and wonderful but they are quite isolated experiences that I guess they take a lot from but it's sometimes hard to...does that make sense....One thing I would say that come out is the confidence because it's sort of away from their family in a different area and you know meet children that they are not familiar with and sort of those conversations and that confidence but I just wonder how you can sustain that when they come back from it because it quickly goes back to sort of everyday life really...I think it is important when they've had a good experience and for them to get that opportunity again."*

*Personal Interview with RA Penny*

Although I still argue that even one off experiences can build a seed of confidence, or resilience, it is of course important that these seeds are fostered. Here is a sad example of what could happen when the young people get back home:

*“Two of the mums I can imagine reading those gorgeous comments and saying well obviously they are not writing about you or they obviously don’t know what you are like and completely just dispelling the magic really.”*

*Personal Interview with RA Mary*

CHICKS obviously cannot control what happens at the homes of the young people, but there are a couple of mechanisms through which CHICKS fosters these seeds of confidence. Firstly they encourage the young people to stay in touch. The letters written by the adults are always written in an extremely encouraging and supporting manner, almost like an extension of the atmosphere on the camps. Secondly CHICKS supervisors are incredibly committed to helping the young people as much as they can, even after they have left their care. For example there was a young lady who was quite talented at football but, in her everyday environment, had lacked the opportunity or encouragement to join a team. The supervisors on her camp acknowledged this and, with the help of her social worker, organised a team for her as well as transport to training that had previously been an issue. But of course there is only so much CHICKS can do after the young people leave their care. There could be a better organised ‘after care’. Some referral agents told me they would have liked to have received a report back from CHICKS after young person’s camp. However there are practical issues that make this tricky. Also oftentimes the referral agents’ schedules were such that they might have not had an opportunity to see the young person for a long time after camp; hence possibly missing out on opportunities for further nurturing and development of confidence and resilience. I will discuss this in more detail in the next chapter the conclusions.

*Jason: I am already quite confident person but like in myself I knew I wasn’t as confident... I wasn’t able to share as much. I could speak to anyone and seem open but inside like I wouldn’t actually share anything personally. To be able to talk to people at CHICKS and just talk about it was like I was a bit more confident person then. Obviously everyone was friends so you didn’t feel put down.*

*Carmen: There was no judging and like here there is always like...*

*Jason: There you could be completely mental and here someone would say you should be in a mental home. In Cornwall it's normal.*

*Carmen: Like here there is a way to act and dress but at CHICKS if you wanted to walk around as a baby then yeah (laughs)... But here you would get put down.*

*Personal Interview with Jason, 12 and Carmen, 16*

Both Jason and Carmen make references to the unique atmosphere and liminality of CHICKS as well as to the love and CHICKS bond and how through that bond they discovered these new dimensions of themselves. These discoveries are the topic of the next two sections.

### **6.2.2. New Horizons**

Here I will discuss new selves and new directions. Together these sections will further expand the argument of this chapter that CHICKS produces spaces of transformations in relation to self and identity.

Here I will demonstrate how attending CHICKS brought up new or rediscovered dimensions to the self. As mentioned in the section on confidence CHICKS activities and atmosphere offered multiple opportunities for discovering skill, interests and talents. Gilligan (1999) argues that care professionals have the tendency to disvalue these ordinary or mainstream opportunities since they are not specifically designed to be therapeutic. However, Gilligan further claims that since these types of activities are removed from the stigma of an intervention, or special treatment, they can be normalising and un-marginalising and thus hugely effective. Granted CHICKS is a special treatment in a sense that there is a specific criteria that has to be fulfilled in order for the young person to attend. In other word those enjoying a more typical childhood do not attend. But on the other hand CHICKS does not offer anything special or extravagant but experiences that all the young people should experience. Many of the young people attending CHICKS come from environments that perhaps require them to behave in certain ways for example taking on responsibilities beyond their years. Earlier in this chapter I discussed Goffman's theory of people as actors taking on multiple roles

in their interactions. I argue here that CHICKS offered those opportunities for the young people.

*“There were girls who were so grown up and so street wise and they mixed with kids who were young for their age and these tough girls let down all their boundaries...they were able to be kids. At home maybe they are forced to be an adult but here they can be someone else.”*

*Personal Interview with SUP Jane*

What supervisor Jane is describing above can be said to be one of the central premises of CHICKS, and it is something that is reflected in the title of this thesis as well; ‘giving children chance to be children’. On one of my camps there was a 15 year old girl from a big city. Already on the way from the train station it became clear that, although hundreds of miles away, she was very much engrossed in her home environment. She was talking about her friends back home, describing a series of quite shocking events that according to her had taken place just a few days before. She exhibited quite rude uncooperative behaviour, for example refusing to give her phone away (one of the rules at CHICKS), so that she could stay in touch with her friends back home. Only approximately three hours into her camp she decided that she would go back home. In spite of the efforts from the adults her mind was made up and she left only a few hours after she arrived. Perhaps because she wasn’t able to enter into a different role, to let herself experience a different way of conducting oneself. Although CHICKS might not be able to make a difference for everyone there were many stories and narratives of successful new positive selves. Two such narratives are below.

*Tea: Did you learn anything about yourself at CHICKS?*

*Peter: Quite a bit of myself... I am not always the person I seem to be (cries) by first look. Cause in school (I) can sometimes be quite boring with my facts and figures; then again I have helped nearly everybody that I know in school...*

*Tea: So at school that’s how people see you... as someone who is very smart?*

*Peter: And quiet...*

*Tea: But are you saying that’s not all there is to you...Here you are able to be something else as well?*

*Peter: Yeah let myself go (cries)...*

*Personal Interview with Peter, 12*

*Sam: They were worried about me cause they thought usually when I'm around other people I get into trouble a lot so (laughs)...so yeah... I didn't get told off (at CHICKS) it's not like school (laughs)....She (mum) was proud of me so cause I didn't kick off or nothing....I was very proud of myself. I was angry at no one at CHICKS... No one got me wound up cause say someone got me wound up I tell them to their face like stop it or I'll hit you (laughs). I'm just sort of one of those lads who is straight I don't care what happens quite often at school actually (laughs)....*

*Tea: So would you say you were little bit different at CHICKS?*

*Sam: Yeah no one pushed my buttons it was like fresh new start. They didn't know me like I kick off... Teachers at our school if you kick off in one lesson all the teachers are like that's Sam....don't go by him... Okay one lesson I kick off and everyone think I kick off at anything. Stupid like that. It was brilliant time at CHICKS and I would tell anyone who wants to go I would push them on I would. It's a great experience.*

*Personal Interview with Sam, 13*

Both Peter and Sam talk about the experience of entering a new role, or a new self, whilst at CHICKS. This seemed to be especially liberating and emotional for Peter who was crying during this part of the interview. For both boys CHICKS offered the opportunity to be someone else or maybe actually be oneself. And although this new identity or self dimension might be difficult to maintain in their everyday environment, as with happiness and confidence, they have the experience of it and an increased awareness of themselves as a person. Below Dylan talks about how, maybe for the first time in his life, at CHICKS he realised he is capable of making friends; that he is someone who can make friends.

*"It is easy...relying on staff and that. It is easy to make friends as long as you don't try too hard for it. It is easier...more kids there...more friends... not that easy on my street to make many friends. Down my street it is proper like hard going kids there and all that. Most of them are like saying you are not having that or you can't be my friend if you wear certain clothes and do certain stuff or don't have certain good stuff...*

*People are easy to make laugh. Instead of like always thinking people hate you, just join in."*

*Personal Interview with Dylan, 9*

Unfortunately I do not have data available on whether or not Dylan was able to transfer that skill of making friends from CHICKS to his everyday life. Evidence on the sustainability of the behaviour change or the new self from boot camps is not that encouraging. Stinchcomb and Clinton (2001) reviewed outcome data

from boot camps as well as carried out their own study of one such camp. They discovered that in case of young people with criminal records levels of re-offending were similar than in those who had not attended such camp. Boot camps of course operate in a completely different matter than CHICKS. The focus is on military style discipline and shock effect rather than the CHICKS style of support and encouragement. Although I do not have very long longitudinal data there is some evidence to suggest that those new selves or behaviour patterns are in use after CHICKS too.

*“I mean I took a girl and she was crying she didn’t wanna leave CHICKS and wanted to be a volunteer. Mum said when we got back her relationship with her daughter was different, she was able to hug her mum when she had been quite frozen before that so it give them the opportunity to discuss with other children that she wasn’t alone with some of the problems she was experiencing at home.”*

*Personal Interview with RA Eva*

What referral agent Eva is describing here is an emotional skill that this girl learned, or re-discovered, at CHICKS and it helped her to re-connect with her mother. The fact that this girl came home from CHICKS wanting to be a volunteer at 18 is not surprising since it was often expressed by the young people especially by those who were close to, or at, the CHICKS maximum age of 15. In fact this was encouraged by the CHICKS staff who often praised the characteristics of a young person and assuring them they would make a great volunteer. Gilligan (1999) asserts that these types of encouragements or praises are often better received from adults beyond home, or the professional care arena, because they are judged to be more genuinely given. So perhaps such praises will leave more permanent marks on one’s identity and behaviour.

In this section I discussed the multiple new self dimensions that the young people experienced at CHICKS. The opportunity to experience new, different or hidden aspects of your identity can be truly transforming to the extent that it makes one change their outlook on life and make positive plans for themselves. The next and final section is about these new directions. In this section I will give a few examples of young people who made new realisations or discoveries that did or could change or alter the direction of their lives. This section is all about future or imagined selves. What can happen when one realises their potential, skills, and

talents and receives encouragement and praise. Below are two narratives from referral agents describing these types of new directions or realisations.

*“...I mean two of them was saying that it just changed their outlook when they came back. One of them in particular. I couldn't get him to talk or to do much... He sits there.... But now he sits there talking to me because it actually opened him....He went for a holiday and for once he wasn't bullied he wasn't...No one took the mickey out of him. It's improved his confidence.*

*One of the other ones I can't believe the change...I mean this is a girl that didn't speak to me. I would get hello and good bye and that was that and now she came back and said Larry that is one of the best things I've ever done in my life. I got to go again I've met some fantastic people and its fine. In the two I can't believe how much change there can be after one week of holiday. And one of the girls is thinking of moving to London. She met a couple of people on the trip and she is saying London this and that so it changed her view cause all she has ever seen is this place”.*

*Personal Interview with RA Larry*

*“Yeah we had one boy and he just came back and he said you know he had the most amazing time and he was much more positive at school and his behaviour improved in school from that we could build on that and get him going out to school to mix with other people. It was always a struggle his social skills and we then managed to get him on catering course with students from another school and his been very successful on that to the point that he is now leaving school and he is going to a catering course at University provision in the county.”*

*Personal Interview with RA Mary*

Larry mentions confidence again but the really interesting and potentially hugely transforming notion here is the fact that after CHICKS this young man was able to have a more effective working relationship with his social worker; a person who has a lot of potential to help him through life. There were a few other informal mentions of such improved relationships between a young person and their referral agent/social worker. The girl Larry is talking about and the boy Mary is referring both realised that there are opportunities available to them that perhaps previously they could not see or have the confidence to pursue. These types of future selves can be vital in well-being since they instil a sense of hope (Hart et al., 2007). Hope is hugely future oriented and often used as a psychological intervention as a forward driving force (Brown, 2000).

Kraftl (2008) argues that self-esteem and hope correlate and share multiple similarities such as being dynamic. He further postulates that young people are

aware that their hope is fragile in some sense and reliant in the wider environment and adults. I would assert that perhaps it is not that important whether these imagined directions or selves actually come true but more important is the hope itself since it can give strength in the here and now, connecting the present with the future, the being with the becoming. Here is an example of such fusion of the present and the future.

*“Yeah he just had a lovely time and he has kept in touch with some of the young people that he met on Facebook so you know it has widened his circle of friends and he asked his mum questions about his own circumstances when he went home because of the other people that he met because they were all young carers and he said to his mum when he got back am I a young carer and...in some ways he is not a young carer but he does help out quite a lot because his mum is a single parent and she’s got a lot on her plate so...”*

*Personal Interview with RA Dana*

CHICKS helped the boy Julie is referring to better understand his life and situation and that of his family. With the widened circle of friends he has gained a valuable support network that could carry him far in the future. The experience of CHICKS made him question his identity and where he fits in the world. Perhaps he will now identify as a young carer and since it is an identity he shares with his new friends perhaps it is not marginalising but something that can enhance sense of belonging and sense of self. Here I have discussed the new realisations and directions going to CHICKS helped to create. By instilling a sense of hope helped the young people to realize new possibilities, directions and lives opened for them. In the next section I will conclude and bring together all the sections on this chapter on transformative spaces.

### **6.3. Conclusion**

This chapter examined and discussed the multiple transformative effects that attending a CHICKS camp created. Here I will draw together conclusions from these findings.

Identity and the self are important if not vital for well-being. Notions such as happiness, confidence and self-esteem can have multiple implications for the wider welfare of an individual. Although identity development is probably a lifelong task young people, especially with increased independence as well as

responsibilities, have multiple opportunities for self-development and identity building. Identity and the self are built in a complex web of social and the physical environment. However young people such as those who come to CHICKS might not enjoy lives where encouragement, nurturing of talent or opportunities to try new things or gain new experience are available for identity development.

Since CHICKS is activity full, it offers multiple opportunities not only for skill development but for social interactions in many different contexts and with many different types of people. CHICKS is a happy place where the young people can thrive and succeed and learn from and carry those experiences in them and with them to their everyday environments. Happiness together with increased confidence at CHICKS can create a strong positive upward force that can create spaces of transformation and resilience-the ability to survive and thrive in the face of adversity. I showed here that happiness and confidence although every day are concepts that should not be ignored when investigating the lives of disadvantaged young people or in fact the lives of anyone. Furthermore it was argued here that CHICKS offers opportunities for the discovery of new self-dimensions or perhaps a re-discovery of them. These new selves can further enhance resilience. Young person can also realise as the result of their experiences at CHICKS, or aided by them, their future or imagined selves and life directions. Whether or not these realisations lead to these specific plans they give the young person that sense of hope that something different, new or better is possible for them.

The next chapter will finish by drawing together all the themes of this thesis. By doing that this thesis will clarify the conclusions for each individual chapter before further moving to draw all the chapters together, as well as discussing the wider implications, research critique and further research directions.

## Chapter 7

### Conclusions

In this final and concluding chapter I will draw together the main themes of this thesis. The aim of this chapter is to form a coherent picture of the themes discussed within this thesis by providing answers to the research questions identified in chapter 1, identifying theoretical and policy implications and suggesting future research directions in the (geographical) study of young people, care, and memory. Furthermore this final chapter reaffirms the main statements made in the thesis, discusses the issues and reaches a final conclusion based on the evidence presented in the previous chapters.

#### 7.1. Introduction

This research was set to examine and explore the memory formation and countryside experiences of disadvantaged young people attending CHICKS respite breaks known as camps. This group is absent on geographical examinations on memory and memories and more knowledge is needed on the impact of leisure activities on well-being and identity in disadvantaged young people. Additionally, it is vital to understand how these third sector organisations can contribute to the care and well-being of disadvantaged young people so that such care can be efficiently and systematically organised to produce best possible outcomes.

The research sought to answer these three research questions:

- 1) *How do care experiences shape memory formation at CHICKS?*
- 2) *Secondly how does care produce space?*
- 3) *Finally to investigate what kind of emotional geographies care produces?*

In the next section I will provide a synthesis of the empirical findings as well as provide answers for the research questions.

## **7.2. Summary and discussion of the main findings**

This section is the main body of this final chapter. Here I converge the main themes of this thesis in order to answer the research questions. I will also analytically highlight how this thesis has advanced knowledge. Although I will occasionally refer back to the arguments made within the chapters, this section is more than a summary of the research but rather an effort to systematically take the discussion to a loftier level. Here I will also discuss both the theoretical and policy implications brought upon by this thesis.

As discussed in chapter one social care system in the UK is both overstretched and costly. Since there are an increasing number of children and young people who need extra care it is important that we are constantly researching and looking for new effective and financially viable ways of providing such care. Running an operation like CHICKS is not cheap but there are multiple points that can be taken away from the CHICKS way of caring and put into action in other places. Therefore first and foremost this thesis contributes and adds knowledge to the geographies of care. Chapter 4 examined the first research question on the role of care experiences on memory formation at CHICKS, here I will explore and discuss that further.

CHICKS has a unique way of caring for young people. First there is the somewhat simple idea of giving young people, who have experienced hardship and stressors beyond their years, respite as well as fun experiences. Fun as a concept is so banal that perhaps that is why it is often overlooked in academic and in care literature. However this thesis has shown the importance of fun to be included both in practical work with young people as well as on theoretical level. I demonstrated in chapter 4 how fun (and silliness) became embedded into the CHICKS way of caring for young people. This fun extended beyond caring actions but rather was everywhere at CHICKS creating an atmosphere that tied together care and fun in an affective and emotional ways. In other words fun and care are so interconnected at CHICKS that to explore one is to explore the other. This is a somewhat novel and an unusual way of providing care, and different to more

traditional ideas of geographies of care that circle around space and the care relationship dyad.

Although the importance of the carer has been highlighted before within geographies of care research, as discussed in chapter 2, at CHICKS this interconnected nature of care and fun required a very specific type of carer. Caring at CHICKS wasn't of course purely about the fun but rather incorporating fun into the more traditional ways of caring such as warmth and kindness. The supervisors at CHICKS had almost an uncanny ability to work in such ways that fostered emotional connections not only with the young people but volunteers alike. This then helped those volunteers who might have otherwise struggled to reach their full potential. The above is a difficult notion to put in a policy context. What could be ensured is that those who are in charge of any particular intervention are types of individuals who are kind, caring, warm, patient as well as great communicators. However these are attributes that are difficult to teach people and might even be difficult to detect in a person during an interview. Perhaps a vigorous vetting process would ensure some quality in staff and volunteers. Theoretically, however, these notions are a lot easier to handle. What this research has shown is the need to further include personality attributes into geographies of care (worker) research. Also by adding fun into the geographies of care research, especially in relation to young people, we could further explore the ability of fun to be therapeutic and to positively impact well-being.

What I have shown in this thesis is that creation of fun was made possible by the flat ontology of care at CHICKS. Although geographies of care research already includes a large research body of power relations in care context; this idea of flat ontology of care will further enhance our knowledge of such relations. As discussed throughout the flat ontology of care did not mean a complete absence of power but rather a shared relational power. In chapter two I discussed how across disciplines the period of adolescence is seen as an increased need for independence and freedom from adults, parents in particular. CHICKS somewhat challenged this idea. Of course parents are conceptualised differently than perhaps other adults but the idea of adults and young people as equally creating

experiences is worth exploring more, both in applied as well as in theoretical sense. Of course there are instances where this type of flat ontology of care and decentralised power are not appropriate and where young people will have to be subject to (more) adult control. But in an environment like CHICKS refigured power relations made it partly possible to have such strong affective shared experiences.

These experiences born out of the interconnected geographies of care and fun then gave birth to geographies of love. This research has demonstrated that geographies of love can be applied to beyond romantic love or landscape experiences, as in Wylie's (2007) study. Furthermore this research has tied together the geographies of care and love. Since in the context of CHICKS geography of love is essentially about care, attachment and sense of belonging that are maintained through visual means after the camps. In other words the photographs from CHICKS seemed to be the main way the happy memories were sustained post camps. Additionally contact with other campers as well as the adults helped to sustain the emotional landscapes created at CHICKS. Although many CHICKS young people came from dysfunctional family units this is not the same as coming from loveless families. However the child centred approach of CHICKS heightened the feelings of love and affection, and the fun activities provided opportunities for affective shared experiences. Hence this research has shown how geographies of love can be utilised within care and its theoretical registers.

Since the first research questions explored how care experiences shaped memory formation at CHICKS the last point I want to make is here that all that all of those experiences of fun and love left very strong memory traces. This research has added onto our understanding of geographical investigations on memory. Firstly it has filled a gap where this group of young people were previously absent from such investigations. Secondly this research has shown how memory can be mobilised beyond investigations on representations to more of an active way of using memory as a part of care as well as memories as a possible tool for well-being. Also this research has enhanced our knowledge of

happy memory and moving away from the detrimental impact some memories can have towards more of a positive discourse. Having discussed the interplay of care and memory I will now move on to the space of care at CHICKS.

As discussed in various parts in this thesis there is an overwhelming amount of evidence on the benefits of nature both on physical and mental welfare. Since this investigation was a social science research, and deployed qualitative methods, there are no physiological measurements available on the benefits of the natural environment at CHICKS. However the qualitative methods revealed some benefits, as well as gave insight to the role of the natural environment in creating the CHICKS experience. First I want to focus on liminality and how this research added to our understanding of it. As discussed in chapter six nature as a liminal space has seldom been investigated. As Van Gennep (1960) connected liminal spaces and changing or new identities so did I. The natural environment at CHICKS was liminal because it was new and a deviation from the norm. And as such it allowed the exploration of new identities and entrance into new or previously undiscovered parts of oneself. However what I have argued here is that in fact it was not necessarily the natural environment that (partly) created the transformative effects but rather the feeling of liminality. Those liminal feelings were further enhanced by the silly, funny and unusual activities, behaviour and looks of those on camp. This takes the concept of liminality to new heights by adding a level of unique affectivity onto it that can only be achieved at exceptional places such as CHICKS. The above statement might not sound as good news in a care policy context since it would be difficult to design specific policies for CHICKS type disconnect. Although it could be argued that by adopting silly and fun ways of working with young people could lead to the desirable results. However liminality at CHICKS is much more than silly escapism and this will be further expanded in the next section. But for now I want to continue exploring the role of the natural environment at CHICKS.

Although liminality at CHICKS was a combination of many factors I still argue that it was the magical and explorative nature of the natural environment that offered a unique frame on which to build liminality. Although a more urban environment

might also be exciting it probably offers less tactile and sensory experiences. In chapter 2 I discussed Kellert's (2002) assertions of nature as a teacher of many cognitive skills as well as various authors claims of nature as a space for building of independence. Although all of these points are valid and based on empirical findings the story was slightly different at CHICKS. The tactile nature allowed interactions between the adults and the young people. It acted as a way of creating together, building rapport and trust as well as discovering nature's magic together. In other words care actions helped to create both the physical space as well as space of liminality. By landscaping and doing nature together the affective networks that were so important at CHICKS were built and rebuilt. In this way the natural environment at CHICKS is socially constructed. This is on the line with Conradson's (2005) findings but adds that level of exploration, fun and tactility. In other words nature is there as a physical space but it takes a form an affective space; nature of care rather than nature of nature. This offers a new insight into spatiality of care and specifically nature as a space for care.

How can then this all be turned into meaningful policies in regards to caring for disadvantaged young people? Although I have argued that the natural environment alone might not play such an importance to well-being it is still vital that all young people are presented with opportunities to engage with the natural environments. Since the stimuli they offer are unique. Additionally this type of care beyond the everyday but focusing on leisure activities of any kind is beneficial. Since it is a break from a norm, and as such disorienting, and can offer beneficial liminal spaces. However what this research has shown is the importance of other people. Especially the types that are willing to let themselves go and engage in silliness and fun. Also what this research has shown is that those relationships do not necessarily need to be long term, but can be established in a fairly short space of time as well. So perhaps providing young people in a social care system with personal mentors who could occasionally take them beyond their everyday environments could be hugely beneficial for identity development and well-being.

What I am yet to discuss in this final chapter is how the natural environment at CHICKS aided in the process of being right here and now. By actively engaging with the landscape the young people were being in the present and the focus of their well-being was less future oriented but rather it was about well-being rather than well-becoming. In other words this research has not only re-thought about therapeutic landscapes but also how we frame childhood. As discussed in chapter 2 by Lee (2001) and others successful adulthood rather than childhood tends to be the desired (theoretical) goal for young people. This research, through being cared for in a therapeutic landscape, shifts the focus more to being than becoming, and as such can hopefully help in the development of theoretical frameworks exploring the value of young people's experiences and memories in the present not only what they might represent in the future. In terms of geographies of care this offers some thought for how we should 'measure' the outcomes of care for young people: is the ultimate goal for such care successful adulthood or well-being right here and now? Additionally this research has shown how it feels like to be part of a part of a CHICKS family, in other words how it feels like to be cared for rather than merely focusing on the outcomes.

Since this research and thesis are so full of affect and emotion, and the third research question addressed care and emotional geographies, it is imperative that those emotional geographies are further analysed in this conclusive chapter so that the full story truly emerges. As discussed throughout CHICKS offered multiple opportunities for the development of self and identity and as such became transformative. The countless activities, as well as meeting and spending time with new young people and adults, all became potential for self-discoveries. As discussed throughout the role of adults was vital in this. Such was the level of care, support and encouragement that it encouraged the young people to challenge themselves, or hone an already existing skill. In an applied setting this would mean offering such opportunities for young people coupled with plenty of encouragement and praise.

Both happiness and confidence at CHICKS were brought upon by a network of care, fun and emotion. As discussed in chapter 6 CHICKS the word happy was

strongly linked with CHICKS. CHICKS as a happy place reconceptualises our (academic) understandings of home. As discussed in chapter four home as a concept is widely researched across youth studies but those investigations often circle around more traditional definitions of home or focus on the care outcomes of different types of (institutional) homes. What I have shown here is that both the concepts of home and family can extend way beyond traditional definitions and even beyond kinship of any kind. The way this research has expanded our knowledge of homes is the discovery that the hugely affective notions of home and family can be attached to something and sensed even after a very short exposure to said environment. This is important because it is often thought that these types of strong emotional geographies would only develop after a lengthy exposure to people and place. This could have some applied implications although this is not to say that we should abandon traditional psychological interventions but to merely point out that fun memories and experiences could have therapeutic value beyond the experience itself.

This research has shown that care can produce the emotional geographies of confidence and happiness that can be further enhanced by the memories of CHICKS. However there are some caveats to this understanding. Care should be organised in a flat (fun) manner decentralising power. Further, (most of) those who provide the care have to be fully committed to the cause, genuinely interested about being part of somebody else's experience and willing to engage in (almost) whatever any particular environment requires. And finally, it should take place somewhere where liminal spaces can be created.

The next section outlines some of the possible limitations of the research.

### **7.3. Limitations**

This section identifies the (methodological) limitations within this study.

As with any academic investigations and studies there are some limitations to the present one which I will discuss here. As I identified in chapter 3 there were multiple methodological challenges in the present study. Although I offered alternatives and rationalisations for my methodological decisions there were a few methodological constraints that I want to further discuss here. First one is on

the longitudinal character of this study. As one of the research aims was to examine the emotional geographies that care produces; ideally this would be done with a longitudinal methodology to examine the long term effects too. However since the length of a PhD research is four years, out of which the last year should be devoted to the write up, this automatically constrained the possibilities here. Ideal research design here would have been pre-interviews before camp, interviews on camp, and follow-up interview annually until the young person is in adulthood. That type of longitudinal investigation would have possibly allowed a more comprehensive mapping of an individual's life and experiences and how CHICKS fits into that frame. But as I outlined in chapter 3 the time and access constraints made this virtually impossible. However I do believe that the longitudinal aspect in this study was carried out best to the possibilities providing time for reflection. Furthermore since I was able to access one of the leading organisations in this type of work one should not underestimate case study type of research, such as this, as they are more than capable producing data and ideas that can be used or further examined by other similar organisations.

Second consideration is CHICKS as a research arena. Firstly, since the study was limited to CHICKS there was not an opportunity to conduct comparative research with similar organisations. Such investigations would have undoubtedly yielded even more data and given the benefit to compare the effects of place, location, background of the young people and so on. Second, CHICKS as a research arena was in its uniqueness a challenging one. On one hand it provided multiple opportunities for rich data collection, as identified in chapter 3, but on the other hand the active nature of the volunteer research role that I had created challenges as well. I discussed in my methodology for example how at times the data could not be recorded until hours later due to the nature of my role on camps. Although this allowed time for reflection at times it might have slightly compromised knowledge production. However since my observational data collection took place on so many different camps I had the luxury of trial and error, and after a few camps started carrying pieces of paper with me where notes could be quickly scribbled on. Although a possible limitation here, by reflecting on it

here I hope this work can aid others conducting research in a similar setting to better understand and overcome research challenges such as above.

Thirdly there was the issue with the access to the young people as discussed in my methodology. Though as explained I used all the means available to me to get through the gatekeepers the limited access meant I could not ensure heterogeneity of my data. Hence all my young people participants are Caucasian and predominantly from the south-west of the UK. This then of course limits the generalisations of my results. However since the main aim of ethnography is to produce a narrative or map out the lives of a particular group of people (Crang and Cook, 2007), the sample did just that. So although I do not view this as a major limitation I wanted to mention it here to show awareness of the homogeneity of my participants, and the influence it can have on making any wider assumptions. However I feel that by expanding the research arena to include different organisations and geographical locations this will (easily) be overcome. I will discuss this further in the next section on future research.

Lastly I want to re-mention what I discussed in chapter 3; being a foreign researcher. As I explained in chapter 3 this could actually be used as a strength rather than a hindrance, and I believe I did achieve this. However since ethnography is trying to understand a particular culture in fine detail, it could be difficult to achieve for someone who has only spent a small number of years in that culture and was born and raised elsewhere with different cultural influences. So I might have missed some cultural clues, nuances or different shades of language but on the other hand culture is more than just the geographical culture as Willis (2000:34) states below:

“The sensuous meaningfulness embedded in cultural practises must, therefore, be understood as ‘sense-full’, not only in immediately local terms, but also in relation to socio-structural form and location providing ‘lived’ assessments of their possibilities as *humanly occupied*”

In other words I might be from another country but share some other commonalities which make my assessments of the lived experience perhaps

more precise. For example I am from an economically humble background and due to that did not necessarily enjoy a typical childhood, not unlike the young people at CHICKS. So although there were limitations to my research many of them could possibly be addressed in future research; next section offers suggestions for such explorations.

#### **7.4. Future research**

In this final section I will offer some suggestions for potential future research in the field of disadvantaged young people, care and memory.

As I mentioned in the previous section CHICKS as a research arena had a set of challenges. Although I feel that I navigated through them, as effectively as possible, future research could focus on developing robust methods for such unique research arenas. A research where the main focus would be on developing research methods rather than measuring outcomes might be useful. Furthermore future research with (more) creative and innovative research methods could open up avenues that interviews and observations do not reach. As I discussed in Chapter 3 the time constraints on camp were such that they inhibited the use of many interesting methods. Hence it would be hugely interesting to see what kind of data something like video projects, life chart mappings and drama based methods could produce.

Additionally it would be interesting to compare different types of qualitative methodologies, for example from grounded theory to ethical inquiry to see where the differences lay in the types of data and narratives each produce. Another interesting point of comparison would be comparing CHICKS to other similar organisations. This would give an opportunity to compare whether young people's camp experiences are similar even when certain variables differ. For example although CHICKS often referred to their young people as being from inner-cities some of the young people were actually from rather small towns. So it would be interesting to see if 'truly' inner city young people would sense and experience their CHICKS camps similarly to those from smaller places. Similarly being able to compare different cultural groups, such as young people of certain

religion or nationality, would produce interesting comparative data and increase our knowledge of cultural geographies and their impact on the self and identity.

Moreover, future research could focus more on the longitudinal aspect of the research. Obviously this would require massive resources but it would be very interesting, as well as potentially carry great applied implications, to be able to extend this research for years or even decades. To be able to interview adults that have attended CHICKS as a child would yield a whole new set of data and micro-geographies, and help as to better understand the interplay of care, nature and memory. On a smaller scale longitudinal future research could focus on more than one post-camp interview with a young person. Again this would give more insight on how CHICKS experiences are conceptualised and linked to everyday lives.

### **7.5. Final words**

This thesis set to examine how CHICKS cares for young people and how the young people experienced that care. Memories at CHICKS were created in an affective web of care, fun, liminality and love. Those connections were multiple and had many centres. The children and adults were co-creating a network of affect that is emotionally charged but also embedded into the spatial world. The actual landscapes together with the emotional landscapes formed a place where happiness and confidence increased. This thesis has challenged some of our existing ideas of how disadvantaged young people should be cared for and conceptualised by offering new insights and knowledge.

Word count: 82,342

**School of Geography, Archaeology and Earth Resources Ethics Committee**

**Format for Applications to the Ethics Committee**

<u>Descriptive Title of Project</u>	<u>Giving Children the Chance to be Children: Memory, Identity and holidays in the countryside</u>
<u>Investigator:</u>	<u>Tea Tverin</u> <u>School of Geography</u> <u>University of Exeter</u> <u>Peter Lanyon Building</u> <u>Penryn,</u> <u>Cornwall</u> <u>TR10 9EZ</u>
<u>Co-Investigator(s) or Supervisor(s):</u>	<u>Dr. Michael Leyshon</u> <u>School of Geography</u> <u>University of Exeter</u> <u>Peter Lanyon Building</u> <u>Penryn,</u> <u>Cornwall</u> <u>TR10 9EZ</u>
<u>Beginning date:</u>	<u>Ending date:</u>
March 2010	December 2012

**Research question / hypotheses in full:**

- i) To what extent do memories and experiences sustain children and young people in the months and years after a holiday in the countryside, giving them a remembered place where to return to in times of stress and anxiety?
- ii) What is the transformative effect of these holidays in giving children and young people a glimpse of an alternative future for themselves?
- iii) How can ethnographic methods be tailored to deliver deeper understanding of these issues amongst disadvantaged young people?

This research has been approved by the Trust of CHICKS, whose ethics co-ordinator has been involved with the development and the design of the project at every stage.

**Participants:**

The primary participants will be the children and young people who attend CHICKS (Country Holidays for Inner City Kids) holidays. Approximately 60 children and young people between the ages of 8-15 will participate in the study. All the children and young people have been referred to CHICKS through social services and health-care providers. Additionally some of the people affiliated with CHICKS, such as care workers, volunteers and youth workers, will be interviewed.

**Methods:**

Recruitment will be facilitated by youth workers from CHICKS who organise the holidays for children and young people and will actively participate in data collection. Informed consent will be sought from both the individuals themselves and their parents/guardians, via completion of a consent form. Participants will be assured of anonymity and given the right to withdraw at any stage. Additionally all participants will be given the opportunity to review and recall personal data, and provision will be made to distribute full and summary reports of the research findings to the participants.

The research will be carried out in two phases with the first stage (during camps) being primarily observational with more varied ethnographic techniques will be used after camps (second stage). Mixed ethnographic techniques such as participant observation, one-to-one interviews, group interviews, diary-keeping, blogging, auto-photography and mobile phone text interviews will be employed with the children and young people who attend CHICKS holidays. More traditional techniques, such as interviews, will be used with the adult participants. The children will be asked to describe their experiences of CHICKS-funded holidays. We will also explore how the activities tap into their perceptions of their own strengths, weaknesses and preferences and to what extent their idea of themselves is challenged by the holiday activities. Significant difficulties are not anticipated since tried-and-tested research methods will be employed.

**Ethical considerations:**

To deal with minors the researcher needs a CRB check. Furthermore the university policies for safeguarding vulnerable participants will be complied with. Informed consent is obtained from the parents as well as the children themselves. The researcher will work closely with CHICKS management to identify suitable participants for interviews. Since all the children and young people have been referred to CHICKS through social services and healthcare providers, there is a strong support network available for them should a heightened need arise due to the research. The participants/those around them will be reminded of this and contact details will be given, if needed, by the researcher.

If during the interviews the children express any reluctance to participate or experience heightened anxiety they will be reminded of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage. The researcher is experienced in addressing sensitive issues with people as well as dealing with anxiety and will recognise signs of anxiety and distress. The researcher will pay extra attention to non-verbal cues of reluctance and anxiety such as facial expressions and posture. The interview technique will be such so that the participants do not feel pressured to answer. Furthermore the children/young people can have a parent/guardian/social worker present when interviewed and they are free to step in and terminate the interview if they wish. The participants will not be implicitly asked about anxious events unless the child/young person brings it up him/herself. At the end of each interview the researcher will make sure that the children/young people as well as parents/guardians have an opportunity to ask any questions. They will also be reminded of the aims and objectives of the research. Additionally at the end of the interview the researcher will spend some “down time” with the participant; this might include activities such as chatting about sports/music/tv-shows or with younger children reading a book, listening to music, playing or watching tv. This is to ensure that the participants will have a positive memory of their participation.

Acts of remembering are not counter to the aims of the organisation, CHICKS, who purposefully work with children, young people and agencies as part of the process of helping young people to deal with difficult situations. Further, acts of remembering are not counter to the aims of the research which aims to understand how CHICKS holidays provide happy memories.

Due to the sensitive nature of the study issues of confidentiality and anonymity are paramount. The data will be kept between the investigator and the supervisor. Any participant identifying features will be removed from the reports visible to third parties.

**Signatures:**

Investigator’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

From: Steve Hinchliffe [Stephen.Hinchliffe@exeter.ac.uk]  
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2010 4:12 PM  
To: Leyshon, Michael; Tverin, Tea  
Subject: Tea Tverin Ethics Approval

Hi Mike - sorry for the delay - been on field work and away from email.  
This looks great and everything is fine. So I'm happy to sign this one off.  
Many thanks for the info.  
Steve

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Biosecurity

<http://geography.exeter.ac.uk/biosecurity/>

Crepe

<http://crepeweb.net/>

Sentient Creatures

<http://www.uio.no/forskning/tverrfak/kultrans/aktuelt/konferanser/sentient-creatures/>



Dear Parent/Guardian

CHICKS, working in partnership with the University of Exeter, is looking to undertake a study that explores children's holiday experiences in the countryside. Tea Tverin, a PhD student at the University of Exeter, will conduct this study as part of her PhD thesis and the purpose of this study is to examine the way in which young people and children organise their memories and thoughts about their holiday.

The study will involve interviewing children and young people who have experienced a CHICKS holiday. Questions will explore areas such as activities done during the holiday and children's experiences of these, and how a CHICKS holiday impacts their daily lives afterwards. Additionally during and/or after their holiday the children might be asked to keep a diary or take part to an art/photo project.

The participation of children and young people in this study is completely voluntary, and they may withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. Throughout the study the children's possible needs and concerns are taken into account. This study will not by any means diminish their holiday experiences, but is expected to be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for all. Participation in the study will result in greater understanding of the potential benefits of the countryside in the lives of children and young people, and could help to gain government funding for CHICKS and similar organisations in the future.

By signing this consent form you will be giving permission for your child to take part in the study. However, as mentioned above, the child is free to withdraw at any point. The data will be kept confidential and no names will be recorded within the project. The interviews might be recorded, but the tapes will only be listened to by Tea Tverin and her academic supervisor and will be destroyed when the project is finished.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Tea Tverin at the CHICKS office by calling 01822 811020. You may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion, by contacting CHICKS at the address below.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this study.

Yours Truly

Roy Endacott  
Chief Executive  
CHICKS

I give my child (name)\_\_\_\_\_ permission to take part in Tea Tverin's study about children and young people and the countryside. I have read and understood the above information.

Signature (parent/guardian)\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_



Dear Supervisor/Volunteer,

My name is Tea Tverin and I am a PhD student at the University of Exeter. For my PhD thesis I am conducting a study that explores children's holiday experiences in the countryside. The purpose of this study is to examine the way in which young people and children organise their memories and thoughts about their holidays. The study will involve interviewing children and young people who have experienced a CHICKS holiday. Also the experiences of the supervisors and volunteers are vital for the research. Questions asked explore areas such as experiences at the camps and reasons for working/volunteering for CHICKS.

Participation in the study will result in greater understanding of the potential benefits of the countryside in the lives of children and young people, and could help to gain government funding for CHICKS and similar organisations.

By signing this consent form you agree to take part in the study. The data will be kept confidential and no names will be recorded within the project. The interviews might be recorded, but the tapes will only be listened to by me and my academic supervisor and will be destroyed when the project is finished. Paragraphs of your interview/recording might be included in the thesis; however anonymity will be assured throughout. You are free to withdraw at any point.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me by leaving a message at the CHICKS office on 01822 811020. You may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion, by using the contact detail above.

Thank you very much for your co-operation,  
Kind Regards

Tea Tverin

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I (name) \_\_\_\_\_ agree to participate in the study about children and young people and the countryside. I have read and understood the above information.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



Dear Referral Agent,

My name is Tea Tverin and I am a PhD student at the University of Exeter. For my PhD thesis I am conducting a study that explores children’s holiday experiences in the countryside. The purpose of this study is to examine the way in which young people and children organise their memories and thoughts about their holidays. The study will involve interviewing children and young people who have experienced a CHICKS holiday. Also the experiences of the supervisors, volunteers and referral agents are vital for the research. Questions asked explore areas such as experiences of the camps and reasons for referring children to CHICKS.

Participation in the study will result in greater understanding of the potential benefits of the countryside in the lives of children and young people, and could help to gain government funding for CHICKS and similar organisations.

By signing this consent form you agree to take part in the study. The data will be kept confidential and no names will be recorded within the project. The interviews will be recorded, but the tapes will only be listened to by me and my academic supervisor and will be destroyed when the project is finished. Paragraphs or sentences of your interview might be included in the thesis; however anonymity will be assured throughout. You are free to withdraw at any point.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me by leaving a message at the CHICKS office on 01822 811020 or at tmt204@exeter.ac.uk. You may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion, by using the contact detail above.

Thank you very much for your co-operation,  
Kind Regards

Tea Tverin

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I (name) \_\_\_\_\_ agree to participate in the study about children and young people and the countryside. I have read and understood the above information.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Referral Agent e-mail:**  
**Title: CHICKS Research**

Dear Referral Agent,

I'm e-mailing you because you have recently referred a child to CHICKS (Country Holidays for Inner City Kids) for a respite break. My name is Tea Tverin; I'm a PhD student at the University of Exeter and doing research for CHICKS. The purpose of the research is to examine the way in which children and young people organise their memories and thoughts about their holiday. Also the experiences of adults on camps and those working with these children outside CHICKS camps are vital for the research.

As I understand you have already filled in an online questionnaire for CHICKS, but it would be greatly appreciated if you could spare a few moments to answer some further questions either via e-mail or on the phone. Confidentiality and anonymity will be assured, and if you wish to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form that further explains the aims and ethics of the study.

Please e-mail me if you have any further questions or if you wish to take part so that we can sort out a convenient day and time.

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Sincerely,  
Tea Tverin

## CHILD INTERVIEW

- Confidentiality
- Recording
- Consent
- Purpose/length of the interview
- Right to withdraw
- Questions?

### Background:

**Tell me little bit about you?**

- Age
- School
- Hobbies
- Home life
- Friends
- When did you go? How many times on camp?

### Camp experiences:

**Expectations (before CHICKS-whatever they come up with)**

- How did you feel before and about going to camp? What did you do before, talked to anyone about it, packing etc.?
- What had you heard about CHICKS? From whom?
- What did you know about CHICKS?

### **Arrival**

- How did you feel? Why?
- How did you find the pick up? What happened?
- How was the journey down to CHICKS on the minibus? Who you sat with?
- Homesick?
- What did you think about the other kids/adults/centre when you first arrived?
- What did you do? Who with? How was it? Everything you remember?

### **Activities**

- Tell me about the stuff you did? Who with?
- Favourite? Why?
- Least favourite? Why?
- Anything you would have liked to do?
- What was the best thing about the activities?

- Weather?
- Mood?

### **People**

- Tell me about the people you met on camp? What did you do with them? How were they? Knew any before? What you expected?
- How did you find the supervisors?
- How did you find the volunteers? Any different to supervisors?
- How did you find the other kids? Made any friends? Still in touch?
- Who do you remember the most and why?
- Did you get help/support when needed? Anything negative about anyone? Why?
- Cook? Cleaners?

### **Free time**

- What did you like to do? Why? Where?
- With whom?
- Enough free time?
- Best about it?
- Anything you would have liked to have done?
- Negatives?

### **Facilities**

- Describe the house, outdoors, the place?
- How did you find the bedroom?
- The dining room?
- The lounge?
- (Swimming pool?)
- Meal times? What was best/worst about them?

### **General**

- **Anything you wanna say?**
- How did you find running of things/organisation?
- Daily structure? Different from home?
- Home sickness?
- How did you feel at CHICKS (physically and emotionally)? Why? When?
- Best memory?
- **What does CHICKS mean to you? Describe CHICKS?**

**After CHICKS:**

- How did you feel on the return trip? Last day?
- **How did you feel straight after at home? What did you do?**
- What do you still remember about CHICKS? Tell me what you remember? How you remember?
- Photos? Letters?
- **What you think about CHICKS? Anything that comes up? Words? Feelings?** Is it any different now than it was before your trip?
- How is home life? Hobbies? Friends? School? **Any different than before CHICKS?** Future plans?

## **SUPERVISOR INTERVIEW**

- **Confidentiality**
- **Recording**
- **Consent**
- **Purpose/length of the interview**
- **Right to withdraw**
- **Questions?**

### **Background:**

Tell me little bit about you? Anything?

- Age?
- Education?
- Work experience?

### **Volunteering at CHICKS (if applicable):**

How and why did you volunteer for CHICKS?

- How many camps?

Camp experiences:

- Tell me about camps?
- Role of the volunteer?
- Co-operation with supervisors/volunteers?

### **Supervisor job:**

What made you choose to become a supervisor @ CHICKS?

- Why? Why then?
- Career aspirations? What next? Why?
- How long you've been doing it for?

How do you find the job?

- Tell me about your job?
- Positives?
- Negatives?
- Hardest/most difficult?
- How was the training? Useful in real life?

What do you think is the role of a supervisor on camp?

- What kind of a supervisor are you?
- Compared to others?
- What makes a good supervisor?

Camp experiences:

- Tell me about camps?
- Children?
- Volunteers?
- Other supervisors?
- Best memory?
- What makes a good camp?
- Differences between old/young camp? Which you prefer?

**General:**

What do you think CHICKS holiday means to a child?

Why do you think CHICKS works?

What do you think is the single most important thing that CHICKS can offer to these children?

## REFERRAL AGENT INTERVIEW

- Confidentiality
- Recording
- Consent
- Purpose/length of the interview
- Right to withdraw
- Questions?

### Background:

Tell me little bit about you?

- Education
- Work experience

### Work:

What do you do?

- Role
- Job description → **what is your goal/aim?** How does CHICKS fit into this?

### Chicks:

Your experiences? How many kids referred? Ages? When did they go?

- How did you hear of CHICKS?
- Why you think it is beneficial to a child?
- **Why** did you refer?
- Why did you refer that/those particular child/children?
- Any types of children you wouldn't refer? Why?
- Referral process? DVD?
- What have you heard about CHICKS from children? Activities? Adults? Centres?
- Do you keep the memory of CHICKS alive in your interaction with the child? How? Why? Do the children bring it up?
- Seen any change in the children? What changes? How are they different? Has the change been permanent?
- Seen any change in the family? Benefits? Any negatives?
- What do you think about CHICKS?
- Why do you think CHICKS works? (Do you think it works for all the children regardless of background etc.?)

What do you think CHICKS holiday means to a child?

What do you think is the single most important thing that CHICKS can offer to these children?

## VOLUNTEER INTERVIEW

- **Confidentiality**
- **Recording**
- **Consent**
- **Purpose/length of the interview**
- **Right to withdraw**
- **Questions?**

### **Background:**

Tell me little bit about you?

- Education?
- Work/volunteering experience?
- Experience working with kids?
- How did you hear of CHICKS?

### **Chicks:**

**Why** did you volunteer for CHICKS?

- How many camps?
- Planning to do another one? Booked on?

### **Camp experiences?**

- Tell me about camps?
- Role of the volunteer? What type of a role did you take on camp? (easy/forced/natural?) Main functions of a volunteer? Power? Difficulties?
- How did you find the kids? Saw changes? What? How?
- Functioning of the camp? (structure, activities, facilities etc.)
- Environment/nature?
- Co-operation with the supervisors? Other volunteers?
- What did you think of the supervisors?
- Positives?
- Negatives? How could camps be improved from the volunteer perspective?
- Best memory?
- Were you prepared enough? Valued? Utilised?

Why do you keep going back?

What did you get out of the camp/camps?

Why do you think CHICKS works? (Do you think it works for all the children regardless of background etc.?)

What do you think CHICKS holiday means to a child? What do you think is the single most important thing that CHICKS can offer to these children?

Hi XXXX,

My name is Tea Tverin and I am a PhD student carrying out research on the benefits of CHICKS.

Last year I was on a CHICKS camp with a young person/people that you have referred. The reason that I am getting in touch with you now is that I have started the second part of the study which is interviewing the young people (who have consented) I was on camp with. This is the vital part of the study for gaining knowledge on the benefits of CHICKS hence it would be greatly appreciated by CHICKS and me if you would be willing to help.

It would be great if you could offer assistance/help on how to best get in touch with the young people/their families and where do you think would be the best to carry out the interviews. I am hoping to get the interviews done by the end of this year. Each interview is expected to last between 40-60 minutes.

I was on camp with the following young people that you referred:  
XXXXX

Any assistance you could give with this will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you and looking forward to hearing from you.

King Regards,

Tea Tverin  
PhD Researcher  
Department of Geography  
College of Life and Environmental Studies  
University of Exeter  
Cornwall Campus  
TR10 9EZ

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Age:</b>	<b>Interview location:</b>	<b>Background:</b>
30.03.2011	Becky	14	School	Young carer
20.04.2011	Carmen	16	Coffee shop	Young carer
20.04.2011	Jason	12	Coffee shop	Young carer
15.05.2011	Ally	14	CHICKS	Young carer
15.05.2011	John	13	CHICKS	Young carer
20.06.2011	Bondi	13	Community Centre	Poverty
20.06.2011	Princess	14	Community Centre	Poverty, domestic violence
20.06.2011	Jake	12	Community Centre	Poverty
20.06.2011	Danni	10	Community Centre	Poverty
20.06.2011	Reece	15	Community Centre	Poverty, domestic violence
06.10.2011	Laura	15	School	Young carer
14.10.2011	Football Man	12	School	Family dysfunction
14.10.2011	Dylan	9	School	Emotional abuse
17.10.2011	Emma	12	School	Poverty, Family dysfunction
17.10.2011	John	13	School	Family dysfunction
19.10.2011	Jess	13	School	Poverty
26.10.2011	Sam	12	Young carer's centre	Young carer
26.10.2011	Tom	13	Young carer's centre	Young carer
26.10.2011	Rachel	14	Young carer's centre	Young carer
26.10.2011	Kat	14	Young carer's centre	Young carer
26.10.2011	Jade	12	Young carer's centre	Young carer
08.11.2011	Jessica	13	School	Poverty, Family dysfunction
13.11.2011	Armani	9	CHICKS	Poverty, Family dysfunction
15.11.2011	Michael	9	School	Poverty, Family dysfunction
16.12.2011	Kyle	13	Community Centre	Poverty, Family dysfunction

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