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Social Acceptance of Children with Developmental Handicaps in Integrated Daycamps

by

Douglas J. McMahon

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
Department of Human Development and Applied Psychology
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

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Master of Arts
1998

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Department of Human Development and Applied Psychology
University of Toronto

ABSTRACT

Service providers have become increasingly concerned with the quality of life of persons who have a developmental handicap. Many settings in which integration efforts are being made remain unresearched with respect to this issue. The social acceptance of peers is known to foster many social adjustment benefits. This study examines the social acceptance of children with developmental handicaps in integrated daycamp settings. Multiple measures revealed an overall picture of low social acceptance of campers who had developmental handicaps. Individual differences in levels of acceptance of these children was largely explained by differing social skill competencies, the presence of difficult to manage behaviour, and setting variables. Acceptance of children with developmental handicaps in camp settings appeared to more closely resemble tolerance than the full unconditional acceptance which leads to the establishment of more enduring social bonds. Strategies for intervention which could improve the social acceptance of these children are discussed.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A sizable number of people must give their consent in order for a study of this nature to be completed. I have enjoyed not only this consent, but invaluable assistance from my colleagues in all steps of the research process. I am extremely grateful and indebted to Mr. Michael LaFlamme of North York Parks and Recreation, and Ms. Lorene Bodiam of Etobicoke Parks and Recreation Services. Without these two people, this document could not have been completed. Special thanks to Mr. John Breuer, Ms. Colette Groll, Ms. Helen Christodoulou, and Ms. Lisa Armstrong of the Metropolitan Toronto Association for Community Living. Dr. Judith Wiener deserves acknowledgement for her valuable feedback and assistance as does Dr. Barry Schneider. Finally, I express my sincere gratitude to all study participants and their parents who felt this endeavour to be a worthwhile one.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION
The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent children with developmental handicaps are socially accepted in integrated daycamps and to identify the variables associated with these acceptance levels.

Service providers have become increasingly concerned about the quality of life of children and adults with developmental handicaps (Ouellette-Kuntz, 1990; Rowitz, 1989). Being accepted by peers and having close friendships are identified by researchers and clinicians as a key component of quality of life (Rowitz, 1989). Children who are rejected by peers have been shown to be at risk for a variety of social adjustment problems (Rubin, 1980). Friendship is a relationship which has been shown empirically to foster many benefits. Included here are opportunities to learn how to interact effectively with others (Rubin, 1980), increased altruistic behaviour directed towards peers (Mannarino, 1976), improved play skills (Musselwhite, 1986), and enhanced communication ability (Donnellan et al., 1984). In addition, friends are seen as instrumental in the consolidation of personal identity (Asher & Gottman, 1981), and positive self concept (Mannarino, 1978; Reiter & Levi, 1980).

A large body of research has shown that children with developmental handicaps are poorly accepted by peers and have impoverished social networks (eg., Sabornie, 1985; Sabornie & Kauffman, 1987). Given the importance of good peer relations for children research which examines variables which contribute to
social acceptance and subsequent friendship formation is needed in a variety of settings. A typical difficulty for children with developmental handicaps is that they have limited opportunities for social interaction (Barber & Hupp, 1993; Crapps et al., 1985; Stainback & Stainback, 1987). These limited opportunities in conjunction with an impoverished social skill base (Faught et al., 1983; Roberts et al., 1991; Stainback & Stainback, 1987; Zetlin & Murtaugh 1988) appear to have contributed to peer rejection and few close friendships. Limited opportunities for social interaction have led to increased lobbying for access to integrated environments due to the potential for the acquisition of adaptive skills and richer social contacts (Affleck et al., 1988; Brinker, 1985; Federlein, 1979; Guralnick & Groom, 1988; Meece & Wang, 1982; Strain et al., 1985).

There has been considerable research effort in examining the role of specific environmental conditions which facilitate or inhibit the social acceptance of children and adults with disabilities (Jellison, 1984; Johnson & Johnson, 1983; Madden & Slaven, 1983; Miller, 1989; Yager, 1985). This has likely been due to the relative ease with which the academic and residential settings in these studies may be accessed for research purposes. It must also be remembered that persons with developmental handicaps have an established service history spanning decades within such programs thus allowing more time for study. Integration efforts within settings which offer other life experiences such as employment and recreation have not been as long established.
The community daycamp is one integrated service alternative worthy of research attention. As a result of increased advocacy during the last decade, children with various developmental handicaps may spend up to two months of the year in these settings. With infrequent exceptions (Wiener, 1980), there has been a paucity of investigation devoted to camp services as compared with education and residential settings. Papers which have dealt with the subject highlight factors thought to be conducive to successful integration for those who have handicapping conditions (Hensley, 1979). Little is offered, however, in the way of empirical evidence for any assertions made (Braaten, 1977; Gold, 1986; Murray & Wilkinson, 1976). Thus, there is a need to assess social acceptance of children with developmental handicaps in this milieu where they do not yet enjoy as long established service histories.

If the social acceptance of children with developmental handicaps is low in camp settings, or at least not as strong as that found for their nondiagnosed peers, methods should be devised to ameliorate this outcome. To do nothing contributes to an impoverished quality of life through negative, unsatisfying social experiences which challenge the very arguments for integrated placement. Innovative programming efforts now being attempted in educational settings to foster positive peer relations such as cooperative task engagement (Eichenger, 1990; Johnson et al., 1986; Johnson & Johnson, 1981; Knapczyk, 1989; Ragan, 1993), peer modelling and coaching of appropriate social behavior (Fox et al., 1992; Goldstein, 1993; Hamre-Nietupski et al., 1992; Lynn Fox,
1989; Sasso et al., 1987; Strain & Odom, 1986; Wacker & Berg, 1985), environmental reorganization (Nordquist & Twardosz, 1990), and the use of toys and other devices to engineer social interaction (Burroughs & Murray, 1992; Martin et al., 1991; McCormick, 1987; Spiegel-McGill, et al., 1989; Vaughn, 1985), may be adaptable to community daycamps in ways which could enhance both the social functioning of children with developmental handicaps and the objectives of the recreation professional. There has already been precedent for the application of cooperative strategies in recreation oriented environments (Orlick, 1978; Orlick, 1982). The positive results of these efforts encourage investigation of further alternatives.

This study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent are children with handicapping conditions socially accepted within camp environments by their nondiagnosed peer group? Research in the school system has reported low peer acceptance. It is expected that children with developmental handicaps will also be less accepted in community daycamps.

2. What behavioral, other personal, and setting variables might influence the social acceptance of children with developmental handicaps in camps? What is the influence of the child's age, sex, socioeconomic status, (SES), and ethnic background? All are influential in other
settings (Asher & Gottman, 1981). What role do communication and other adaptive skills play? Is prior experience within an integrated setting for a child with a developmental handicap an advantage? Are there specific behavioral correlates governing acceptance or rejection of children with developmental handicaps in camp settings? What role do differing play styles, the ability to contend with aggressive or disruptive behaviors, and negotiate successful group entry have in affecting peer acceptance (Guralnick, 1988)? Does the size of the camp group, number of supervising staff, and types of activities and routines have an impact? Such considerations are known to influence peer interaction in school and residential settings (Aloia, 1978; Cooper et al., 1992; Marlowe, 1979; McWilliam, 1987; Shaw, 1976; Whaley & Bennett, 1991).

The presence of a one-on-one support person whose function is to facilitate adjustment on the part of the child has a high probability of exerting effects on interaction with one's peers. The role of this influence also requires study. Systematic examination of these variables may prove useful in predicting social success and in instances of poor social adjustment, could suggest strategies for intervention.

3. A final consideration will be to examine those strategies which have proven useful in improving social outcomes for
children with developmental handicaps in educational settings. Should social acceptance prove to be low, perhaps programming methods utilized in schools could be adapted to foster acceptance of children with developmental handicaps attending community daycamps.
CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Participants

The participants in the study were four boys with developmental handicaps between the ages of 10 and 12. All four of these children resided in Metropolitan Toronto and attended an integrated day camp setting during July and/or August of 1995. Each participant was part of the author's caseload within a Toronto based social service agency. Demographic information regarding the participants obtained from case files is presented in Table 1.

All of the participants were diagnosed with some form of developmental handicap. Each lived at home with his family. In all cases various forms of difficult to manage behaviour had been identified which necessitated the author's involvement. More detailed information on behaviour issues as well on adaptive functioning and social behaviours is presented in the Results section.

The parents of nonhandicapped children in the participants' camp groups were sent the same consent forms used for the participants' parents to allow their children to participate in the sociometric portion of the study (Appendix A). This permitted the selection of four children without handicaps to act as comparison children for each participant with a developmental handicap. The comparison children were matched with each participant with a developmental handicap on age and gender.
Table 1: Participant Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chad</th>
<th>Matt</th>
<th>Bob</th>
<th>Jeff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Single parent</td>
<td>Single parent, one sibling</td>
<td>Both parents, two siblings</td>
<td>Both parents, one sibling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosis</td>
<td>Developmental delay</td>
<td>Developmental delay</td>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>Autism, Prader-Willi Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Background</td>
<td>Jamaican</td>
<td>Jamaican</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>Anglo-Saxon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Settings

The study was conducted in four summer day camps operated by two city Departments of Parks and Recreation. Data outlining the characteristics of these camps were collected by interviewing the Supervisor of each setting. The Camp Setting Description Form (Appendix B) was used to complete this task. Although each participant with a developmental handicap attended a different day camp setting, all four locations had many commonalities. All operated for seven or eight weeks during July and August with children attending anywhere from two to eight weeks according to their placement needs. Study participants were in attendance from six to eight weeks. Camps were located in public school settings and served children between 6 to 12 years of age. In each location children were divided into smaller groups based on their chronological age. Six to 8 year olds comprised the youngest camp groups followed by 9 and 10 year olds, and 11 and 12 year olds. All four camp settings have had at least five years experience integrating children with developmental handicaps into their programs.

In spite of the many similarities, there were differences between settings, especially in terms of the overall size of the camp setting, staff-child ratio, program emphasis, and staff and children’s attitudes towards those with handicapping conditions. Similarities and differences between settings are described in Table 2.
### Table 2: Camp Setting Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Chad</th>
<th>Matt</th>
<th>Bob</th>
<th>Jeff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty</td>
<td>Generic</td>
<td>Generic</td>
<td>Generic</td>
<td>Generic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>daycamp</td>
<td>daycamp</td>
<td>daycamp</td>
<td>daycamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>activities</td>
<td>activities</td>
<td>activities</td>
<td>activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of Operation</td>
<td>9:00am-4:00pm</td>
<td>9:00am-4:00pm</td>
<td>9:00am-4:00pm</td>
<td>9:00am-4:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>Unlimited</td>
<td>Unlimited</td>
<td>Unlimited</td>
<td>Unlimited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>7-8 weeks</td>
<td>7-8 weeks</td>
<td>7-8 weeks</td>
<td>7-8 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment</td>
<td>Variable, up to 50 children, 3 with handicaps</td>
<td>Variable, up to 70 children, 3 with handicaps</td>
<td>Variable, up to 70 children, 1 - 4 with handicaps</td>
<td>Variable, up to 70 children, 1 - 4 with handicaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40 - 80</td>
<td>3 - 4</td>
<td>up to 70</td>
<td>up to 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Ratio</td>
<td>Average of 4 - 8/1, depending upon attendance</td>
<td>Average of 4 - 6/1, depending upon attendance</td>
<td>Average of 6 - 9/1, depending upon attendance</td>
<td>Average of 6 - 9/1, depending upon attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellors</td>
<td>4 female, 1 male</td>
<td>8 female, 5 male</td>
<td>10 female, 2 male</td>
<td>8 female, 1 male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Participant Ratio</td>
<td>1/1 support for out trips and difficult moments only</td>
<td>1/1 support for out trips and difficult moments only</td>
<td>1/1 support for out trips and difficult moments only</td>
<td>1/1 support for out trips and difficult moments only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Environment</td>
<td>Gym, staff room, kitchen, 2 classrooms</td>
<td>Gym, 2 classrooms and 1 playground</td>
<td>Gym, science and staff rooms</td>
<td>Gym, playground, staff room, classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and 1 playground.</td>
<td>Staff room.</td>
<td>Playground.</td>
<td>Playground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Matt</td>
<td>Bob</td>
<td>Jeff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task Demands/Activities</strong></td>
<td>Field trips, sports and games, arts &amp; crafts.</td>
<td>Field trips, sports and games, arts &amp; crafts.</td>
<td>Field trips, sports and games, arts &amp; crafts.</td>
<td>Field trips, sports and games, arts &amp; crafts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children encouraged to cooperate and communicate.</td>
<td>There are long wait periods which discourage interaction.</td>
<td>Activities promote interaction.</td>
<td>Activities both encourage and discourage interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration History</strong></td>
<td>Over 5 years experience.</td>
<td>Over 5 years experience.</td>
<td>Over 5 years experience.</td>
<td>Over 5 years experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Attitudes/Behaviour</strong></td>
<td>Excellent attitudes from all. Supervisor has an investment in seeing Chad succeed here.</td>
<td>Range from accepting to not involved. Support worker lacks skill/motivation to promote integration.</td>
<td>Range from full acceptance to no involvement. Most accept philosophy if integration effort does not disrupt routines.</td>
<td>Most favour integration philosophy. There is no staff involvement by anyone other than the support worker and negative comments regarding Jeff are made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camper Attitudes/Behaviour</strong></td>
<td>Excellent also. Many play with Chad and are protective of him. Reluctant to complain of his aggression.</td>
<td>Indifferent. Most deal with Matt only when he initiates contact, and they do not sustain this.</td>
<td>Range from indifferent to liking Bob. Some greet him, but do not sustain contact beyond single exchanges.</td>
<td>Many will not engage Jeff due to behaviour. Some will greet him but contact is not sustained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measures

Participant Descriptions

Diagnostic as well as other needs information on study participants was obtained through the author’s case files, camp application forms, and a Social Language Checklist located in Appendix C (Wiener, unpublished).

Peer Acceptance

As recommended by Odom, McConnell and McEvoy (1992), multiple methods were utilized to measure peer acceptance for the participants within their camp settings. Counsellor ratings of acceptance and a peer rating sociometric scale were used.

The counsellor rating method was devised by Hallihan (1981). Each of the four participants’ groups had three or four counsellors assigned to it, one of whom was assigned to support the study participant. Counsellors were first asked to "sort" all children in their group into the three general categories of "most accepted", "accepted", and "less accepted" by peers. They were then required to rank order all children within each of the three categories in terms of social acceptance, assigning a tied rating when they were unable to make a decision regarding which of two children was more accepted than the other. The score for each participant and comparison peer was the percentage of the entire group ranked as more accepted than him.

The peer sociometric technique was administered in two ways depending on the age of the participants. In all cases, the raters were children in the same group as the participants. Peers were
asked to rate the participant and two other children in the group selected at random on the statement, "I like to have this person in my group". A four point Likert scale was used with the following statements: "do not like to a lot", "do not like to a little", "like to a little", and "like to a lot". The 6 to 8 year old children were assisted with this task through the addition of diagrams of faces placed above the numbers for each rating. These methods of measuring peer acceptance have been successfully employed elsewhere (Amish et al., 1988; Cuksts, 1988; McMahon, 1982). Siperstein and Bak (1989) also found the addition of smiling and frowning faces to be a useful aid for younger children without advanced reading skills. It is this method which was utilized in the present study. A happy face was placed above number four, "like to a lot". A smaller smile was placed above number three, "like to a little". Number two, "do not like to a little", had a slight frown placed above it. Number one, "do not like to a lot", had a stronger frown placed above it. Older children with higher reading skills did not require this assistance, so the faces were not utilized for these age groups. The reliability and validity of rating scale sociometrics have been well established (Asher & Gottman, 1981).

Both formal and informal observation by the author corroborated the acceptance measures. A series of interview questions (see Appendix D) also served this purpose. The parents of all participants were interviewed using these questions 24 weeks after camp ended in order to determine their perceptions of how
Problem behaviour scores fare better, with internal consistency and found to have poor retestability. Main scale social skills and (not important, important, critically) SSRS subscale scores are

not important, sometimes, very often) and their importance of behaviours (never, sometimes, often, always) are adjusted within the children's settings. A three point scale is used to assess both the frequency

and how important these are to adjustment within the children's
carers who indicate how often specific behaviours are engaged in

rated on both the social skill and problem behaviour scales by

rated as both the social skill and problem behaviour subscales by

rated as highly active and easily distracted (hypersensitivity).

Children are towards others put turned inward (internalising problems) and are showed evidence of difficulty or directed (externalising problems) which children direct inappropriate behaviour towards others.

Which children direct inappropriate behaviour towards self
coincide. The problem behaviour subscales assess the extent to

SSRS include the children's levels of cooperation, assertion, and measured. The social behaviour measured by the subscales of the
to grade 6. Problem behaviours exhibited in the classroom are also

be important in classroom adjustment for children in kindergarten

SSRS is a checklist which measures various social skill traits shown to

teaching rating system. The Teacher form (SSRS) developed by Creasman and Ritter (1990). The

complete an adapted version of the social skill rating system.

Social behaviour was assessed by asking the support workers to

Social behaviour

the author transcribed responses as they spoke.

As the parents did not consent to audio taping of the interview,

determine if any contact with peers was kept up after camp ended.

their children targeted socially at camp. Another purpose was to
coefficients for the Teacher scale ranging from .82 to .95. Test-retest reliability ranges from .85 to .93. The SSRS is shown to have adequate construct validity and moderate correlations are found between this system and peer sociometric and classroom observation measures (Elliot et al., 1988; Gresham & Elliot, 1990; Gresham et al., 1987).

The teacher form was adapted for use within camp settings by making minor word changes on classroom related items. The statement "finishes class assignments on time" was changed, for example, to read, "finishes tasks on time".

An adapted version of the Playground Behaviour Observation Scale utilized by Harris and Wiener (1991) was also used to assess participant social behaviour. The Scale is included in Appendix E, and provides information on specific play behaviours helpful in explaining the results of the acceptance measures. This unpublished tool requires raters to note the frequency of the following behaviours at prescribed time intervals. Cooperative behaviour, Leadership, Comic behaviour, Dependent, Shy/Withdrawn and Disruptive behaviour. Instances of verbal and physical aggression are also noted. The environmental context in which these types of behaviour are displayed is recorded on the form. Children's involvement in solitary, onlooker, and parallel types of play as well as their interaction with peers and adults receives attention. Finally the presence and frequency of group entry, maintenance, and conflict resolution skills is recorded. All of these three skills are shown to be important to social adjustment (Guralnick, 1994).
**Procedures**

The first study task involved seeking the consent of two Departments of Parks and Recreation and the parents of the participants. Consent letters are included in Appendix A. Families were assured both verbally and in writing that participation in the study was completely voluntary and that abstaining in no way affected eligibility for the author’s or agency’s professional services. Confidentiality safeguards were guaranteed for the participants, their families, and participating settings. A coded number system was used to identify participant data during analysis.

Playground observation data were collected by the author at least weekly. The peer acceptance measures and SSRS data were collected during the participants’ final week at camp. Counsellors filled out the SSRS forms and camper sociograms independently. The author met individually with children whose parents gave written permission for them to take part in the peer rating sociometric. Since these procedures are capable of prompting unwanted negative social comparisons, a distracter task, one more likely to draw child interest and discussion, was used immediately upon completion of the rating procedure. Younger children in the 6 to 8 year age range were read portions of a story appropriate for this age range, and asked to talk with their peers afterward to learn unheard story events leading to a conclusion. Peers needed to collaborate in order to learn the entire story. Older children were asked a riddle (Appendix F) and encouraged to discuss it among themselves in order
to find its solution. The answer to the riddle was shared the following day with camp Counsellors.

All who were asked to do ratings were not informed of the specific purpose of the study until after all data were collected.
CHAPTER 3
RESULTS

Chad

Background

Chad is a healthy 12 year old boy who lives alone with his mother. He has no siblings. Most of his schooling has been conducted within integrated classroom settings. Verbal skills are delayed, characterized by short utterances and he has a mild intellectual disability. A short attention span, noncompliance, inappropriate touching, pinching and difficulty in finishing tasks have been reported concerns. It has been noticed during his long history within integrated daycamp settings that most of these behaviours improve as Chad continues to spend time in the new setting. Chad presents as a highly social child who is quite able, and highly motivated to interact with his peer group.

Acceptance

Of all four study participants, Chad proved to be the most accepted by other campers. Peer ratings, staff sociograms and observation all supported this conclusion. Peer responses to the statement, "I like to have this person in my group", all produced positive ratings with two respondents stating that they "like to a little", and the remaining peer stating he "liked to a lot". While the validity of the peer sociometric ratings is somewhat questionable due to a low number of respondents for each participant, the results are presented here and are valuable in so far as they supplement the findings of other peer acceptance

measures.

The other peer acceptance measures also showed evidence of Chad's popularity. There were no observed negative responses to Chad at any time during setting visits by the author by either staff or peers. All were aware of his presence within the setting and they appeared highly interested in him and his adjustment. During the completion of the Playground Behaviour Observation Scale, Chad initiated entry into various groups of children a total of nineteen times over eight observation periods totalling 48 minutes. None of these group entry attempts were refused by peers.

The sociograms completed by staff on Chad were split with two staff assigning fairly low peer acceptance ratings to him, while two others saw him as one of the most popular children at camp. Ratings by these latter two staff members stated that only 12% and 24% of the other children were more accepted than Chad (see Table 3). Taken together, the sociogram results of all four staff members average a total of 53% of the other campers rated as more accepted than Chad in this setting (Table 3). His level of acceptance within the camp may be described as moderate. Chad was the only study participant to fare better on sociograms than the randomly selected child who was also rated for comparison purposes (Table 3). Chad's mother noted that children who lived within the same building would continue to greet him after the camp period ended.

Skills and Behaviour

In addition to being the most accepted of all four study participants, Chad also had the strongest social skill repertoire.
This finding is consistent with explanations from Chad’s mother during the parent interview that he generally does well and learns what is required of him once others model appropriate behaviour or task requirements.

While results must be interpreted with caution due to minor wording changes on some statements, the SSRS revealed average social skills when Chad’s ratings were compared with the nonhandicapped standardization sample (see Table 4). This finding is consistent across Cooperation, Assertion, and Self Control subscales and the total score. His level of cooperation within groups was found to be comparable to that of nonhandicapped children. Assertion, or the degree to which Chad would initiate contact with others and respond to their initiations, was likewise comparable to that of his peers. The Self-Control subscale results, which measured appropriate responding to specific conflict situations and those which require waiting or restraint, were again within the average range.

Chad’s SSRS Problem Behaviour Scale score was at the 98th percentile showing him to display significantly more difficult behaviours than the nonhandicapped standardization sample (see Table 4). Chad exhibited high levels of inappropriate verbal and physical behaviours towards others (Externalizing Problems), behaviours indicating anxiety, loneliness and poor self esteem (Internalizing Problems), and hyperactivity. Behavioural difficulties are confirmed by Chad’s service records and his mother who explained that these usually occur when he first encounters a
new setting.

Chad's Playground Observation Scale results are graphed in Figures 1 and 2. A total of eight observations were completed within both unstructured play situations and structured active games. Each type of activity was conducted in and out of doors. Chad made frequent attempts at group entry and peers allowed this in every case. While solitary and onlooker types of play were noted there was also participation in interactive games and activities. This participation took place independently of support worker prompting and assistance. Seventeen instances of cooperative behaviour were noted as well as 22 disruptive behaviours. These results are consistent with SSRS findings.

Chad is a verbal child who tends to speak in short two or three word utterances and only at required times. Much of his language use noted on the Social Language Checklist involved making initiations towards peers or responding to their initiations. He would greet others and respond to questions appropriately. The ability to communicate needs and wants was apparent. Chad did not sustain topics of conversation, make small talk or demonstrate any mastery of conversational turn taking. He would sometimes interrupt others, perseverate on the same topic, and make inappropriate remarks. He could however, maintain brief verbal interaction. These findings were consistent with frequent observations of Chad moving from group to group after spending brief periods of time with each one.
Figure 1 - Chad's play behaviour

- O O Noninteractive play
- x x Interactive play
- # # Peer conversation
- @ @ Adult interaction

based on 8 observations
Figure 2 - Chad's social interaction behaviour

- O-O Cooperative behaviour
- X-X Disruptive behaviour
- #-# Comic behaviour
- ©-© Group entry behaviour

based on 8 observations
Setting

Although Chad was more highly skilled than the other study participants, and this serves as a partial explanation for his acceptance ratings, it must be emphasized that his camp setting was an exemplary one. While the daycamp model used here was similar to the remaining three (see Table 2), the following observations were made. In addition to the fact that no children within this camp were seen refusing a social overture from Chad, they would frequently initiate these themselves. It was apparent that other children attending this setting were well aware of Chad and accepted his presence. Many adopted a protective attitude towards him making certain he was monitored on field trips to unfamiliar locales. Peers seemed to feel it was their responsibility to assist and look out for him. Chad’s mother later reported that she would frequently observe others assisting her son while taking him to and from the camp setting. It was noted that peers would persist in helping Chad to understand something and in facilitating positive responses. These exchanges tended to take place independently of adult prompting.

Staff attitudes seemed quite positive. The camp Supervisor always made time to sit in on consultation meetings regarding Chad’s progress and saw herself as having an investment in this. Other staff encouraged children to interact with and assist Chad on their own. Without exception, camp staff made it a point to answer children’s questions regarding Chad’s needs.

The regulation of Chad’s activity time within this setting was
unique. Rather than staying with his assigned group for the entire duration of an activity, he was permitted to move from group to group at his own discretion, doing different things and spending time with all age groups.

Analysis

There was evidence of both the camp setting and Chad's social skills contributing to his acceptance by peers. SSRS results showed relatively good abilities to interact with others, possibly due in part to his integrated school placement. This finding was supported by observation. It would be expected that Chad should do reasonably well socially. Verbal language and the ability to engage in interactive games also encouraged peer acceptance.

Social skills comparable to those of nonhandicapped children do not by themselves, however, completely explain Chad's acceptance within this setting. Strong evidence of problem behaviours were also noted on the SSRS, yet evidence of low peer acceptance was weak consisting of poor sociogram acceptance ratings by only two staff members. This result was contradicted by two other staff persons within the same setting. Many of the problem behaviours described on the SSRS were seen during observation. Chad would often act impulsively, not staying with any one activity for long periods of time. Easily distracted, he would also not sustain interaction with peers despite their efforts to get him to do so. Temper tantrums were reported and at times he would choose to be alone.

The way in which problem behaviour was responded to in this
setting seemed to play a role in Chad's adjustment and acceptance. Problem behaviour did not terminate social overtures by either staff or peers. It seemed to make all involved persist in their efforts. The attitude was clearly that this child had every right to attend camp, and that all reasonable steps would be taken to encourage his participation. An orientation session regarding the nature of disability was held for all children at the start of the summer. Counsellors frequently held discussions with campers on how best to accommodate Chad and encourage him to participate. Allowing him to move freely between groups is an example of an adaptation which assisted him in feeling comfortable and participating alongside others for at least brief periods of time. The assigned support worker was conspicuously absent from view, working with other children and allowing Chad to access his peers on his own. This necessitated that Chad work out issues with his peers himself and they with him. Chad's mother reported that new positive social behaviours such as waiting patiently in line were being taught by peers at camp. While it was true that Chad had many good social skills going in, the camp encouraged him to demonstrate these and to begin to develop others.

In summary, this camp setting may be described as one with positive attitudes towards serving children with disabilities. It was highly flexible in approach. Chad's behavioural needs became something to be worked with and accommodated. The willingness of all to continue efforts to engage him was reported to have an immediate pay off with pinching behaviour disappearing a few days
after starting camp although some of the other difficult behaviours described above continued.

Matt

Background

Matt is an 11 year old boy who lives with his mother and baby sister. There is a long history of attendance within integrated summer camping programs. Matt attends a private residential school for hearing impaired students during the academic year spending weekends with his family. This situation has provided little opportunity for continued contact with peers at the conclusion of camp sessions despite the fact that some live within Matt’s mother’s apartment building. In addition to his hearing impairment, Matt has a mild intellectual disability coupled with a Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD). He does not speak. There are long-standing behavioural concerns such as pinching both peers and adult caregivers. Noncompliant behaviour has also been an issue, particularly during the adjustment periods within new settings. Matt frequently engages in self stimulatory handflapping behaviour. He is nonverbal and communicates through use of sign language, facial expression and gestures. While often appearing aloof, he frequently responds to initiations by others.

Acceptance

Acceptance ratings for this participant were somewhat mixed. The support worker assigned to work with Matt rated him as being the most accepted and popular child at camp (see Table 3), while other staff sociograms strongly disagreed with this result. One
counsellor estimated that a full 82% of the campers in attendance were more popular than Matt while the camp supervisor assigned him a more moderate acceptance level with 54% of the other children being more popular (Table 3).

A single peer rating of acceptance was obtained for Matt with this child stating that she did not like to have Matt in her group, "a little". This same child went on to state that she did not like to have another randomly selected peer without a disability in her group "a lot". The result suggests that Matt was not the least accepted child at this camp.

Observation by the author confirmed that there was no effort made by Matt’s peers to sustain interaction with him. This was due, in part, to the fact that he would sometimes run away from other children once an interaction had been started. This would happen even on occasions when Matt himself initiated peer contact. Observed exchanges with peers consisted of greeting Matt, and producing desired responses to his nonverbal requests. Two requests for group entry by Matt were noted while completing the Playground Behaviour Observation Scale (Figure 3), and both of these entry bids were successful. Matt’s mother has explained that peers would continue to greet him in the elevator in her apartment building after the camp period had ended. These greetings became more and more infrequent as the academic year progressed.

To summarize, while acceptance ratings for Matt were not nearly as high as Chad’s, there was some indication of acceptance by at least some persons within his camp setting.
The text describes a figure showing Matt's play and social interaction behaviour over different periods of the camp. The figure includes lines for non-interactive play, interactive play, peer conversation (sign), adult interaction, and group entry behaviour. The data are based on 5 observations.
Skills and Behaviour

Matt's skill repertoire was not as diverse as Chad's. SSRS findings indicated his overall social skills were at the 4th percentile. Matt displayed lower levels of cooperative behaviour within groups as well as less assertion in interacting with others when compared with the nonhandicapped standardization sample. Only Matt's Self Control subscale score was within the average range, indicating some appropriate responding to the demands of waiting and dealing with peer conflict.

Problem Behaviour scales of the SSRS indicated rates of difficult behaviour which may be considered average (Table 4), in spite of some reported difficulties in this area at camp. Matt's standard score of 112 on the Problem Behaviour section of the SSRS placed him within the 79th percentile (Table 4), on this dimension, suggesting that while behaviour issues are present, these are not severe.

The Playground Behaviour Observation Scale (Figure 3), suggests some age appropriate interaction with peers although this takes place at very low levels and is most often initiated by others. Five observations of unstructured and low task demand activities totalling 30 minutes were completed for Matt. Observed activities consisted of watching movies with his peer group (two observations), free play activity in a school gymnasium (two observations), and a "break" from the camp group sitting on school grounds.

A high level of onlooker play and responding was observed with
Matt. While three of the five observations lent themselves well to this kind of behaviour, onlooker play was also seen during gym free play activity which has the potential to encourage greater interaction. Interactive activity without conversation and without adult prompting was observed on 5 occasions (Figure 3). Most often this was initiated by others during play activities. As noted above, Matt made two observed attempts to enter an activity albeit for brief durations each time. Both of these attempts were successful with his peer group.

The Social Language Checklist could not be completed for Matt as he does not speak. He was observed completing four of its communicative behaviours. Matt would respond nonverbally to questions, initiate a conversation through sign, and use sign language to either ask for assistance or demand something.

Setting

Within this camp setting, attitudes of both staff persons and peers appeared to range from somewhat accepting of Matt to disinterested. The large discrepancy between the sociogram ratings of Matt's designated worker and other camp staff prompted discussion and observation by the author. It is difficult to accept a rating of Matt as being the most accepted child at camp when peer interaction was not sustained by him or others. Matt was often found physically separated from his peer group. At no time was the support worker observed making efforts to encourage Matt to interact with the group or them to interact with him. During one observation, the worker was located on the school grounds watching
unsuccessful. This situation played a role in restricting the communication needs, efforts to improve this condition were and was placed within a setting which lacked the infrastructure to meet and have skill levels which even approximate grade. He is nonverbal setting. On first examination this is surprising as Matt does not seting. Matt experienced a modest level of acceptance within this camp observations as well as staff and peer rating interacted that

Analyzes

Interaction by consensus.

At this camp received little observation or encouragement of responsibility for entertaining them, of activities. Being programmed activities of "down time" in which camps remained largely inactive. In camps studied, this setting was observed to have the largest amount did not seem to be restricted to the support workers. Or the four issue of Matt was not being encouraged to interact with others.

Statement.

Such action was unnecessary. No rationale was offered for this use these when interacting with him. The support worker stated that of some of Matt's most frequent used signs and be encouraged to peers. It was suggested that other children be taught the meaning were discussing Matt's difficulties in communicating with his peer's. Leg all during this observation, but gave the appearance worker's leg and returned, and tasted comfortably against his support made inside the gym's all appropriate for Matt's participation. conducted in public courts while several activities were playing a tennis match on public courts while several activities were playing
opportunities for group involvement and the subsequent development of higher peer acceptance. Also contributing here were Matt's poor social skills.

Matt's success at winning some acceptance within this camp may be attributed to the fact that despite strong deficits, he does have some social competence. He was consistently able to communicate his needs and wants nonverbally and occasionally demonstrated the ability to successfully negotiate peer group entry. Additionally, his SSRS Problem Behaviour standard score proved not to be indicative of significantly high behavioural difficulties within this setting suggesting that while such behaviours have been reported in his history, peers and staff did not experience these from him with sufficient frequency to adversely affect his acceptance ratings.

This camp environment was probably a poor choice for Matt. The motivation and effort of his assigned support worker raised questions for the author during all observations conducted. While some peers seemed receptive in their attitudes towards Matt and accepted his rare overtures, systematic and sustained efforts to engage him were not seen. This same observation was made for staff members in this setting. No preparation of any kind for serving a child with Matt's needs was noted. Organization and programming within this setting differed greatly from Chad's camp location with minimal efforts being made for many children attending. With very few task demands being placed on children there is less encouragement to interact and thus reduced likelihood of
acceptance. These setting factors probably explain much of Matt’s high levels of solitary, onlooker and parallel play (Figure 3). It speaks well of his potential that Matt does on rare occasion move beyond these play styles.

Bob

Background

Bob is ten years old and the youngest of three children. He lives at home with his parents. Diagnosed at an early age with autism, Bob’s school history has been one of partially integrated placements all with small class numbers. He is also mildly intellectually challenged. There has been a long history of service within the Parks and Recreation Department. Behaviour issues have been present since Bob’s early school attendance and have consisted of hitting and kicking others, urinating in public, and noncompliance. Bob sometimes communicates verbally using single word utterances but very seldom does so.

Acceptance

Bob’s level of peer acceptance within his camp setting was found to be lower than both Chad’s and Matt’s as measured by all information except two peer ratings. Both children who responded to the statement, "I like to have this person in my group" stated that they liked to have Bob participate "a little" and "a lot". The observed behaviour of other campers did not validate these assertions. Bob was often seen playing by himself in a sandpit sometimes with his support worker monitoring him and at other times not. While it was explained that Bob often required time alone to
avoid chaos and lengthy setting transitions, peers did not actively seek out his company and paid no attention to the fact that he was missing. There were no observed instances of children independently initiating contact with Bob. He similarly did not seek out contact with his peers unless prompted to do so by an adult.

During the parent interview Bob’s mother disclosed that he did not experience continued contact or even polite greetings with camp peers after the summer despite geographic proximity. The mother noted that peer contact which took place during the camp sessions appeared to be brief and limited to single exchanges such as saying hello or assisting Bob in the completion of a one step task. There was no interest expressed by peers in continuing the interaction beyond this point.

Three out of four staff sociograms completed for Bob suggest extremely low group acceptance for him with 89 to 95 percent of the entire camp group being more accepted (Table 3). While the Camp Supervisor was somewhat more generous in his estimation of Bob’s acceptance status, all four staff ratings averaged 84.5% of the total camp group as being more accepted by peers than Bob.

Skills and Behaviour

Bob’s SSRS results were similar to Matt’s with his total social skills score at the 4th percentile showing him to have a lower overall level of skill compared to the nonhandicapped standardization sample (Table 4). Self control within groups and assertion in responding to and initiating contact were lower than norms for the nonhandicapped. Levels of cooperation within group
activities were found to be within nonhandicapped age norms. Although problem behaviours were noted in detail within Bob's camp application form and these were sometimes reported by staff, they were not rated as being significantly greater than the nonhandicapped group. All Problem Behaviour subscale scores indicated that levels of inappropriate behaviour directed towards others (Externalizing Problems), behaviour indicating anxiety or poor self esteem (Internalizing Problems), and hyperactivity were all within average limits when compared with the nonhandicapped standardization sample (Table 4).

A summary of Bob's Playground Observation Scale results is found in Figure 4. Five observations were completed in this setting totalling 30 minutes. The activities observed included arts and crafts, an unnamed freeplay water activity, and various active team games conducted both in and out of doors. While other observations of Bob not utilizing this scale described long periods of solitary play activity with no interaction initiated by either Bob or his peers, this scale notes consistent and frequent interactive activity (26 recorded instances), and cooperative behaviour (21 instances noted). While seemingly a contradiction of the informal observations, all recorded group cooperation and interaction took place with the facilitation of the adult support worker assigned to Bob. The inference is that Bob is capable of appropriate interaction and cooperative activity but does not conduct this on his own. The remainder of his Observation Checklist results were unremarkable and consisted of onlooker play (always taking place
Noninteractive Play, (adult prompted)
Cooperative behaviour, (adult prompted)

Beginning camp period
Middle camp period
End of camp period

Shy behaviour

Based on 5 observations

Figure 4 - Bob's play and social interaction behaviour
illustrate the fact that Bob has far fewer interaction skills than expected given his weak social skills. SSRS results did not fully reflect Bob's low acceptance within this setting may be explained in

analytical responsibility.

exception he was regarded as being his support worker's exception that many counselors made no effort to approach Bob. With race and interaction with Bob, staff attitudes appeared to be similar in instances in which even tolerant peers would voluntarily approach "tolerant," the support worker did not hesitate to describe any camps appeared extremely busy. Described by many as "fast" and on each visit, both staff and described by many as "fast" and on each visit, the pace was games and sporting events. Although quite well run, the pace was menu of day camp activities, the emphases appeared to be on active the camp may be described as an active one, while offering a setting and make demands of others.

language as a functional tool which he would use to ask for help. Adult prompting. There was some recognition on Bob's part of appropriate reason. Once again, such behaviors tended to take place with questions from those familiar to him and from others. Checklists were few in number. Bob would occasionally respond to communicative behaviors measured by the social language without his support worker prompting him. 'and behaviors which may be classified as shy.'
Matt in that Bob initiated contact with others far more rarely, and only with adult prompting. All successful group entry, activity maintenance and cooperation took place with adult assistance. Bob showed no motivation to engage others preferring instead to spend time at solitary play when permitted to do so.

While reported levels of problem behaviour on the SSRS were not extreme, such results contradict Bob's clearly documented history of difficulties in this area. Bob's behavioural problems have been corroborated by the author's past consultation involvement, current informal camp observations and staff reports. The relatively positive SSRS problem behaviour ratings may be explained by the diligence shown by Bob's support worker in closely and carefully guiding his activity participation and interaction. While constantly monitoring him and taking immediate action when difficulties presented themselves, the worker played a large role in discouraging the frequent expression of difficult behaviour on Bob's part. As these were rarely encountered and quickly dealt with thanks to worker intervention, significantly high levels of problem behaviour were not evident on the SSRS. As his level of acceptance is low it seemed likely that the early and infrequent display of Bob's difficult to manage behaviours played a role in alienating him from his peers.

This camp setting was seen to be "fast paced" with a large and inconsistent enrolment. Such conditions are known to be difficult for persons with autism. Problem behaviour frequently asserts itself under such conditions, and activity as well as social
engagement with others become harder to attain. These outcomes appeared when no adult facilitation was taking place and worked against Bob’s achieving strong peer acceptance. They also seemed to prevent the attitudes of staff and peers from becoming more positive over time which would have fostered Bob’s acceptance.

Jeff

Background

Jeff is 11 years old and lives at home with his parents and younger sister. There is a dual diagnosis of autism and Prader-Willi Syndrome. The latter condition is characterized by an uncontrollable compulsion to continuously eat. Individuals with this syndrome are predisposed to serious weight problems from an early age and to common health problems exacerbated by weight gain. Jeff is also developmentally delayed although there is no record of his functioning level being formally assessed. Observation and interviews with involved case professionals estimate him to be within the moderate to severe range of intellectual delay. Noted behaviour concerns have included food stealing, ingestion of objects, grabbing at other persons, particularly females, dropping to the ground and refusing to move, and other forms of noncompliance. He has no verbal communication skills. Family strain in caring for Jeff is evident and this has encouraged consistent usage of integrated summer camp options for Jeff since the age of four. These serve as a respite option for the family.

Acceptance

Jeff proved to be the least accepted of all four boys studied.
Staff sociograms all yielded consistently low acceptance levels with anywhere from 71 to 96% of all campers rated as more popular. On average a full 84.75% of camp participants were rated as more accepted than Jeff (Table 3).

This finding was strongly supported by both informal observation and parent interview. Peers would approach Jeff extremely rarely, at prescribed times, and only with adult prompting. Camp counsellors also showed extreme reluctance to approach Jeff as it was explained he would "grab" at them. This behaviour was especially problematic for women with long hair. Jeff apparently enjoys the texture of hair. He also had an unfortunate habit of grabbing women's breasts. Because of these and other difficult behaviours several disparaging comments were made regarding Jeff by both staff and peers.

Peer ratings of Jeff's acceptance show some variation with one child reporting "not liking having this person in his group a lot", while two others offer the faint praise of "liking this a little". Jeff was the only one of the four boys to receive an extreme negative rating ("do not like to a lot") from a peer.

Skills and Behaviour

Social skill ratings on the SSRS are uniformly below average in all domains. The total score was less than the second percentile (Table 4). Cooperation within groups, assertion in initiating and responding to contact with others, and self control were all at significantly lower levels than those found for the nonhandicapped standardization sample. The Problem Behaviour subscales and total
score results (Table 4) were in clear contradiction with behavioural difficulties both observed and reported by many within the setting. None of these scores described problem behaviour levels above that which would be expected for the nonhandicapped standardization sample.

Seven observations were completed on Jeff utilizing the Playground Observation Scale. Total observation time was 42 minutes and camp activities included free play alone as well as with the support worker, lunch, and low demand game activity. Results are presented in Figure 5. Both cooperative behaviour and interactive activity were observed, 20 and 18 incidents respectively. It is important to note, however, that these are most often prompted by the support worker. It should be noted that Jeff was assigned the same highly skilled support worker as Bob. This woman was assigned to Jeff once Bob's camp period ended. On one occasion, cooperation and interaction were facilitated by peers and not Jeff's worker. A lunch time routine had developed where peers selected by the worker on a rotating basis would take turns breaking off pieces of Jeff's food and allowing him to access them a little at a time. This served to keep him from eating too fast, stealing others' lunches, and misbehaving. It also proved to be one of few methods the support worker was able to devise to encourage others to interact with Jeff. The strategy was successful as Jeff remained compliant in order to secure his lunch. Positive interaction did not generalize beyond lunch time, however, and no other positive instances of cooperation or interaction were seen. Jeff was only
Figure 5 - Jeff's play and social interaction behaviour

- O O Noninteractive play
- X X Interactive play, (adult prompted)
- # # Cooperative behaviour, (adult prompted)
- • • Shy behaviour
- & & Physical aggression

based on 7 observations
observed to aggress towards his peers when initiating contact with them independently at times other than lunch. Remaining behaviours noted on the Playground Observation Scale consisted primarily of solitary and parallel play (Figure 5).

The Social Language Checklist could not be completed as Jeff is nonverbal. Informal observations, however, showed that he was able to nonverbally respond to questions as well as ask for help, inform, and make demands. These abilities were confirmed through staff reports.

Setting

The attitudes of both camp staff and peers towards Jeff are described above. These were easily the most negative encountered across all four camp settings. The setting was similar to the camp attended by Bob with large numbers of active games and structured sporting events being conducted. Participation of any kind in such activity was difficult for Jeff due to his poor stamina so he would spend large amounts of time engaged in alternative one-on-one activities with his support worker. Taking part in arts and crafts offerings was also problematic and handled in similar fashion due to Jeff’s continual efforts to ingest materials. These activities tended to be avoided for this reason unless edible materials were involved.

Analysis

The one inconsistency in Jeff’s findings was that his score was in the normal range on the Problem Behaviour Scale of the SSRS. There are two possible explanations for this. First, some of Jeff’s
problematic behaviours such as hair pulling and ingesting inedible materials are not measured by this instrument. The second explanation is that Jeff had an extremely competent support worker, highly skilled at behaviour management. Consequently, Jeff suppressed many of his negative behaviours in her presence. Since the worker completed the SSRS she simply reported what she encountered which was his behaviour when it was most controlled. Despite Jeff’s SSRS results, he was clearly and consistently identified by all others who had contact with him as the child who displayed the most challenging, persistent behaviours out of all four studied. Unlike Chad and Matt, these behaviours persisted in their expression throughout his entire camp attendance with no reduction in frequency except in the presence of his support worker. This finding has been well documented throughout Jeff’s service history in the Parks and Recreation Department and does much to explain his low acceptance levels. All those at the camp reported that Jeff’s behaviour was unpredictable and very unpleasant to deal with. This was a powerful deterrent to people interacting with him.

Jeff’s social skills were found to be the lowest of all four participants. As would be expected, so was his acceptance at camp. It could not be ascertained whether the negative attitudes of staff and peers towards Jeff were a result of his challenging behaviours or if these staff had an initial negative attitude toward children with special needs. In any case, these attitudes did prove to be problematic for Jeff. Opportunities for successful interaction were
not provided because of them unless prompted by his support worker. Like Bob, Jeff was largely seen as being the worker's responsibility and no one else's. This situation deteriorated by the late introduction of an additional male support worker who was required during periods in which the original worker was unavailable. This gentleman quickly became even less accepted than Jeff due to difficulties in relating to other staff. This sabotaged efforts at activity inclusion. The new worker freely admitted to accusing staff of "not wanting Jeff within their setting" and avoiding further inclusion attempts within the groups afterwards.
Table 3: Camp Staff Peer Acceptance Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rater 1</th>
<th>Rater 2</th>
<th>Rater 3</th>
<th>Rater 4</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>82% b</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matched Control</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>6% b</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>35.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt</td>
<td>54% a</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>0% b</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>68% c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matched Control</td>
<td>0% a</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20% b</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16% c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>65% a</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matched Control</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0% a</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeff</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>81% b</td>
<td>84.75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matched Control</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>12% b</td>
<td>44.25%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

a - Camp supervisor rating
b - Participant's support worker rating
c - Adjusted mean with support worker rating removed
Table 4: SSRS Social Skills and Problem Behaviour Total and Subscale Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chad</th>
<th>Matt</th>
<th>Bob</th>
<th>Jeff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard Score</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentile Rank</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&lt;2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>average</td>
<td>fewer</td>
<td>average</td>
<td>fewer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assertion</td>
<td>average</td>
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<td>fewer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Control</td>
<td>average</td>
<td>average</td>
<td>fewer</td>
<td>fewer</td>
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<td><strong>Problem Behaviours</strong></td>
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<td>Standard Score</td>
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<td>Problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internalizing</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4
DISCUSSION

Three questions were articulated in the introduction. The first examined the degree to which children with developmental handicaps are accepted by their peers in integrated daycamp settings. The second was to identify behavioural, personal and setting variables which influence this social acceptance. Question number three considered strategies shown to be helpful in developing positive peer acceptance for children with developmental handicaps in educational settings. It was thought that at least some of these strategies could be adapted for use within recreation environments. The results will now be considered in terms of these research questions.

Social Acceptance

The results indicated that all four children with developmental handicaps were generally less accepted by their peers than the non-handicapped comparison children on both sociometric measures employed. There was strong agreement across the two measures and the finding is consistent despite variation in acceptance levels for each participant.

Chad was clearly the most accepted of the four participants. Nevertheless, even he did not acquire any lasting friends or experience anything beyond superficial contact in the form of polite greetings when meeting children in his camp group after the session was over. In spite of his relatively positive acceptance ratings he was recognized and treated as being "different" by both
staff and peers. Some children reported feeling protective towards him, perceiving the need to be patient, provide extra assistance, and work much harder to establish and maintain interaction. This differs from most peer relations and has been seen with adults with developmental handicaps in community settings (Green et al., 1995). Matt and Bob seemed to simply be tolerated and Jeff was openly rejected by the group.

Factors Influencing Participant Acceptance

Analysis suggests that some variables did not seem to have a strong impact on participants’ social acceptance. For these four boys, age, socioeconomic status and ethnic background did not seem to affect their acceptance by their peers.

The data suggested that participant behaviour, skills and setting characteristics all interact to determine the degree of acceptance that will be offered by a child’s peers. Figure 6 provides a schematic representation of these variables and the nature of this interaction. Children who have positive social and communication skills as well as few externalizing or internalizing behaviour problems are more likely to enjoy peer acceptance than children whose skills are not as well developed, or have severe behaviour problems. The model outlined in Figure 6, however, suggests that children’s social skills can be bolstered and difficult behaviours weakened if camp staff have positive attitudes towards them, activities and routines are carefully planned, and designated support workers are skilled and do not shadow children too much.
Figure 6 - Variables influencing peer acceptance

PEER
ACCEPTANCE

SOCIAL SKILLS AND PROBLEM BEHAVIOURS
- interest in social interaction
- conversation skills, (oral language)
- attention span
- frequency/intensity of noncompliant and aggressive behaviour

SETTING VARIABLES
- staff attitude and training
- motivation/skills of support workers
- camp structure, activity, routines
Social Skills and Social Behavior

The findings corroborated much of previous research in educational settings which has shown that children with advanced social skills are more accepted by peers than children who do not have as advanced skills. These findings are true for children with developmental handicaps (Johnson & Johnson, 1981), children with other disabilities (Cohen & Zigmond, 1986; Ochoa, 1991; Odom et al., 1992; Roberts & Zubrick, 1992; Stone & La Greca, 1990), and children without disabilities (Asher & Gottman, 1981).

Both Chad and Matt obtained higher scores on the SSRS and were more accepted by their peers than Bob and Jeff. Chad would initiate contact with others independently and frequently engaged in cooperative play and conversed with peers. His ability to use short utterances clearly facilitated his interaction. He greeted others, expressed his needs and wants, and responded to other children’s initiations. Matt initiated contact occasionally, typically responding to other children. His role seemed to be that of onlooker. An inability to communicate orally inhibited his interaction to a large extent. This difficulty was further compounded by the fact that other campers were not taught to interpret Matt’s signs. Bob also did not communicate verbally with other children. He further seemed to be uninterested in social interaction, not initiating contact with peers, and not responding to their overtures. Jeff’s only unprompted interactions with his peers were aggressive in nature resulting in their avoidance of him.
Regardless of his good peer acceptance and frequent interaction with peers, even Chad's relationships did not follow the typical pattern of children without disabilities. Chad did not sustain a complex play interaction or conversation for an extended period. This fleeting quality of Chad's interactions confirms Guralnick's (1994) observation that interaction maintenance skills are an important component of social relationships. Chad's peers would play with him, interact with him, and seemed to like him. They also protected him and allowed him to move from activity to activity without sustaining an interaction. In essence, they treated Chad as though he was a much younger child.

In addition to social skill deficiencies, three of the four boys displayed negative behaviours which could potentially interfere with social interaction and acceptance. In Chad’s case, these behaviours included noncompliance and inappropriate touching. Accommodations made within the camp setting led to a significant reduction in these behaviours which helped foster his acceptance by peers. Matt was also sometimes noncompliant and would pinch new adults and peers. This behaviour was seen as an adjustment to the demands of a new setting. He would also engage in self stimulatory hand flapping. None of Matt’s behaviours were of sufficient intensity or frequency to significantly alienate him from other children. Jeff’s noncompliant and aggressive behaviours were so intense that others actively tried to avoid interacting with him and disliked him.

The analysis of all four case studies suggests that children
will accept those who have disabilities within recreational settings, provided that the children with disabilities are interested in interacting, initiate interaction at times, and respond to the initiations of others. Children without disabilities will even tolerate some problem behaviours, provided that these are not too intense, improve over time, and they may have their questions answered regarding such behaviours. Children without disabilities are less likely to accept children with developmental handicaps when they withdraw from interaction, do not respond to the overtures of others, or exhibit such frequent or intense levels of noncompliant or aggressive behaviours that they are consistently difficult to be around.

**Setting Impact**

A key issue explored in the present study was the degree to which opportunities provided in daycamps enhanced social skills and minimized difficult behaviours for children with developmental handicaps. Although several previous studies in educational and residential settings have illustrated that setting variables influence social acceptance of children with developmental handicaps (Altman & Kanagawa, 1994; Meece & Wang, 1982), the specific variables of importance in daycamp settings have not been previously identified.

Although all four camps had a long history of integration effort, there was considerable evidence that the number of years spent integrating children with disabilities does not influence success at this. Each setting varied considerably in the methods
they used and their effectiveness. The variables which seemed to be important were the attitudes and training of staff, the skill of the assigned support workers in adjusting their response to the children’s needs, and the structure of activities and routines.

Staff Acceptance and Training

The four daycamps differed considerably in the attitudes of both their supervisors and front line staff towards children with developmental disabilities. In those camps attended by Matt, Bob, and Jeff, interviews suggested that at best these children were tolerated. It was clear that these children were viewed as the responsibility of the designated support worker. All three interacted minimally with other children within the setting, often only with adult prompting and did not participate in many of the activities. Instead, they spent much of their time either in solitary forms of play, or interacting solely with their support worker. Some front line staff did not seem to view integration as being important. When it was suggested that other staff and children in Matt’s setting learn signs, for example, the staff did not understand why this would be necessary.

Conversely, the attitudes of staff at Chad’s camp were strongly positive. Although not all staff within this setting were given extensive special needs training, the camp supervisor was a teacher with a strong commitment to integration. Her skills to carry out this task were obviously well developed. From the beginning, she assumed a strong leadership role in this area. The setting was proactive in that staff worked to prevent problems from
becoming serious. There was consistent productive problem solving. Shortly after the start of camp, the supervisor held a question and answer session for all campers to answer their questions about children with disabilities. The staff group as a whole seemed to be committed to including all children whenever possible. They demonstrated patience, creativity, modified activities to include Chad and were highly sensitive to his needs. It was not clear if this was due solely to the influence of the supervisor or if all staff shared this commitment at the beginning of camp. In any case, the positive attitudes of supervising adults in this setting were transferred to many of the campers. Staff within this setting had the ability to act as positive role models for children on how to include someone who had a developmental handicap. In addition to the positive outcomes Chad experienced, these conditions helped to create a setting which was receptive to consultation input, problem solving and continued training.

Support Worker Skill and Role

In those camps attended by Matt, Bob, and Jeff, the support workers spent all of their time working with children who had developmental handicaps. In spite of job descriptions to the contrary, their role often seemed to be to take care of these children's needs rather than facilitate integration into the camps. Certainly this was the view of most other staff within these camps. The support workers seldom organized games or other activities with all children and other staff rarely interacted with the children who had developmental handicaps. At times when such interaction
took place, it was most often prompted by the support worker. All three of these support workers were somewhat accepting of their implicit role, not expecting that they should work with any other children unless it pertained to the children in their care. The role of Chad's support worker was different. Her role involved work with all campers which lowered the ratio of staff to children. This woman was able to model ways for other staff and children to interact with Chad, without taking over or controlling the interaction.

It should be noted that in contrast to the other study participants Chad had a lower need for one on one assistance. He did require support when groups moved to unfamiliar environments or engaged in new activities. Occasionally he would become noncompliant or aggressive necessitating support worker or other adult intervention. In spite of this however, supporting Chad when the group did something new became a role assumed by other campers. This role was effectively carried out by these children under the nonintrusive supervision of counsellors. This carefully orchestrated fading of adult support to levels appropriate for Chad facilitated his social acceptance and integration.

Matt, Bob, and Jeff all had support workers of varying skill and motivation. Both Bob and Jeff were assigned to a highly skilled individual. There were minimal opportunities for her to promote interaction between the children she worked with and other campers. In Bob's case, she always needed to prompt him to interact with others. It was also necessary to prompt other children to interact
with Bob. This person worked hard to control Jeff’s aggressive behaviour toward other children at times developing creative ways of doing so. During lunch time, she asked other children to take turns breaking Jeff’s lunch into small pieces, preventing him from eating too quickly, becoming aggressive, and at the same time encouraging interaction with other children. Constructive and stimulating individual activities were also derived for both Bob and Jeff where appropriate.

Difficulties in integrating Bob and Jeff were due in part to the attitudes of other staff towards these more difficult to work with children and as will be discussed, the structure of the camp setting. In addition, the activities done by the other children were so far above Jeff’s cognitive abilities that it was difficult to see, even with adaptations, how he could participate in ways meaningful for him. Furthermore, managing his behaviour was a priority and required considerable energy and ability. This could not be left to other campers or untrained staff.

Matt’s support worker appeared less motivated and skilled. This woman was seldom observed prompting him to interact, did not teach other children how to communicate with him, and did not develop activities they could do together. There was much downtime for Matt at this camp when he was not actively engaged in any structured activity. Consequently, opportunities for him to interact with other children were minimal.

Camp Structure, Activities and Routines

Camps varied in their structure, activities and routines. All
programs required children to be registered in advance and a small fee to be paid. Children arrived at roughly the same time each day, staff never knew exactly how many children would be in attendance. Enrolment periods of two to eight weeks were permitted with campers typically attending for long periods of time. Although this structure allowed for the building of cohesive groups which could promote the integration and acceptance of children with developmental handicaps, this occurred for Chad but not the others.

In addition to varying staff attitudes, camp settings differed in their activity organization as well. There was a consistent routine at the camp Chad attended with active, organized and creative programming. There was little time observed during which children were not engaged in enjoyable activities. Matt’s setting had much more time in which campers were required to occupy themselves, and routines were inconsistent. Children have been shown to benefit from consistent routines and structured programming (Nordquist & Twardosz, 1990). The present study suggests that benefits may be further enhanced by being flexible with routines. Such an approach was used with Chad. He was permitted to move from group to group at his discretion, changing activities more often than others because of his short attention span.

Bob and Jeff attended camps similar in design to Chad’s. It seemed harder in these settings, however, to predict the number who would be in attendance each day. Drop in enrolment made for larger daily changes in attendance. This made it harder to fully organize
activities in advance, develop cohesive groups, and consistently establish routines with which all children would be familiar.

**Summary**

The data collected indicated that while the social skills and problem behaviours of children with developmental handicaps affect levels of peer acceptance, setting variables play an important role in providing opportunity to use skills and in modifying difficult behaviour. The attitudes of staff and skill levels of support workers appear to be important determinants.

**Intervention Strategies**

A review of the literature on effective methods of including children with developmental handicaps revealed several strategies which could be applied in daycamp settings. These include having a clear set of routines and efficient group management, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, peer mediated interventions, the use of toys and computers to promote positive social interaction, social skills training, and the training of staff and other children. The applicability of each of these strategies in daycamps will now be discussed.

**Routines and Group Management**

The importance of having clear routines, efficient group management of children, and well planned, interesting programs has been demonstrated in both school and recreational programs (Deklyen & Odom, 1989; Voeltz, 1982). This involves a careful assignment of tasks to children in groups, equitable distribution of resources, clear, yet flexible role assignments for staff, and smooth activity
transitions. Most children feel safer in this kind of environment. There are fewer episodes of aggression and more time may be devoted to fun and educational tasks instead of behaviour management. For children who have developmental handicaps, having consistent routines and sound group management becomes even more critical.

Although other factors were involved in the differential level of social acceptance of Chad and Matt, the findings suggest that consistent routines, stimulating programming and smooth transitions served to decrease both the frequency and intensity of Chad's negative behaviours thus increasing his social acceptance at camp. For Matt, large amounts of downtime, and inconsistent activity routines made it difficult for him to fit in given his existing skills.

Cooperative Learning

Recreation services have been a forerunner in the development of cooperative learning and participation approaches designed to ensure inclusion of all group members (Orlick, 1978; Orlick, 1982). While many specific methods and strategies are discussed in the literature, cooperative approaches all have in common the identification of a specific group goal, the allocation of explicit tasks to each group member, and the requirement that all group members help each other when difficulties in performing their individual tasks are encountered. Teachers who utilize cooperative learning effectively for children who have various special needs, plan their group composition carefully and assign tasks in accordance with the capabilities of participants. Cooperative
approaches have been shown to promote the social acceptance of children who have special needs (Orlick, 1978; Orlick, 1982) and to enhance student learning (Eichinger, 1990; Johnson, 1983; Johnson & Johnson, 1981; Lew, 1986).

Despite the fact that recreation services have historically utilized cooperative approaches, there was no evidence of the use of these techniques in any of the camps studied. Teaching these approaches would serve as a training recommendation for front line staff and support workers in their efforts to integrate children who have developmental handicaps.

Peer tutoring and Peer Mediated Interventions

Peer tutoring has been shown in classroom settings to both be an effective tool for fostering learning and enhancing peer acceptance for children who have developmental handicaps. Peer tutors receive benefits as well (Cochran et al., 1993; Holder & Lister, 1982; Kohler et al., 1990; Lynn Fox, 1989; Sasso et al., 1987; Wacker & Berg, 1985). While academic tutoring is not relevant to a recreational setting, having peers assist children with developmental handicaps to carry out game or other activity requirements may be appropriate. The selection and training of suitably mature peers at daycamps may provide benefits for both the children with developmental handicaps and their peer helpers. The helper gets to know, play with, and become more accepting of children with disabling conditions. Research has shown that when peers are used as intervention agents they are given opportunities to build their self esteem (Ambron, 1977). In recreation programs
which frequently provide rewards for athletic and social gains
positive recognition would easily be given to peer helpers.

Peer tutoring and assistance was used very effectively with
Chad. As a result, he interacted frequently with his peers. His
support worker's role was not to stand constantly by his side, but
to train and encourage peers to do this while serving as a
counsellor to the whole group. Similar techniques may well have
been effective with Matt had there been more support by staff in
his setting. A good start would have been to teach his group some
basic signs to permit them to communicate with him.

As Bob was uninterested in peer interaction and avoided other
children when not prompted by adults, the same type of peer
assistance used with Chad would not likely have been effective with
him. Peer mediated intervention is a more structured approach
effective in increasing the social initiations and responses of
children with autism (Strain and Odom, 1986). This approach
involves the training of peers on how to elicit responses from
children with special needs and reinforces them for doing so. Bob
might have benefited from peers who had received peer mediated
intervention training as part of their camp activity routine.

It should not be surmised that peer interventions would be
appropriate for all children who have challenging needs. The
frequency and intensity of Jeff's aggression and noncompliance
could quickly compromise the safety of his peers making this an
inappropriate choice of strategy.
Toys and Equipment

Toys and computers have been shown to foster social interaction between children while reducing problem behaviour and enhancing learning (Burroughs & Murray, 1992; Martin et al., 1991; McCormick, 1987; Spiegel-McGill et al., 1989; Vaughn, 1985). Many software packages are available which encourage interaction and are appropriate for use in recreation programs. An example would be the CD Rom package, "Need for Speed" which simulates competitive race car driving between two players (Electronic Arts, 1997). Many popular board games such as "Monopoly", "Scrabble", and "Trivial Pursuit" are also now on CD Rom and could be utilized with higher functioning children to encourage peer interaction.

Toys have their uses as transitional aids which are beneficial in assisting a child or an entire group in moving from point A to point B within a setting, redirecting inappropriate behaviour, or providing a time filler while setting up a new activity. Children who enjoy music, for example, might listen to a walkman while having to wait for activities to be set up. Those who engage in inappropriate self stimulatory behaviours such as handflapping might have this behaviour redirected by providing them with a toy during downtime which accomplishes this same function. Using a Rubicks Cube to keep one's hands busy might reduce handflapping and might have been effective with Matt, who frequently exhibited this behaviour. For those who have poor attention spans, "slinky races" in which a child grabs one end of a slinky and has to touch his end to the one held by the support worker while that person moves down
the hall to their next destination could be a way of effectively transitioning a child who has difficulty focusing while changing activity. The toy gives the child both an object and a task to focus on (McMahon, 1992).

**Social Skills Training**

The role of direct social skill training shown to be beneficial in other settings (Antia & Kreimeyer, 1987; Hamre-Nietupski et al., 1992; Luftig, 1988) should not be overlooked. This form of intervention need not necessarily be incompatible with children's recreational environments since it may be done on an informal basis. In the case of recreational programs, children must often be reminded of the rules, how and when to be courteous to peers, turn taking, etc. When dealing with children with developmental handicaps, it is necessary to work more systematically at this task in order to ensure that learning takes place. This may be done through setting up game activities appropriate to the recreation setting which require children to deal with one another, negotiate conflicts, compromise, share, and take turns (Aloia, 1978; Marlowe, 1979). This idea may be taken one step further where the process of social skill learning becomes a direct focus of the game. Children are rewarded directly and receive immediate feedback for solving social problems and demonstrating appropriate social behaviours in the Social L.I.F.E. game (Griffiths, 1988).

**Education and Training of Staff and Children**

It is clear that the implementation of approaches outlined
here involve education and training of both recreation staff (Fiedler & Simpson, 1987) and children (Groll & McMahon, 1994; Reaves & Roberts, 1983). Rhetoric regarding normalization and the rights of people with disabilities does little to assist those responsible for integration outcomes. The current findings corroborate those of previous studies (McEvoy et al., 1990; Romer & Haring, 1994; Salisbury et al., 1995) that all staff, not just specialized support workers must believe in integration and have positive attitudes towards the inclusion of children who have developmental disabilities. Both staff and children must be taught about the needs of children who have special needs, and have their questions answered both initially and on an ongoing basis. Staff will need to be taught routines which help children to function within the group. Training should include specific skills for efficient group management, cooperative learning, peer assistance, and social skills training techniques. Appropriate toys and computer software should be demonstrated and these resources provided to staff. If a child uses an augmentative communication system, staff and children must be provided with some basic training in its use.

**Study Limitations and Future Research**

The major limitations of the current study are the small sample size and the short period of time available to observe individual children. As the above discussion is based on four case studies, assertions made must be viewed as hypotheses waiting to be verified through empirical testing with large samples of children.
in various recreational environments.

The model outlined in Figure 6 could provide a theoretical basis for future studies. Research might involve approximately 50 children with developmental handicaps. Sociometric measures, a measure of both social skills and problem behaviour completed by staff members who know the child best, and observational measures of the child and setting are appropriate. The sociometric measures employed in the present study and the Social Skills Rating System have provided some useful data. Both the Playground Observation Scale and the Camp Setting Description Form should be enhanced primarily by having longer and more frequent observation periods. With sufficiently large samples, regression techniques could be applied to confirm whether the variables which facilitate social acceptance of children with developmental handicaps in camp settings suggested by this study are predictive on a more widespread basis.

Conclusion

It is widely accepted that the integration of persons with disabilities has many benefits to both these individuals and their peers. Both groups learn from each other and broaden their experiences.

"IDIC" - "Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combination"

It is our differences and our acceptance of these which make us strong.

Star Trek
APPENDIX A

Consent Letter

ALL FAMILIES PLEASE READ BOTH SECTIONS

Dear Parent:

My name is Douglas McMahon and I am a graduate student in the Department of Applied Psychology at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, (OISE). Some reading this know me as the MTACL Day Respite Services Coordinator. With the assistance of Dr. Judith Wiener and Dr. Barry Schneider of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, I have developed a research study to learn more about the social acceptance and skills of children with special needs demonstrated within a summer day camp environment. Some children are readily accepted by a sometimes unfamiliar peer group in day camps and others are not. Earlier research in other settings has suggested that children who experience poor acceptance from peers may have difficulty realizing the full benefits of integration. To ensure that these benefits are forthcoming for all, we must learn more about the functioning of children with special needs within day camp settings.

FOR SUBJECTS WHO HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS

Should you provide consent for your child to participate, I will engage in a number of activities to assess his or her social functioning at camp during July and August. First, I would like permission to use the information you have already provided on your child’s application forms. Secondly, I would like to observe your child for two 10 minute periods each week. While doing this, I will fill out a checklist noting his or her play behaviors and social interactions. Next a camp counsellor will complete social skills, language/communication, and social acceptance scales at the end of the camp session. Finally, I will ask all participating children to rate themselves on how much they enjoy having one another within their group. This will also be done at the end of the camp session and it will be stressed that their ratings must be kept confidential. In order to ensure that this happens, an entertaining activity, one which will distract the children from discussing their ratings will be done at the end of this procedure.

I wish to assure you that should you decide to let your child take part, his/her identity will be kept confidential at all times. At the conclusion of data analysis, a results summary will of course be made available to all who have agreed to assist. In order to request your copy of this summary, please fill in your full name and address on the appropriate section of the enclosed consent form. Should you allow your child to participate, you may still withdraw your consent at any time by telephoning me at the number below. Finally, it is important to stress that should you choose
not to participate, this in no way affects your eligibility to receive the experimenter's MTAACL professional services.

It is realized that involvement in this project requires commitment from yourself, your child, and the organization sponsoring your child's camp program. I believe however, that the potential benefits of this research for children who have special needs, and for the programs which endeavour to serve them, are great. I hope that you will choose to assist me. Please return the attached consent form with your child during the first week of July indicating whether or not you wish him/her to take part. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 438-6099, ext. 245 should you have questions or concerns. I very much appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Douglas McMahon
Day Respite Services Coordinator
MTAACL
FOR SUBJECTS WHO DO NOT HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS

As this study concerns itself with the social acceptance within camp programs of children who have special needs, the consent requirements for other children within the camp group are not as involved. Children who do not have special needs whose parents will permit them to take part will be included in the social acceptance scale completed by Counsellors described previously. These children will also carry out the rating procedure describing their level of enjoyment in having other children within their group. Completion of the other measures described on page one involving skills and behavior are not required for these children with one exception. For comparison purposes, efforts will be made to locate a peer within the camp setting who matches the exceptional child on sex, and as closely as possible on age. This child’s parents will be contacted directly by the experimenter to obtain permission to complete the remaining measures described in the consent letter for parents of participants who have special needs.

I wish to assure you that the same considerations and safe guards afforded parents of children with special needs who are taking part in the study are in effect for your child as well. Your child’s identity will be kept confidential at all times. At the conclusion of data analysis, the same summary of research findings will be sent to you should you wish this. In order to request the results, please fill in your name and address on the appropriate section of the enclosed consent form. Should you choose to allow your child to participate, you may still withdraw this consent at anytime simply by contacting me at the number below.

It is realized that involvement in this project requires commitment from yourself, your child, and the organization sponsoring your child’s camp program. I believe however, that the potential benefits of this research are great, and well worth the effort. I hope that you will choose to assist me. Please return the attached consent form with your child during the first week of July indicating whether or not you wish him/her to take part. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 438-6099, ext 245 should you have questions or concerns. I very much appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Douglas McMahon
Day Respite Services Coordinator
MTACL
CONSENT FORM

Child’s Name: ___________________________ Birthdate: ________________

Check here:

____ I give permission for my child to participate in the study on social acceptance conducted by Doug McMahon of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

____ I do NOT give permission for my child to participate in the study on social acceptance conducted by Doug McMahon of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

____ I wish to receive a copy of the final summary report.

NAME: ________________________________________________

ADDRESS: ____________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

TELEPHONE: __________________________________________

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN: _______________________

DATE: _______________________________________________
## APPENDIX B

### CAMP SETTING DESCRIPTION FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Full name of setting &amp; Parks Dept. affiliation if applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Setting</td>
<td>School? Large outdoor conservation area, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting Specialty</td>
<td><em>i.e. general day camp activities, computer camp, sports camp, etc.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of Operation</td>
<td>Setting times, e.g. 8:00am - 4:00pm daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment Maximum</td>
<td>Maximum amount of time allowed for users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment</td>
<td>Total numbers in attendance and numbers of participants with special needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Ratio</td>
<td>Average numbers of staff persons to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellors</td>
<td>Number of female Counsellors, number of males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Ratio</td>
<td>Does subject have 1:1 support or function within normal camp ratio? How often? What is this ratio?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Environment</td>
<td>Describe setting. Do activities take place indoors, outdoors, both? Use school class rooms, large outdoor fields, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Demands</td>
<td>Describe activities routinely done in this setting. Are these active or passive in nature? Do they encourage/discourage interaction among participants etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration History</td>
<td>Does setting have prior experience integrating those with challenging needs? How extensive?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Attitudes</td>
<td>What are staff feelings towards integration process? Also their attitudes towards the specific subject with special needs in the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Attitudes</td>
<td>What are the attitudes of the children attending towards those with special needs? Towards the subject with special needs in the study?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

SOCIAL LANGUAGE CHECKLIST

Responds to questions ___
Initiates a conversation ___
Sustains topic in a conversation ___
Has mastered conversational turn taking ___
Greets others appropriately ___
Makes small talk ___
Adjusts level of speech to listener ___
Understands/tells simple jokes ___
Interrupts others who are speaking ___
Perseverative speech (repeats same thing over and over) ___
Echolalic speech ___
Switches topics inappropriately ___
Talks excessively ___
Frequently makes inappropriate remarks ___
Uses language to:
   ask for help ___
   inform ___
   persuade ___
   demand ___
   provide support for others ___
APPENDIX D

PARENT INTERVIEW

TELL ME ABOUT ____ 'S SOCIAL EXPERIENCES AT CAMP LAST SUMMER. HOW DID YOU FIND HIS EXPERIENCE RELATING WITH OTHER CHILDREN?

WHAT CHANGES, (IF ANY), HAVE YOU NOTICED IN YOUR CHILD'S SOCIAL CONTACT WITH OTHERS AFTER THE INTEGRATED SUMMER CAMP EXPERIENCE?

- DESCRIBE ALL POSITIVE CHANGES.
- DISCUSS HOW THESE ARE DIFFERENT FROM BEFORE CAMP.
- WHAT FACTORS DO YOU BELIEVE HELPED THIS TO HAPPEN?
- DOES YOUR CHILD NOW SEE ANYONE FROM CAMP NOW THAT TIME THERE IS FINISHED?

HAVE THERE BEEN ANY NEGATIVE SOCIAL EFFECTS RESULTING FROM YOUR CHILD'S TIME AT CAMP?

- DESCRIBE THESE.
- HOW DID YOU HANDLE THEM?

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT CAMP OR OTHER INTEGRATED EXPERIENCES HAVE ANY SORT OF EFFECT AT ALL ON YOUR CHILD'S SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT? WHY OR WHY NOT?

HOW DOES ____ STILL HAVE TO IMPROVE SOCIALLY, (IF AT ALL)?

- DESCRIBE FULLY.

WHAT EXPERIENCES/OPPORTUNITIES ARE REQUIRED IN ORDER FOR THIS TO HAPPEN?

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE AGENCY, OF THE CAMP, (PARKS DEPT.), AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN PROMOTING POSITIVE SOCIAL RELATIONS FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS? IS THERE ONE? HOW SHOULD ORGANIZATIONS ATTEMPT TO DO THIS?
APPENDIX E

PLAYGROUND BEHAVIOUR OBSERVATION SCALE

Name ______________________  Subject I.D. ______

Date ______________________  Time ______________

Predominant Context

A = Male,  B = Female,  C = Integrated camp,  D = Segregated camp,
E = Younger child,  F = Older child,  G = Peer

1. Solitary play
2. Onlooker play
3. Parallel play
4a. Interactive game
4b. Interactive activity, (no conversation)
5. Conversing with 1 peer
6. Conversing with 2 or more peers
7. Ongoing adult interaction

Behavioural Attributes

8. Cooperative - sharing, giving, praising, confirming, welcoming, listening, complying, affection

9. Leadership - play organizing, asserting, spokesperson, resolving conflicts, offering ideas which get accepted

10. Comic - telling jokes or riddles, slap stick, response is always laughter or enjoyment

11. Dependent - asking for help, whining, pouting, nagging, crying

12. Shy/withdrawn - non-aggressive refusal to participate, unresponsive to play or interaction of others, self stimulation

13. Disruptive - non-aggressive attention-seeking which is not responded to by laughter or followers such as interrupting, inappropriate giggling or affection

14. Verbal aggression -  A = initiator  B = responder teasing, name calling, excluding, defiance

15. Physical aggression -  A = initiator  B = responder hitting, kicking, pushing
Social Interaction

A = appropriate, B = inappropriate, C = successful, D = unsuccessful

16. Group entry - attempts to enter a group of children who are playing or conversing

17. Maintenance - attempts to prolong an interaction with a group of children who are playing or conversing

18. Conflict resolution - attempts to resolve a conflict with one or more other children

Target Behaviours
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TARGET BEHAVIOUR</th>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>MINUTE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
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PLAYGROUND OBSERVATION
NAME:_________ I.D.:_________ DATE:_________ TIME:_________
I'm going to tell you a story and ask you a question about it ok? There was this man who lived on the seventeenth floor of his apartment building. Everyday, he’d get up to go to work and take the elevator in his building all the way down from floor seventeen to the main floor. He’d go to work, and at the end of the day, come home. Once he got to his apartment building though, he wouldn’t take the elevator up to the seventeenth floor, he’d take it up to the tenth and walk the last seven flights of stairs up to his apartment everyday.

Can you tell me why he did this?

ANSWER - He was a short man and couldn’t reach up past button number ten in the elevator.
REFERENCES


