

# Holocaust Education Policy & Practice: Focus Group Findings

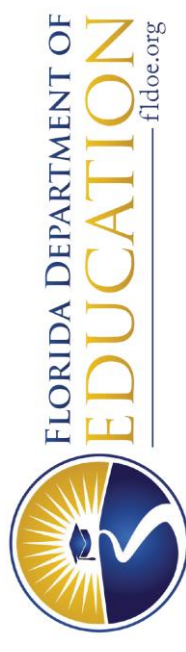
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*FLDOE Commissioner's Task Force on Holocaust Education Annual Meeting*

September 20, 2016

*This research was funded in part by the  
FLDOE Commissioner's Task Force on Holocaust Education*

# Barry University



# History of the Study

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- Task Force request to investigate the relationship between Holocaust knowledge and citizenship values
  - Justify the need for Holocaust education
- Request was for a *basic research* study to identify a link between Holocaust education and positive student outcomes
  - This is valuable because it says something about how Holocaust education be related to citizenship *among people in general*.



# Today's presentation

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- Review a summary of the original findings
- Present themes that emerged from last year's focus groups

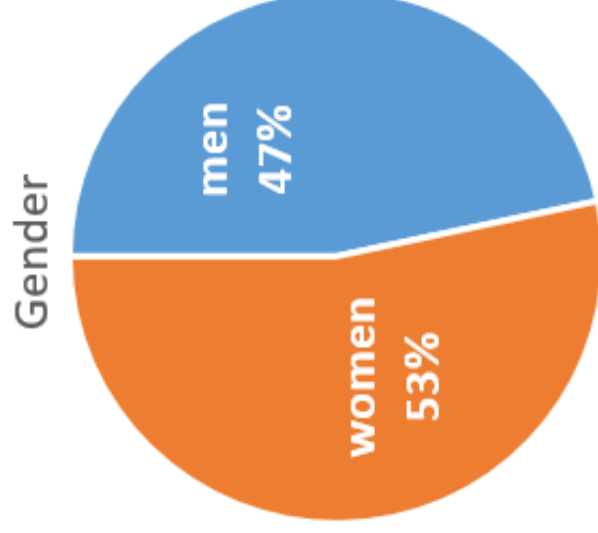


# Summary of Original Methodology

## Participants - Gender

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- 301 adults across the U. S.

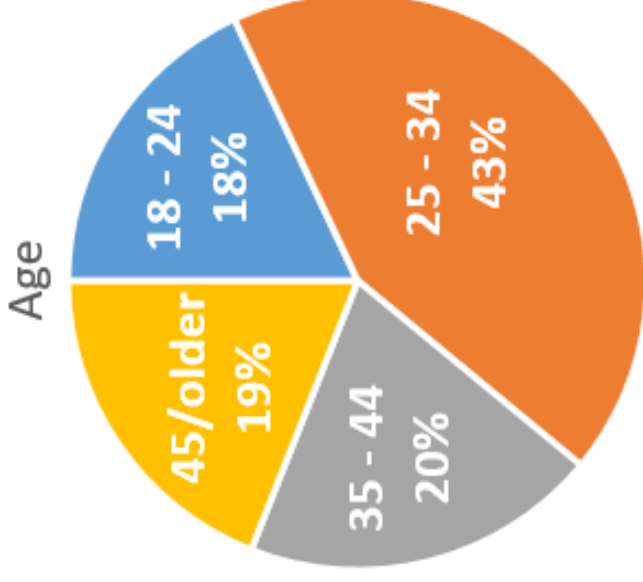


# Summary of Original Methodology

## Participants - Age

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- 301 adults across the U. S.

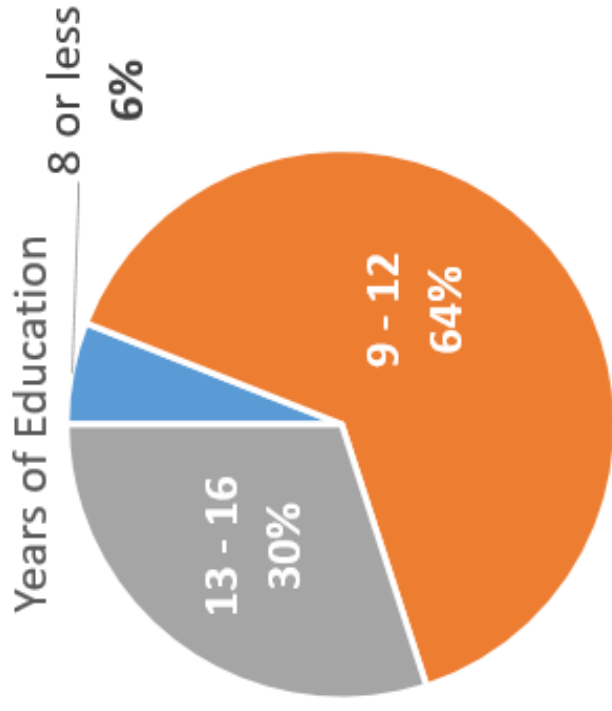


# Summary of Original Methodology

## Participants – Education

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- 301 adults across the U. S.



# Summary of Original Methodology

## Survey

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### Electronic survey

- Citizenship values
- Holocaust knowledge
- Demographics
- Holocaust education experiences



# Holocaust Education Experiences

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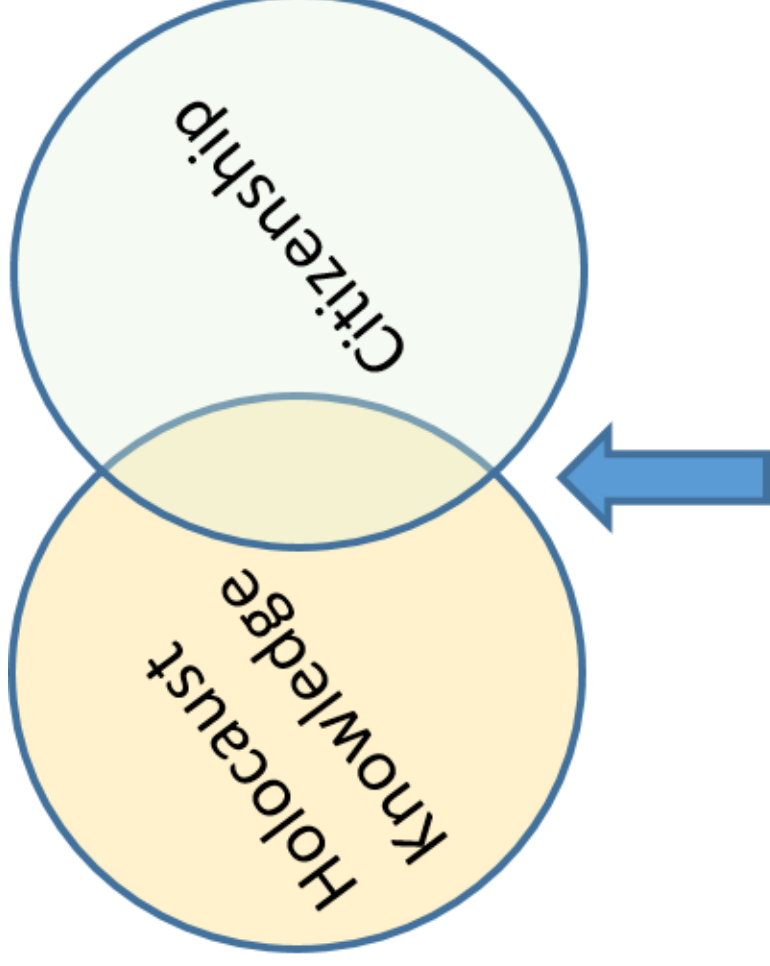
- I heard people talk about the Holocaust
- I saw a television show about the Holocaust
- I read a book or story about the Holocaust
- I saw a movie or documentary about the Holocaust
- I learned about the Holocaust in school
- I visited a Holocaust memorial museum
- I read a biography or autobiography of a Holocaust survivor
- I heard a Holocaust survivor tell their story in person, on radio, television, Internet, or in a video





# Summary of Original Findings

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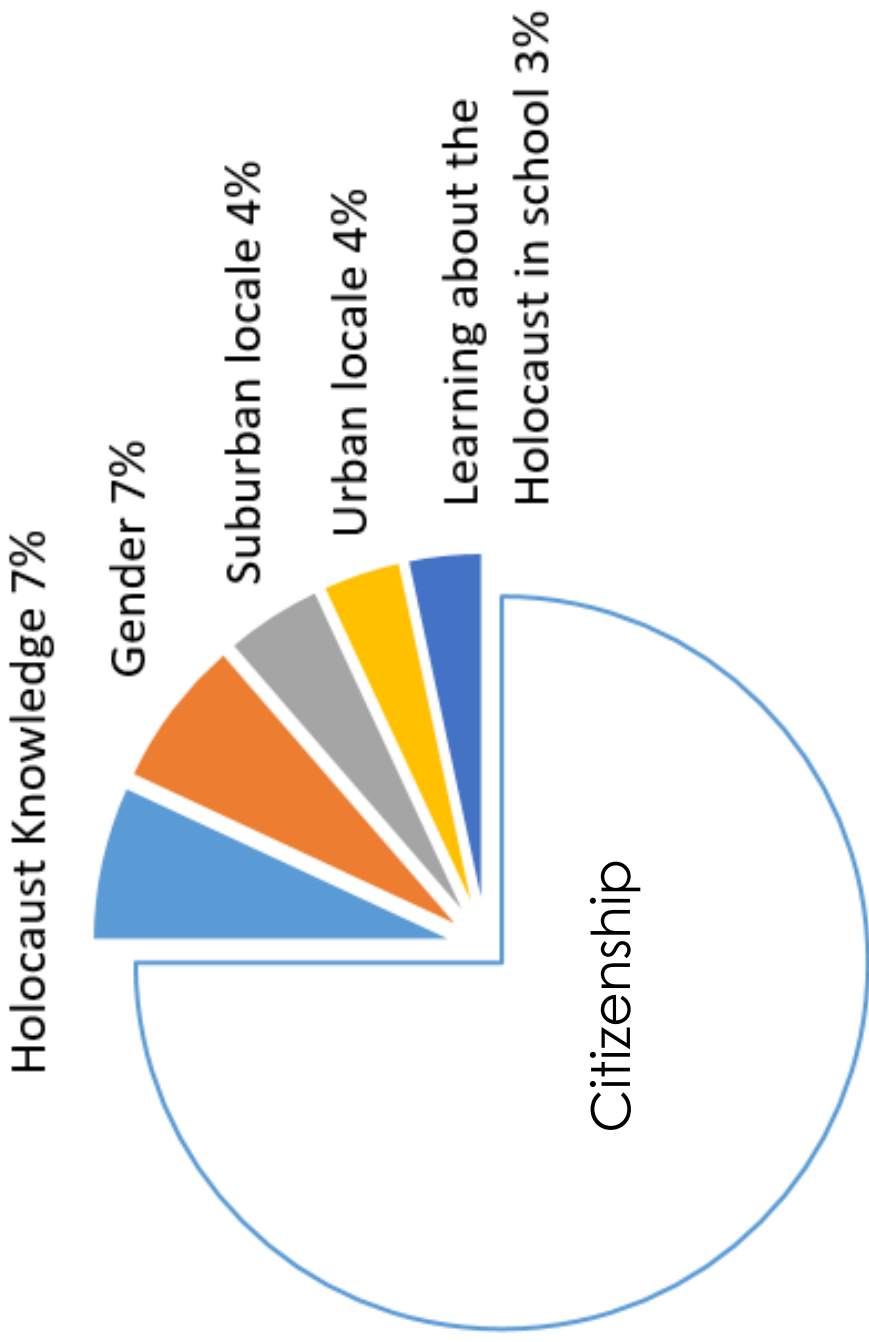


10% of citizenship is explained by  
Holocaust knowledge

# Summary of Original Findings cont'd

## Overall Predictors of Citizenship

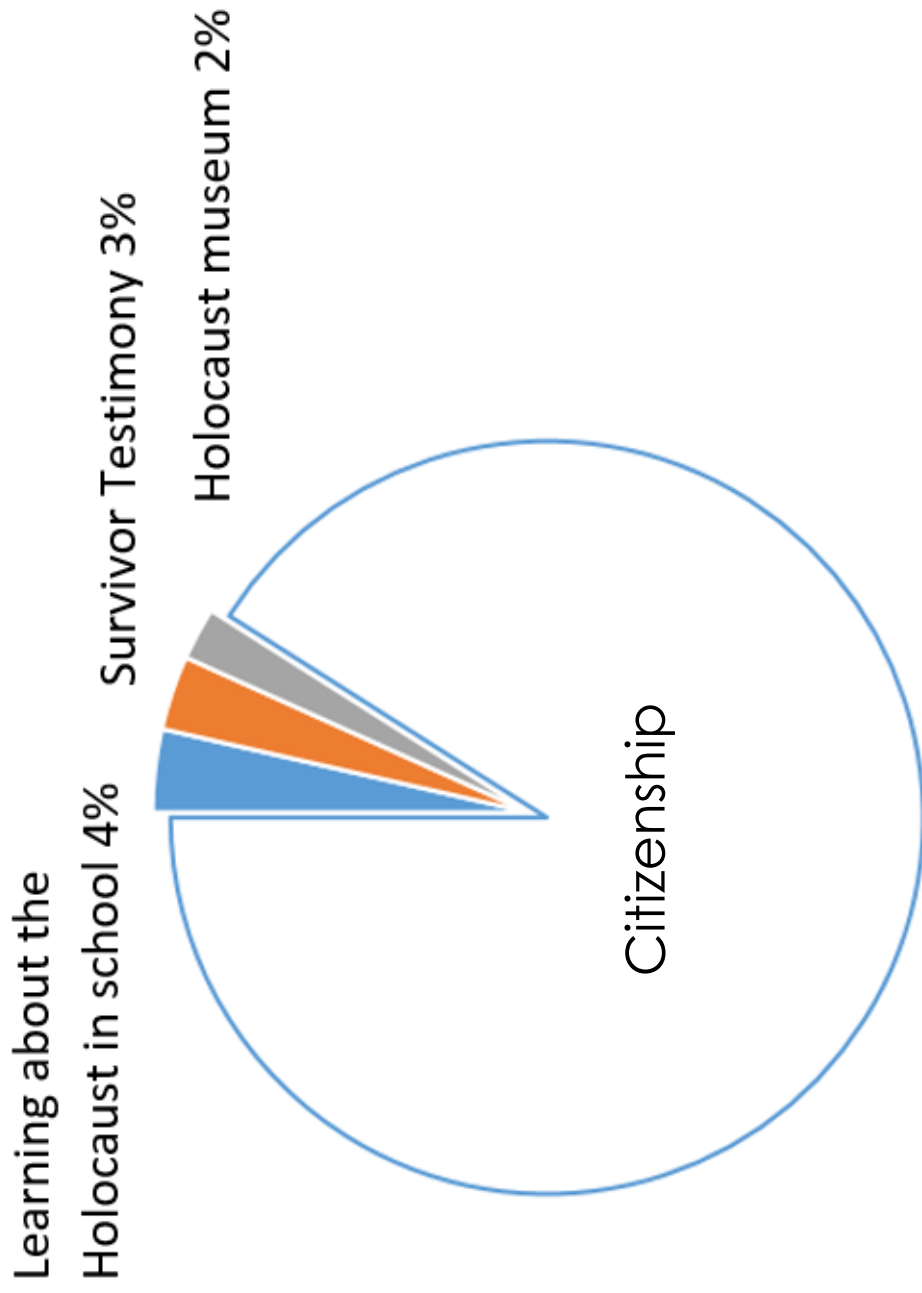
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# Summary Original Findings cont'd

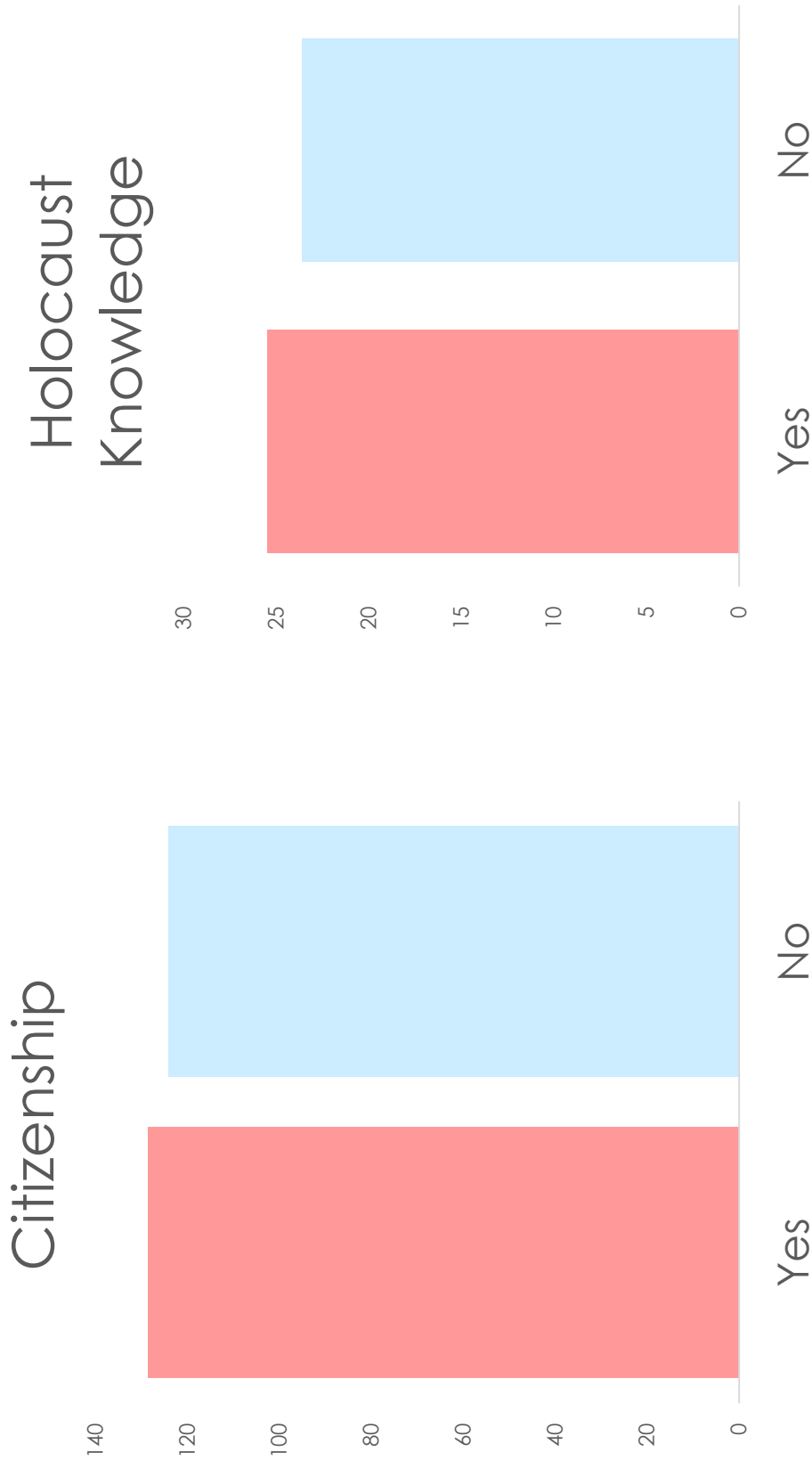
## Education Experiences as Predictors of Citizenship

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# Summary of Original Findings cont'd

## Heard a Holocaust Survivor Testimony



# Interpretation

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- We *cannot* say that Holocaust knowledge or Holocaust experiences *caused* better citizenship values.
- The evidence *does* suggest there may be value in:
  - Teaching Holocaust in school
  - Holocaust survivor testimony
  - Visit to a Holocaust memorial museum



# Follow-up Focus Group Study

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- 2015 Task Force meeting
  - Two groups
    - Primarily educators
    - Primarily program administrators
  - Purpose: Identify themes related to:
    - Practice
    - Policy
    - Future research



# Themes Related to Value of the Research

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- Accountability
- Justification for funding requests
- Addressing resistance
  - Students
  - Peers
  - Administrators
  - Policy-makers



# Themes Related to Curriculum: Challenges

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- Limited time in the curriculum
- No criteria for “fulfilling the mandate”
- How to bring diverse experiences to less diverse communities?
- Differentiating instruction
- Policy: Book excerpts only
- How much background to front load for students?
- Fewer survivors
  - Questionable value of children of survivors in curriculum





# Themes Related to Curriculum: Opportunities

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- Make citizenship the backbone for all content areas
- Teach students why the Holocaust is relevant
  - Working backwards – what is the goal?
- Value of Holocaust survivor testimony in person *and* in video format
  - Liberator, writer, or expert testimony
- Artifacts in a museum setting
- Market & design curriculum for both genders
- Students' relationship with electronic information
- Student-created films



# Themes Related to Professional Development

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- **Challenges (to rigor)**
  - Limited curricular time
  - Teacher skills
- **Opportunities**
  - Develop quality resources for teachers
  - Encourage diversity of pedagogy
  - Support the role of the teacher in facilitating meaning-making



# Themes Related to Policy

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- **Challenges**
  - STEM focus overshadows citizenship, which fosters conscience, understanding, and empathy.
  - Culture of standardized testing
  - Standards as an obstacle (book excerpts only)
  - Policy interpretation can be specific to environment
- **Opportunities**
  - Foster buy-in
    - Tie curriculum to standards
    - Provide teacher points
  - Task Force role to address policy obstacles?



## **Themes: Future research might address...**

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- When throughout lifetime was Holocaust learned?
- Deep assessment of Holocaust knowledge
- Differences in knowledge before and after implementation of mandate (FL only)
- Deep assessment of curricular best practices
- Private vs. public school learning experiences
- Relationship between Holocaust and reading



# Community-based Research Project Outcomes

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- Study findings
  - Conveyed to practitioners
  - Conveyed to policy-makers
- Experiential learning for student researchers
  - Stronger research skills
- Scholarship opportunity
  - Four peer-reviewed presentations
  - Manuscript reporting original findings is under review by the *Journal of Moral Education*
  - Exploring opportunities to publish focus group findings



# Presentations to Date

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- Fredotovic, I., Goodletty, S., & Starratt, G. K. (2013, October 1). *Holocaust Education and the Development of Citizenship Values: A Research Proposal*. Presentation to the Florida Department of Education Commissioner's Task Force on Holocaust Education, Fort Lauderdale, FL.
- Fredotovic, I., Goodletty, S., & Starratt, G. K. (2015, October 19). *Holocaust Education Predicts Citizenship Values*. Presentation to the Florida Department of Education Commissioner's Task Force on Holocaust Education, Fort Lauderdale, FL.
- \*Medvin, L., Fredotovic, I., Goodletty, S. & Starratt, G. K. (2016, October 29). *What does research tell us about Holocaust Education?* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Florida Council of the Social Studies, Orlando, FL.
- \*Starratt, G. K., Fredotovic, I., Goodletty, S., & Starratt, C. (2014, February). *Holocaust education, statutes, and citizenship values*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Educational Research Association, Jacksonville, FL.
- \*Starratt, G. K., Fredotovic, I., Goodletty, S., & Starratt, C. (2016, February). *Holocaust education, Holocaust knowledge, and citizenship values among U.S. adults*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Educational Research Association, Hilton Head Island, SC.
- Starratt, G. K., Fredotovic, I., Goodletty, S., & Starratt, C. (2016, September 20). *Recommendations for Holocaust Education Policy and Practice: Focus Group Findings*. Presentation to the Florida Department of Education Commissioner's Task Force on Holocaust Education, Fort Lauderdale, FL.
- \*Starratt, G. K., Goodletty, S., Fredotovic, I., & Starratt, C. (2015, February). *Constructing a Holocaust Knowledge Instrument: Establishing Content Validity using a Table of Specifications Methodology*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Educational Research Association, Sarasota, FL.
- \*Starratt, G. K., Fredotovic, I., Goodletty, S., & Starratt, C. (under review). *Holocaust knowledge and Holocaust education experiences predict citizenship values among U.S. adults*. Journal of Moral Education. Submitted 7/15/16.

\* Peer-review venue

