

FOUNDATION FOR  
JEWISH  
CAMP

UJA-FEDERATION OF NEW YORK  
WESTCHESTER WOMEN'S IMPACT PHILANTHROPY GROUP  
**NESHAMOT** FUND



מחנות רמה  
**Ramah**  
Camping Movement

# INCLUSION TRAINING GUIDE FOR JEWISH SUMMER CAMPS

# INTRODUCTION

Dear Friends and Colleagues in the Jewish Disabilities Inclusion Field,

The Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) and the Ramah Camping Movement have been receiving an unprecedented number of calls and emails from camps wishing to start programs for people with disabilities, expand services, or become more inclusive. Camp directors and staff members are actively seeking guidance, support, and resources.

Proudly, we see that attention to including campers with disabilities is exploding as a priority across movements, and organizations with interest in overnight camping, day camping, vocational training programs, family camps, and more! We therefore welcome you to this Resource Guide, which we hope will evolve through use and feedback, as a regularly updated, hands-on, online resource assisting you in all aspects of your work with campers with disabilities.

FJC is grateful for the generous support of UJA-Federation of New York – Neshamot Fund, and our partner, Ramah on development of this Guide. Through the collaborative efforts of Lisa Tobin, Director of the Disabilities Initiatives at the Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) and Howard Blas, Director of the National Ramah Tikvah Network, this co-branded resource has emerged. In an effort to get useful training material in the hands of camp personnel in time for the 2015 camp season, Lisa and Howard, their teams at FJC and Ramah, and many helpful colleagues in the disabilities camping field have worked tirelessly to collect, organize, and bring online the many useful resources in this guide.

Whether you are a camp director, inclusion specialist, director of a disabilities camping program, counselor, or activity specialist, there is something here for you! We see this project growing and expanding over time. This first version offers basic information on the history of disabilities camping, models of camping for people with disabilities, benefits of camping for both campers with disabilities and the typical camp community, overviews of various disabilities, and many useful tools for day to day work with campers.

You will read materials designed by FJC, you will “hear” the voice of Tikvah, the pioneers in the field of disabilities camping since 1970, and you will see forms and resources which have been contributed by several partners in the field. For this reason, some terms and names of programs or divisions (for example *zimbudia* or *solelim*) may sound camp- or movement-specific.

This guide is designed to be used optimally by various camp stakeholders. Feel free to go directly to the section most useful by clicking through to what you need immediately, on the chart of Links by Use/Stakeholder, just above the complete Table of Contents.

# USERS' GUIDE

We have created this online resource guide to share information and resources which will help you feel more confident in your work with children with disabilities.

- Camp directors may want to take a look at sections pertaining to inclusive camping for people with disabilities, successful inclusion in Jewish summer camp, inclusive camps, specific disabilities and related activities, communicating with parents, staff training, and people first language.

- Inclusion Coordinators will find it particularly useful to access certain materials like intake forms, people first language and general information on inclusive camping before the summer, while other materials like staff training (role-plays, sensitivity activities, values based on Jewish texts, and people first language) may be useful while camp is in session.

- Counselors, division heads, inclusion coordinators, program directors and camper care teams may find such tools as social stories, visual schedules, and tips on managing camper behavior, and speaking to the bunk about inclusion and disabilities to be particularly useful.

It is our hope that this guide will continue to evolve, and that we will continue to update the guide and add new resources. We welcome your feedback and encourage you to share new materials with us.

As this resource guide expands, we would like to offer an updated list of all Jewish camp programs in the US and Canada serving campers with disabilities. In addition, we would like to offer a list of professionals and other organizations in the field serving people with disabilities. In order to offer the most comprehensive list, we ask you to complete the form below so we can include you and your organization in future updates to this guide.

We wish all of you a successful 2015 camping season and offer our support in your work. If you would like to contact Lisa or Howard, our contact information is below:

**Lisa Tobin**

[lisa@jewishcamp.org](mailto:lisa@jewishcamp.org)

646-278-4515

**Howard Blas**

[howardb@campramahne.org](mailto:howardb@campramahne.org)

413-374-7210

*In addition, we would like to offer a list of professionals and other organizations in the field serving people with disabilities. In order to offer the most comprehensive list, we ask you to email your contact information to [inclusionresourceguide@jewishcamp.org](mailto:inclusionresourceguide@jewishcamp.org) so we can include you and your organization in future updates.*

USER/STAKEHOLDER	EASY LINKS
<p><b>Pre-Camp</b>  Board/Lay Leaders  Directors/ADs  Camp Leadership  Inclusion Team  Education Staff  Seasonal Directors  New &amp; returning counselors  Camp MDs &amp; RNs  Dining Hall Leaders  Vocational Directors</p>	<p><a href="#">Inclusive Camping for People with Disabilities</a>  <a href="#">A List of Inclusive Camps</a>  <a href="#">Successful Inclusion in Jewish Summer Camp</a>  <a href="#">People First Language</a>  <a href="#">Pre-Camp Resources</a>  <a href="#">Sample Intake Forms</a>  <a href="#">Marketing</a>  <a href="#">Communication with Parents</a></p> <p><b>Glossary</b></p>
<p><b>Staff Training</b>  Director/ADs  Division Heads  Inclusion Leaders  Camper Care Team  Yoetzot  Seasonal Directors  Counselor Trainers  Vocational Directors</p>	<p><a href="#">People First Language</a>  <a href="#">Specific Disabilities and Related Activities</a>  <a href="#">Understanding The Role of Behavior in Communicating</a>  <a href="#">Communicating About Campers Within Camp: Some “Who’s” and “How’s”</a>  <a href="#">Text Based Jewish Values for Inclusive Communities</a>  <a href="#">Staff Training – A Treasure Chest</a>  <a href="#">Role Plays and Inclusion Activities</a>  <a href="#">Games &amp; Activities to Introduce Inclusion and Supporting Diverse Needs</a>  <a href="#">Anticipating, Understanding, and Managing Behavior</a>  <a href="#">Behavior Planning Charts</a>  <a href="#">Behavior and Social Skills Tips</a>  <a href="#">Visual Schedules, Social Stories, and Other Planning Tools</a>  <a href="#">Visual Schedules</a>  <a href="#">Social Stories</a>  <a href="#">General Group and Activity Planning Guidelines, Inclusion/Shadow Counselors</a></p> <p><b>Glossary</b></p>
<p><b>Use with Camper w/Disabilities</b>  Bunk Counselors  Specialists  Teachers  Camp MDs &amp; RNs  Camp Rabbis  Inclusion Staff  Camper Care Staff  Vocational Mentors</p>	<p><a href="#">Understanding The Role of Behavior in Communicating</a>  <a href="#">Anticipating, Understanding, and Managing Behavior</a>  <a href="#">How and when do inclusion directors keep in touch with parents?</a>  <a href="#">Behavior Planning Charts</a>  <a href="#">Behavior and Social Skills Tips</a>  <a href="#">Visual Schedules, Social Stories, and Other Planning Tools</a>  <a href="#">Visual Schedules</a>  <a href="#">Social Stories</a></p> <p><b>Glossary</b></p>
<p><b>Bunk/Group Use</b>  Bunk Counselors  Specialists  Teachers  Camp MDs &amp; RNs  Camp Rabbis  Inclusion Staff  Camper Care Staff  Vocational Mentors</p>	<p><a href="#">Building an Inclusive Community – Activity Plan</a>  <a href="#">Overnight Camp Sample Picture Schedule</a>  <a href="#">Behavior and Social Skills Tips</a>  <a href="#">Text Based Jewish Values for Inclusive Communities</a>  <a href="#">The Ramapo Toolbox: Creating Environments that Support Success</a></p>

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1: Inclusive Camping for People with Disabilities</b>	<b>8</b>
Research on Serving Children with Disabilities at Jewish Overnight Camps	8
History of Tikvah Programs in the Ramah Camping Movement	9
History of Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) Programs for Campers with Disabilities	9
About Yachad	11
History of Keshet and its Work in the Area of Jewish Camp	12
Ramah Tikvah Survey Results: The Positive Impact of Disabilities Programs on the Camp Community	13
Where to Begin? Developing a Successful Program Which Is Supportive of Campers with Disabilities and Seamlessly “Fits In” at Camp	14
A Range of Inclusive Models to Consider for Supporting Campers with Disabilities	15
A Definition of Inclusion at Camp	16
Other Approaches to Supporting Campers with Disabilities	16
Other Program Approaches	17
A Word about Day Camping	17
<i>A List of Inclusive Camps</i>	18
<b>Chapter 2: Successful Inclusion in Jewish Summer Camp</b>	<b>21</b>
Inclusion is an Attitude and Approach, not a Place or a Program:	21
Inclusion Opportunities throughout Camp	21
General Group and Activity Planning Guidelines for Inclusion/Shadow Counselors	21
Self-Assessment on Inclusion	22
Steps to Achieving Full Inclusion	23
<b>Chapter 3: People First Language</b>	<b>28</b>
Words Matter: “What Do We Call Him?”	28
About People First Language	28
<b>Chapter 4: Pre-Camp Resources</b>	<b>31</b>
Sample Job Description and Qualifications for Camp Inclusion Director:	31
Sample Counselor Evaluation Form	32
The Intake and Admission Process and Preparing Campers for Camp	35
Suggestions for Effectively Communicating with Families of Campers with Disabilities during an Intake	36
The Telephone Intake: Balancing Compassion with Obtaining Relevant Information	37
BRIEF TELEPHONE SCREEN FORM	38
<i>Sample Intake Forms</i>	40
Intake Form 1	40
Intake Form 2	43
Intake Form 3	49
Parent Interview	59
SENSITIVE TOPICS TO ADDRESS WITH PARENTS/ GUARDIANS	63
Camper Intake (Questions to be asked at a Home Visit)	64
School Staff or Therapist Intake	65
Information Release Form	68
Mission Statement on Website	69
<b>Chapter 5: Summer Communication</b>	<b>70</b>
Ongoing Communication with Parents/Communicating About Campers within Camp	70
How and when do inclusion directors keep in touch with parents?	70
Communicating About Campers Within Camp: Some “Who’s” and “How’s”	71

<b>Chapter 6: Text Based Jewish Values for Inclusive Communities</b>	<b>72</b>
How Do Jewish Texts Approach Individuals with Disabilities?	72
<b>Chapter 7: Staff Training – A Treasure Chest</b>	<b>75</b>
Staff Week Topics to Discuss	75
Staff Week Sample Schedule 2014 from Ramah New England	77
Code	77
Schedule	77
An Alternative Staff Week Schedule	82
<i>Role Plays and Inclusion Activities</i>	85
Role Play Suggestions	88
Building an Inclusive Community – Activity Plan	89
Sensitivity Activity	94
Inclusion Counselor Training	96
Experiential Activities	100
Games and Activities to Introduce the Themes of Inclusion and Supporting Diverse Needs	101
Positive Exposure: The Spirit of Difference	108
Understanding The Role of Behavior in Communicating (Behavior Management Session for Staff)	108
<b>Chapter 8: Specific Disabilities and Related Activities</b>	<b>112</b>
Seizure Disorders	112
Autism Spectrum Disorders (PDD-NOS—Pervasive Developmental Disorder—Not Otherwise Specified)	113
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	118
Communication Disorders	120
Hearing Impairments	121
Learning Disabilities	123
Intellectual Disabilities	125
Physical Disabilities	128
Vision Impairment	128
<b>Chapter 9: Anticipating, Understanding, and Managing Behavior</b>	<b>131</b>
The Ramapo Toolbox: Creating Environments that Support Success	135
Setting Camper Goals, Tracking Them and Achieving Them!	137
Individualized Camper Program 1 (sample form)	139
Individualized Camper Program 2 (sample form)	141
Daily Camper Report form: (used at Camp Harlam)	151
Sociogram Form: (used at URJ Camp George and Camp Harlam)	153
2014 Camp Harlam Sociogram Form	153
<i>Behavior Planning Charts</i>	155
Behavior Chart 1	155
Behavior Chart 2	156
Behavior Chart 3	157
Positive Plan of Action	158
Processing Graphic Organizer	159
Five Point Scale	160
<i>Behavior and Social Skills Tips</i>	161
Behavior Tip Sheet	161
Integrating Social Skills	161
Responding to Behavior Challenges	163
General Tips and Strategies (these will vary from camper to camper)	164

Effective Praise	164
<b>Chapter 10: Visual Schedules, Social Stories, and Other Planning Tools</b>	<b>166</b>
Visual Schedules	166
Division Detailed Schedule	167
Day Camp Sample Picture Schedule	169
Overnight Camp Sample Picture Schedule	170
<i>Social Stories</i>	175
Social Story: Winning and Losing	176
Social Story: Hands are for High-Fives!	176
Social Story: Trying New Things at Camp	176
Social Story: Winning & Losing at Camp	176
Social Story: Bees and Bugs Live Outside at Camp	177
Social Story: How to be a Good Camper	177
Social Story: How to Keep Friends	178
Social Story: I Try to Keep My Hands to Myself	179
Social Story: Words That Help and Words That Hurt	180
My Lave Tov – My Good Heart	183
My body is Holy and Good—Worksheet	186
<b>Chapter 11: Speaking to the Bunk About Inclusion and Disabilities</b>	<b>189</b>
Tips for speaking to a group about a camper with disabilities	189
Tips for speaking 1:1 with a child who is having difficulty accepting/understanding a child with a disability in the group	191
Bunk Conversations about Disabilities	192
Celebrating Difference with Campers in an Inclusion Program	194
<b>Chapter 12: Glossary</b>	<b>198</b>
<b>Chapter 13: Bibliography and Sources</b>	<b>200</b>

# CHAPTER 1: INCLUSIVE CAMPING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

## Research on Serving Children with Disabilities at Jewish Overnight Camps

As the only agency dedicated to working with all nonprofit Jewish camps, regardless of denomination or affiliation, FJC has become the leading force for growth and expansion of Jewish camps' programs and services. We understand modalities, methodologies, and the support camps need to implement change, in Jewish/Israel educational experiences, leadership development, marketing and recruitment, and more. We are keenly aware that Jewish children with disabilities have been underserved by the field of Jewish camp. It is our hope that, after 15 years as a research- and data-driven agency with a reputation for delivering programs of excellence that elevate the Jewish camp experience, FJC's standing will enable us to successfully broaden access to Jewish summer experiences for all Jewish children.

FJC believes that inclusivity is as important to typically developing children and the camp community at large as it is to children with disabilities. A fully internalized Jewish identity should certainly include a mandate to help others overcome challenges. These summer communities must be accessible to all Jewish children; they must also be infused with an ethos built around including all individuals, regardless of their needs. Moreover, sharing the camp experience with children with disabilities helps typically developing youth gain a greater appreciation of, and learn from, the strengths and abilities of their peers who face challenges.

As a first step towards initiating field-wide changes in this arena, FJC engaged in a research project mapping current, potential, and desired services available to children with emotional, intellectual and physical disabilities at nonprofit Jewish overnight camps across North America. Laszlo Strategies delivered the results of the research (conducted in early 2013), the first of its kind in the Jewish community. The survey garnered results from 423 camp staff members (from 124 camps), 262 parents, and 141 campers.

This study indicates that the majority of those involved in Jewish camps care about this issue and agree that every Jewish child, regardless of a disability or need, should be able to attend a Jewish camp. Most respondents note a preference for an inclusion model. The survey shows that the field of Jewish camp is serving no more than 2,340 to 2,590 children with disabilities, out of 75,000 total campers. While this number is more than originally estimated, it is far less than ideal. The biggest barrier to camps offering or expanding programs for special populations is not the camps' physical attributes, but rather is a dearth of relevant training and knowledge, followed by insufficient funding to adequately educate their personnel.

Armed with the findings of the survey and our understanding of what Jewish camps currently are and are not offering in the arena of disabilities programs, and encouraged by conversations with leaders in the field of Jewish camp, parents, and potential funders, FJC is now working to address the needs of children with disabilities whose right it is to have access to and benefit from immersive summers at Jewish camp. By employing a diverse set of approaches to expand camp accessibility, we are confident that we can increase access to Jewish camp so that children with wide-ranging differences can experience the best of what camp offers: joyous Judaism, new friendships, developmental growth, and fun.

For more about the 2013 Inclusion Study, click below:

Key Findings:

<http://www.jewishcamp.org/sites/default/files/u4/Key%20Findings%20-%20Jewish%20Camp%20Survey%20on%20Disabilities.pdf>

Full Results:

<http://www.jewishcamp.org/sites/default/files/u4/Jewish%20Camp%20for%20Children%20with%20Disabilities%20and%20Special%20Needs%20-%20Full%20Survey%20Findings.pdf>



## History of Tikvah Programs in the Ramah Camping Movement

In the late 1960s, two Long Island, NY public school special education teachers had an idea: offer children with disabilities the opportunity to participate in a Jewish overnight summer camp experience. After all, Jewish camping had positively impacted so many typically developing Jewish campers. As you might imagine, Jewish camps did not respond in the most supportive way. The law did not even require school districts to provide children with disabilities with a free public education until PL 94-142 was passed in 1975. Nearly every Jewish summer camp expressed hesitation. They worried about “normal” campers leaving the camps, they worried about the level of Hebrew going down as the camp catered to these campers, and of course, they worried about the extreme costs associated with such a program. And what about liability? What if the campers ran away, became violent, required extensive medical care, etcetera? Just as in the midrash wherein no nation of the world wanted the gift of the Torah, so too no Jewish camp or camping movement wanted to take on a program for campers with disabilities.

Then along came Danny Adelman (ז"ל), director of Camp Ramah in Glen Spey, NY, to change the course of history for people with disabilities in the Jewish camping world. Adelman questioned why Ramah or any other Jewish camp exists if not to promulgate the value of being inclusive of as many Jewish campers as possible. Thus, Ramah's Tikvah Program was launched with pride in 1970. It soon moved to Camp Ramah in New England located in Palmer, MA. The Tikvah Program now thrives at most Ramah overnight camps, positively influencing thousands of campers, staff members, and Israeli *mishlachot* members (emissaries).

Having a Tikvah Program at Camp Ramah now feels as natural as having Shabbat, swimming, or campfires. Yet, it hasn't always been easy. In the early years of Tikvah in New England, medical personnel were nervous, if not reluctant, to care for these campers, and Israeli *mishlachot* members, particularly in the post-Six Day War period, were very uncomfortable having “these campers” around. After all, they had barely seen “such people” moving freely out and about, interacting with the community. When Rabbi Mitch Cohen, the current director of the National Ramah Commission, served as the director of Camp Ramah in Canada, he and the board of directors decided to start a Tikvah program there. Again, there was resistance and many asked, “what are you doing to our camp?!” Within days, however, the positive impact of Tikvah on the rest of the camp was felt and, as Rabbi Cohen proudly reports, people in the camp community began treating *all* members of the community, regardless of their abilities, more sensitively. When Rabbi Cohen travels to the various Ramah camps each summer, people frequently ask him why two of the Ramah camps don't have Tikvah programs. These people had either worked at a Ramah camp with a Tikvah program or they had friends who described the program and its impact on the camp community. These people feel a lost opportunity in the absence of Tikvah in their camp: a Ramah camp without Tikvah is missing something very important.

Since the 1970 opening of the first Tikvah Program at Camp Ramah in Glen Spey, NY (which moved to Palmer, MA and became Camp Ramah in New England), every residential and day camp in the Ramah network has launched a Tikvah program, including Ramah's newest overnight camp, Ramah Outdoor Adventure in the Colorado Rockies, and two new programs which will proudly start at Camp Ramah in the Poconos and Camp Ramah Darom, in Georgia, over the coming months. In 2016, all eleven of the Ramah camps will have Tikvah programs open to hundreds of campers with disabilities, spanning and serving Jewish families across the entire North American continent. The inclusivity programs feature a wide array of camping opportunities, including targeted programs for specific populations, family camps for children with autism, and a growing initiative in vocational education, in which Tikvah alumni come back to camp as young adults to learn job skills and work in neighboring communities while enjoying the socialization and Jewish experiences of camp life. Some 250 campers with disabilities participate in Ramah programs each summer, and those programs are staffed by 240 young adults. Interest in starting or bolstering inclusive camp programs for people with disabilities continues to grow throughout the Jewish camp world.

## History of Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) Programs for Campers with Disabilities

In 2011, an especially shy and socially anxious young girl named Ali arrived at URJ Camp Harlam in Kunkletown, PA, fearful of the summer ahead. With high anxiety and a diagnosis of ADHD and autism, Ali and her parents wondered if she could successfully navigate the incredibly social environment of camp. With assistance from Camp Harlam's Camper Care staff, a team of nurturing individuals responsible for the

happiness of all campers, Camp Harlam's staff watched Ali evolve over four years, growing from an insecure camper into a confident and happy one with an arsenal of tools for building successful friendships.

After much correspondence with Ali's family in the months prior to camp each year, and a great deal of staff training, the staff was able to support Ali as she transformed herself from an struggling camper to a repeatedly excelling one. In November 2014, she became a Bat Mitzvah, and her parents graciously referred to the Camper Care team as the "fairy godmothers" who changed Ali's life, helping their daughter mature from "a seed into a flower." Her *d'var Torah* spoke to what Camp Harlam had done for her: how she would not have been the same person, or have had eight of her Camp Harlam friends at her Bat Mitzvah, without the devoted team of professionals at Camp Harlam. With support from the FJC Ruderman Inclusion Initiative Grant in 2015, Camp Harlam will expand their Camper Care team by adding an Inclusion Coordinator, who will spend even more time making sure campers with disabilities are prepared for and experience a fruitful summer.

"We want to set our campers up for a successful camp experience. Much of that success depends on creating an open and safe camp community. Our campers and staff benefit from a more diverse group of peers, where each person feels responsible for creating an inclusive and welcoming environment." –Lisa David, Associate Director of Camp Harlam

Starting in 2004, every URJ Camp hired an Inclusion Coordinator or Camper Care staff member(s) in order to meet the needs of campers with disabilities. URJ has seen these staffing changes create great success for children whose needs run the gamut of social and emotional issues to physical disabilities. Molly, a ten-year-old camper at URJ Greene Family Camp (GFC) in Bruceville, TX, was born with Cerebral Palsy, which mainly affects her balance. To set Molly up for success, GFC provided her with a one-on-one shadow (supportive adult), whose sole responsibility was to help Molly accomplish all of her goals and get her involved with activities. Molly was so pleased with her success at GFC that she wrote a blog post [1] chronicling moments of adversity that evolved into her proudest feats. Molly reflected, "I think that it is okay to be different in camp. We all have different things we need, and that does not make us any weaker than anyone else. I am having a blast at camp and think other people should try it out."

In the early 1990s, URJ Kutz Camp, in Warwick, NY, the URJ's camp for young Jewish leaders in NFTY (the Reform Jewish Youth Movement), started the Kutz Mitzvah Corps Program, an inclusive camp experience for Jewish teens with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Teens with autism are fully integrated into the Kutz summer programming. A particular highlight of this program is that NFTY leaders from across North America apply to become mentors to Mitzvah Corps campers. The peer-to-peer experience that occurs between Mitzvah Corps campers (*Tzofim*), and Kutz participants (*Chaverim*) in the Mitzvah Corps peer engagement major makes this program extraordinarily meaningful. These groups of teens set the stage for all campers to feel a sense of belonging in the Kutz community; teens in the peer engagement major (*Chaverim*) come to feel a particular sense of connection with *Tzofim* while building a *kehila kedosha* (holy community) in which each member is fully honored.

URJ Camp Coleman in Cleveland, GA, launched the inaugural year of Chadash in 2014. Chadash is a vocational program for high school graduates with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. The three-and-a-half week program offers participants with disabilities the chance to participate in the joy of an inclusive URJ camp community. Chadash provides vocational training in a supervised setting, along with the opportunity for participants to join in a wide range of recreational, social, and educational aspects of camp life.

It's not only at camp that the URJ is building awareness of inclusion. NFTY, the Reform Jewish Youth Movement, places inclusion at the forefront of everything they do. At the 2015 NFTY Convention, one of the ways NFTY celebrated inclusion was by inviting URJ Eisner Camp alumnus, Matan Koch, to address a sea of over 1,000 teens and 200 youth professionals. Koch, a Jewish lawyer with disabilities, told teens that it's not only the kids with disabilities that are benefiting from inclusive camping experiences, but even more so, typically developing teens.

NFTY-Southern, the movement's youth region encompassing Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Florida, sponsors Camp Dream Street (in partnership with Mitzvah Corps, URJ Henry S. Jacobs Camp, and the Dream Street Foundation). Dream Street is a five-day camping program for children with

physical disabilities, led by NFTY-Southern teens. Inclusion is also on the radar of NFTY's Garden Region Empire (NFTY-GER), encompassing New York and New Jersey. Four years ago, NFTY-GER invited a social worker to analyze a regional event with an inclusion lens. GER's Regional Director of Youth Engagement Pamela Schuller implemented peer-to-peer inclusion training for her teens, which educates teens about how to help fellow teens who are struggling to find their place.

Schuller describes the results: "We have seen teens change immensely as our community has become more welcoming of teens of all abilities. We equip our teen leaders to model inclusive behavior through trainings and conversations. Our community continues to grow and build with every member and that's beneficial for everyone."

The URJ has seen immense growth and success with inclusion throughout the years. The URJ and its camping and educational initiatives remain committed to an inclusive Jewish experience for all its youth. It continually strives to break down remaining barriers for entry and to create a meaningful, fun summer for all campers, no matter their differences.

[\[1\] Embracing Challenges: When the Entire Camp is My "Challenge Course"](#)

## About Yachad

Yachad, the National Jewish Council for Disabilities, was founded in 1983 with a mission to include those with developmental disabilities in all aspects of the Jewish community. With a philosophy based around a model of inclusion, Yachad serves children and adults with a wide range of disabilities.

Up until 1995, Yachad offered a 4 week summer trip called Yachad Israel. Additional trips were added, such as an east coast bus trip, based on requests from Yachad members and their families. In 1995, Yachad's only non-inclusive program became an inclusive trip, taking mainstream high school students together with Yachad participants for the most unique Israel summer experience; thus Yad B'Yad was born with 16 high school students and 13 Yachad members. Since then, Yad B'Yad has grown exponentially, serving as Yachad's premier program offering a complete inclusion summer experience. Now with two trips, over 100 high school students and 50 Yachad members, Yad B'Yad continues to model the power of inclusivity.

In 2000, Taglit Birthright Israel responded to Yachad and agreed that individuals with disabilities should have the same opportunity as other young adults to experience Israel for the first time. The first Yachad Birthright trip included participants with hearing impairments as well as those with developmental disabilities. To date (2015) Yachad provides the only Birthright trip for individuals with all types of disabilities. Yachad Birthright runs two trips a year, in June and December.

With the success of Yad B'Yad's inclusive model, Yachad opened its first sleepaway camp program in Camp Morasha (Lakewood, PA) in 1999. This program began with nine campers, providing them with an exciting inclusive summer camp experience for a two week period. The following summer, Yachad ran a full summer session program at Camp Morasha and opened one in Camp Mesorah (Guilford, NY) the next year. The program at Camp Neshar (Lakewood, PA) followed in 2002. In 2015, there are close to 30 Yachad summer programs.

Yachad's first shadow program opened at Moshava IO in 2006. Shadow camper programs provide campers with moderate disabilities the opportunity for full inclusion, albeit with the needed support to be successful. Since then, Yachad shadow and camper programs have been opened at Camp Shoshanim, Moshava Ba'lr Toronto (Day Camp), Camp Chaverim, Camp Keshet, Camp Keshet (Day Camp), Moshava Malibu, and Camp Yavneh.

Yachad's vocational training programs were also launched in the early 2000s. With the help of supportive job coaches, Yachad members are able to participate as staff members in camp. Jobs taken on by vocational members include, but are not limited to, working in the office, health center, canteen, kitchen, sports program and day camp. Yachad has vocational programs in: Camp Morasha, Camp Mesorah, Moshava IO, Camp Lavi,

Moshava Ba'lr New Jersey (Day Camp), Moshava Ba'lr Toronto, Camp Amichai in Israel, Camp Shoshanim, and Moshava Ennismore.

Yachad's mission includes working tirelessly with host camps to provide the most inclusive experience for our campers and the most meaningful understanding of individuals with special needs by the mainstream campers. In 2014, Yachad program participants totaled 642. Yachad campers have very much become a part of the larger camp community at each of our host sites. They are welcomed with open arms each summer and have become equal members of their camp communities.

Three new programs are scheduled to open this summer (2015): Camp Yavneh Shadow Program, Camp Ennismore Vocational Program and Camp Shoshanim Vocational Program.

## History of Keshet and its Work in the Area of Jewish Camp

### BACKGROUND AND MISSION

Keshet: A Rainbow of Hope for Individuals with Disabilities is a community-based organization committed to overcoming barriers to inclusion and facilitating community participation for individuals with cognitive, intellectual, and physical disabilities. Working in partnerships with Jewish schools, camps, and businesses, Keshet provides integrated educational, recreational, and vocational programs for individuals with a wide range of disabilities, helping them reach their full potential and lead dignified and productive lives.

The idea behind Keshet (Hebrew for Rainbow) was to create a place where children with disabilities could gain equal access to the resources and education available to their typically developing peers. Since then, the organization brought the "abilities" of those with disabilities to the forefront of community life.

In developing its inclusion model, several core beliefs have guided Keshet's mission and vision since its inception:

- Individuals with disabilities do best in the embrace of the community, alongside their typically developing peers.
- The organization can expertly serve individuals with a wide range of complicated needs, so no rigid admission criteria is set.
- The success of Keshet is rooted in its mutually beneficial relationships with each of its partners.

### KESHET INTEGRATED CAMP PROGRAM

Not every child with a disability has an opportunity to participate in recreational activities. For many, summer is not a time of freedom, sports, and fun, but of isolation and boredom. For individuals with disabilities, camp is not a luxury, but a necessity that provides a continuation of learning and socialization, helping to avoid the regression that often occurs over the summer. For someone with a disability, much, if not all, of the hard work and growth that takes place over a school year could be lost in an inactive summer.

As with many Keshet programs, the very first Keshet camp has evolved, out of necessity, to provide its participants with the same recreational opportunities available to their typically developing peers. If typical kids were off to an exciting, stimulating summer filled with exercises, outdoor activities, and team work, Keshet was committed to providing its campers with as many of the same experiences as possible. Keshet's first day camp program began in 1989, at Camp Apachi, with just five campers. In 1993, Keshet opened its first overnight camp program, at Camp Moshava in Wild Rose, WI, and has since expanded to multiple camps throughout the Midwest. This summer (2015), Keshet is consulting with three overnight camps across North America who plan to incorporate Keshet's model of inclusion. Now entering its 26<sup>th</sup> year of summer camp programming, Keshet serves over 150 campers annually while positively affecting the lives of thousands.

Keshet accepts participants regardless of the nature of their disabilities, accommodating a wide range of physical, verbal, social, and cognitive challenges, including pervasive developmental disorder, autism, intellectual impairment, Rett syndrome, Down syndrome, Fragile X syndrome, cerebral palsy, spina bifida,

various speech and language impairments, movement and behavior disorders, Sensory Processing Disorder, and learning delays or conditions that inhibit social interactions.

Keshet considers structured teaching—a university-developed, evidence-based service, training, and research program endorsed by the Illinois Department of Human Services—to be best practice for educating individuals with intellectual challenges. Keshet uses structured teaching, emphasizing social integration with typically developing peers. In order to ensure that each participant gets all needed supports, Keshet employs a highly trained, specialized, direct service staff including integration specialists, experienced teachers and paraprofessionals, and related services professionals.

For summer integrated programs or camps, it is essential to hire and train staff members who blend into ordinary camp life. While this can present a challenge, as the education and history of ordinary camp staff working with our campers is minimal, Keshet sees it as an opportunity to build capacity in the camps; they conduct extensive on-site trainings with Keshet and host site staff members. Additionally, they offer Disability Awareness education for typically developing campers. When inclusion is done correctly, it is beneficial for all members of a camp or program community.

As a side-effect that increases capacity in the field, exposure to Keshet trainings and programs has affected many people's career paths; the organization's own day school social worker, before experiencing a Keshet training, was studying to become a general education teacher.

## Ramah Tikvah Survey Results: The Positive Impact of Disabilities Programs on the Camp Community

The Tikvah Program's successes, and those of other early adopters in the Jewish disabilities inclusion field, provide strong anecdotal evidence of the positive impact of such programs for both campers with disabilities and for the entire camp community. At Ramah, all campers have experiences with Tikvah campers through buddy/peer mentoring programs, participation in joint prayer services, plays, camp-wide song and dance festivals, and informal interactions. Similarly, staff members throughout camp, from drama specialists to waterfront staff to ropes course instructors, have many ongoing opportunities to interact with members of the programs for campers with disabilities. The 50 members of the Ramah *mishlach* (Israeli delegation of emissaries) also get to know the Tikvah campers through serving as teachers and peer mentors.

A recent study conducted by the National Ramah Commission measured the impact of Ramah's disabilities programs. Key findings are available at:

[http://www.campramah.org/pdf/handout\\_research\\_summary\\_web.pdf](http://www.campramah.org/pdf/handout_research_summary_web.pdf)

The study, entitled "The Impact of Ramah Programs for Children, Teens and Young Adults with Disabilities: A Survey of Special Needs Education Professionals, Ramah Special Needs Staff, Staff, Alumni, and Parents" analyzed the impact of Tikvah on staff and other campers. The results demonstrate that the impact of camp extends beyond the campers with disabilities to the disability program staff and to the typically developing campers who interact with campers with disabilities. Results indicate that the impact includes influence on many life choices:

55% – Philanthropy

53% – Volunteer work

41% – Professional work and career choice

32% – College or graduate school coursework

This includes a wide range of personal and professional benefits:

95% – gained awareness of issues having to do with inclusion of individuals with disabilities

87% – gained a sense of responsibility for others

84% – became more patient with others

One respondent wrote:

“Thanks to my experience working in a special needs program, my ability to recognize other people for their strengths, and not just for their weaknesses, is much more developed. When you’re working with a camper with special needs, not only does your patience have to increase, but your stress and intolerance for their supposed ‘weakness’ initially rise as well. However, as the summer goes on, you begin to realize that beyond the visible cues and often difficult moments in working with someone with special needs, there is a deep and elaborate human being with skills and desires far beyond what you expect.”

### Where to Begin? Developing a Successful Program Which Is Supportive of Campers with Disabilities and Seamlessly “Fits In” at Camp

The single most important step in creating a successful program to support campers with disabilities is to embrace the importance of and need for such inclusion, and to believe in the right of all Jewish families to have options for their children with disabilities within the Jewish camp world. A camp’s executive director and board of trustees must feel in their *kishkes* that offering a program for campers with disabilities is a priority. If so, the program will succeed. If a camp’s leadership is merely responding to pressure from parents or the field, then the resulting program will not succeed. FJC advises that camps wait to launch a program until they firmly take this step. There are many wonderful camp directors and boards of trustees who can serve as models for creating and running successful programs, ones in which the entire camp community benefits. They can demonstrate that while there are certainly investments to be made, the camp’s financial bottom line need not suffer.

At Ramah camps, the Tikvah Program is essentially “just another division” in camp. At each of the eight Ramah overnight camps, age groups (divisions or *edot*) are known by a Hebrew name, and campers within each *edah* travel together throughout the day. The main differences between the Tikvah Program and other *edot* are that Tikvah is a mixed age division (ages 13-18) and the Tikvah staff to camper ratio is higher than in other *edot* (approximately 2.5 to 1). There are several periods each day (including sports, and either swimming, arts and crafts, or pre-vocational training) which are intentionally planned to have Tikvah and other campers and participate together as buddies/peer mentors. At Ramah New England, Tikvah campers live in fully accessible bunks in Tikvah Village, situated right next to housing for the 13- and 14-year-old *edot*. Each of the four Tikvah bunks typically houses six to eight campers, two or three Tikvah counselors, and one or two members of the specialty staff (i.e. sports, dance, or arts) who live in the bunk and support Tikvah campers during daily transition times.

The Ramah New England Tikvah Village bunks were built 15 years ago. Designed with input of experienced Tikvah counselors, each has fluorescent lighting, two toilets and showers (one of each is universally accessible), porches for socializing, and window air conditioners, which help campers cool off and recharge during the daily rest period and at night.

Beginning around 2002, several Ramah New England Tikvah parents asked if the camp might consider offering a full inclusion program where campers with disabilities participate fully in the typical camper program. Parents pointed to increased inclusion in schools and recreational programs and encouraged camp leaders to move toward even greater inclusion in the overnight summer camp setting. The camp had been run a successful Tikvah Program for more than 30 years, and strove to respond regularly to new developments, innovations, and trends in the field. The camp director and the board expressed openness to the idea, and the staff set out to consult the literature on inclusive camping. They were disappointed not to find adequate literature or expertise on fully inclusive camping. They were fortunate, however, to connect with Professor

Spencer Salend of the State University of New York at New Paltz, an expert on inclusive classrooms. Professor Salend worked with Ramah New England as a consultant on developing its inclusive camping initiative.

Ramah New England piloted their full inclusion program for 9-11-year-old campers with a range of disabilities and typically developing campers. They lived together in bunks and participated together in the daily camp program for that age group. The campers with disabilities were supported by an inclusion specialist and by an additional counselor in the bunk. They chose not to offer individual shadow counselors, and instead, assigned three counselors per bunk (rather than the customary two) who sufficiently supported each of the campers. The entire division staff and all camp specialists were trained in ways to best support the campers with identified disabilities. Leadership determined that, as long as the pilot was successful, its participating campers with disabilities would continue into older divisions with his/her typically-abled peers.

Over the years, Ramah New England found that inclusion offers a different experience for each camper, bunk, division, and staff member. Campers with physical/mobility challenges, intellectual disabilities, autism, and language and processing difficulties have all been supported in the program, and camp leaders have remained flexible in thinking about and design of the ideal camper program. The parents whose children participated in the pilot and camp staff agreed not to let philosophy (i.e. a set notion of the ideal program) drive decisions about placement. Rather, honest conversations about each camper's experience would inform his or her inclusion plan. As a result, some campers have continued through the full inclusion program until "graduation" at age 16. Other campers have transitioned to the Tikvah camping program and/or to the vocational training program. The camp sometimes accepts older campers (up to ages 13 or 14) into the inclusion program, and has increasingly created opportunities for campers to split their time between Tikvah and typical divisions, based on individual needs.

An unanticipated benefit of the inclusion program is that counselors have been able to identify issues for and offer special support to campers considered typically developing. Each year, a few second or third year typical campers are observed to be struggling to succeed. In these cases, staff members speak with the parents about their children receiving support through the inclusion program, with little resistance and, largely, excellent results.

In the first year of the camp's inclusion program, the mother of a 9-year-old camper with Down Syndrome likened a child with disabilities to a dual citizen. "Our daughter, God willing, will always be part of the typical world—in our shul, our community, and more. And she will always be part of the disabilities world—she has Down syndrome! We should think of her as a dual citizen and have her split her time between two programs. It is like someone who moves to Israel from America—they will always be citizens of Israel AND the United States!" This way of thinking opened the camp leaders' thinking and facilitated creating an ideal program for this camper, who was able to fully participate in the typical camper program by day but required the level of support provided by the Tikvah Program and Tikvah counselors at meals and in the evenings.

Increasingly, the boundaries between programs at Ramah New England blurred—a camper can fully participate in a typical program or be a day camper in a typical program and sleep in a Tikvah bunk. Some members of the Tikvah camping program have the readiness and ability to participate in the vocational training program by day, without the independent living skills to live in the vocational training housing: they, too, would sleep in Tikvah Village at night.

## A Range of Inclusive Models to Consider for Supporting Campers with Disabilities

For camps considering starting a program for campers with a range of disabilities, it is important to know that there are several worthy models to consider. As one funder has pointed out to FJC staff over the years, the word inclusion has become ubiquitous and, quite frankly, can mean many different things. When it comes to creating a program for children with disabilities, there is no one-size-fits-all, universally accepted, model that works for everyone. Even parents of campers with disabilities do not all agree on which approach works. There are so many factors influencing the decision of which model to choose.

For camps and programs considering inclusion, we strongly recommend getting in touch with colleagues at camps and programs that have been running programs for children with disabilities; talk with the lay and

professional leaders about the experience. This Guide helps you make those connections by including a [chart of camps](#) known by FJC to be running such programs.

## A Definition of Inclusion at Camp

Inclusion of children with disabilities at camp is the participation of such campers to the greatest possible extent in the full experience of a regular camp setting alongside their peers. Campers with and without disabilities do all camp activities together, live together and eat together, with no separation. The inclusive camp or program is structured to allow all campers to live and participate together while receiving appropriate supports and services based on their individual needs. Behavioral supports and accommodations are incorporated into daily living, often times under the guidance of an inclusion coordinator. The inclusion coordinator works closely with all staff to collectively provide and implement necessary accommodations and programmatic changes to achieve success for each camper.

Creating an inclusive environment requires a philosophical stance that all campers, regardless of abilities, will benefit from inclusion. A dedication to the broad training of all staff to understand and work together in support of this vision is necessary. Camp-wide assessment of goals, programs, and activities within the framework of the camp's overall mission must ensure that campers with varying abilities and needs will be able to fully participate in the life and culture of the camp.

The purpose of this Guide is to support you in crafting the program(s) for campers with disabilities that will work best within your camp: for some, that means a fully inclusive program; for others, the timing or circumstances may not yet be right to move into full inclusion. Facilitating full inclusion in your camp or summer program is a multifaceted project that goes far beyond building ramps and hiring extra staff members. Inclusion has to do with making friendships possible by allowing campers with disabilities to fully participate in all of the activities that take place. This includes camp plays and dance competitions, as well as all of the other exciting sports, recreation, outdoor education, cultural arts, and social activities that take place during the summer months. While you may understand or believe that an inclusive approach will ultimately impact your entire community in many positive ways, the entire camp community must be on board so that the transformation becomes a true camp-wide priority. To bring leadership, parents and campers around to this way of thinking, questions of purpose, value and values must be raised and discussed openly, so that concerns are aired and addressed openly. Questions worth raising may include: Is the camp play's goal to be the perfect theatre performance with only the most competent actors participating? Must a finished product in the art shop look a certain way? Does the blue team have to win every sports competition by involving only the most talented athletes? Or is the value of the camp community to recognize and promote positive attitude over pre-existing aptitude? Is it the goal that all campers, regardless of abilities, have many opportunities to grow, to define success individually, and to participate to the maximum extent.

## Other Approaches to Supporting Campers with Disabilities

Currently, many camps have developed models of partial inclusion, ranging from high degrees of integration to near complete segregation of the campers with disabilities. It is important to validate all historical attempts to serve and include campers with disabilities. For our purposes, it is useful to define them as follows:

**Partial inclusion** - A camper with disabilities participates in activities with typically abled peers for some percentage of the day, depending on their needs. The percentage of time spent in inclusion is based on the programming structure of the camp, its resources, and the disabilities of the campers. Campers may or may not be housed in separate cabins. An inclusion coordinator facilitates the process of inclusion and serves as a training and coaching leader and resource for the general staff.

**Camp within a camp** - A camper in this program lives on the same grounds as campers without a disability and uses the same activity spaces on a different schedule and is housed in separate bunks. While often opportunities are arranged at scheduled times for campers with and without disabilities to interact, in this model, the group of campers with disabilities essentially functions as a separate division of camp: camp within a camp.



## Other Program Approaches

**Vocational programs** – Older campers with disabilities work side by side with camp staff in all areas of camp: dining room, caring for younger campers, office, sports, etc. They receive job coaching as well as support and role modeling from coworkers within the larger camp setting.

A participant in the vocational training program at Camp Ramah in New England recently wrote,

“What I loved about Voc Ed was learning to be independent. I liked that I was treated as an adult more than a camper. For example, at Ramah I had a lot of choices for how to spend my time. I got to choose how to exercise and how to spend my free time. The advisors always helped me and pushed me to grow. This summer I learned to take better care of myself and make my bed. I also learned to be more social and I made a lot of new friends. I learned new Hebrew words that I never knew before. The skill I am most proud of learning at camp is advocating for myself. When something was bothering me, I learned how to deal with it and speak up instead of just getting frustrated. I am very proud that I learned to advocate at camp, and took this new skill home with me.”

**Family Camps** - For some younger children, the best introduction to the world of camping is through a three to five day family camping program. In such programs, campers with disabilities participate in age-appropriate recreational and religious programming. Some camps provide the children with a one-to-one shadow, while at other camps, each family camper is supported by all of the counselors supervising the whole group. Typically developing peers also participate in the social, educational, and group process activities while parents socialize with other parents and enjoy down time, knowing that their children are well cared for. This “taste of camp” can often serve as a first step in getting to know camping and ultimately attending a day or overnight camping program. In the summer of 2014, Camp JRF incorporated families of children who are Deaf into their family camp program. In a recent New Normal blog post in the New York Jewish Week, a parent wrote of her Tikvah Family Shabbaton experience:

“Before the Shabbaton, I’d never really visualized what it would be like if, instead of trying to mold our family to fit a mainstream environment, the environment was molded to us... For one weekend, my family learned what it felt like to be not merely accommodated, but truly accepted and nurtured by a community.”

## A Word about Day Camping

Perhaps the most inclusive of all Jewish camps to date are the day camps. Day camps offer a stimulating, structured, activity-filled day with a natural end point. Day camp is a bit like a play date; at the end of each day’s experience—good, bad or mediocre—it ends soon, all go home, and everything starts fresh tomorrow. In contrast, overnight camping is 24/7. Not exactly, since campers do sleep at night, but in overnight camping, campers spend the day together, share living quarters, wait in line for the shower, and navigate such potentially awkward situations as coming out of the shower and changing clothes in close proximity to others. (Campers with social skill deficits have even greater issues navigating such situations than do typically abled campers).

In day camps, children enjoy all the camping activities like swimming, singing and dancing, *ruach*, and they may even have bunks. Then, at day’s end, they return to their parents and to their own familiar bedrooms. They generally wake up each morning feeling rested, refreshed and ready to enjoy camp all over again. Many day camps offer supports for campers with disabilities and most report that nearly 10% of their campers have some type of identified disability or concern, including ADHD, social skill deficits, language processing issues, etc. Many day camps are formalizing inclusion training for their staff and support programs for children, so that all campers, regardless of abilities, have a successful summer.

A successful day camp summer is often a predictor of success in an overnight camp. Directors and intake staff of overnight camps are likely to ask about previous camp experience and may even contact day camps to find out how a particular camper fared. Day camp offers a taste of what overnight camp has to offer, and many day campers become overnight campers as they get older. Campers with disabilities may naturally progress, with their typically developing friends, to attending an overnight camp program.

JCC camps have been very successful in including campers with disabilities and other day camps, such as Moshava Ba'lr, have also begun offering such programs. At these day camps, campers with disabilities are fully included with their peers and are supervised by inclusion specialists who provide extra support through counselor training, behavior management, visual schedules, encouraging cooperative learning, and working closely with camper families.

## A List of Inclusive Camps

It is a tremendous challenge for a camp to offer a brief, user-friendly description of the types of campers with disabilities they serve. This is due, in part, to the wide range of functioning within each disability type. For example, a camper with cerebral palsy may have clear language and require minimal assistance with leg braces, or he may use a wheelchair and communicate via an augmented communication device.

It is useful to have a general understanding of the types of campers typically well served, as well as the types of issues the camp is not able to accommodate (i.e. accessibility, medical issues such as insulin or feeding tubes). In general, camps are likely to assess rightness of fit based less on diagnoses or labels and more on each camper's demonstrated functioning in such areas as behavior regulation and self-care.

This chart of camps and the categories of disabilities they address can be a good starting point for parents of children with disabilities to explore potentially good fits between camps and their child(ren). It is also a great resource for camp leaders launching or expanding their programs for campers with disabilities to connect with experienced colleagues.

CAMP	SERVING	CONTACT
<b>Aryeh Adventures</b> (Teen Travel Program)	(Teen Program) Autism Spectrum Disorder, Intellectual Developmental Disabilities, Learning Disabilities, Tourettes Syndrome and Mental Health Issues	Contact: 718-790-0528
<b>B'nai B'rith Beber Camp</b> (Mukwomago, WI)	Blindness, Autism Spectrum Disorder, intellectual and developmental disorders	Winter contact: 847-677-7130 Summer contact: 262-363-6800
<b>B'nai Brith Camp</b> (Neotsu, Oregon)	Physical and intellectual disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, developmental disabilities and some medical conditions	Winter contact: 503-452-3444 Summer contact: 541-994-2218
<b>Camp Akiba</b> (Culver City, CA)	Moderate-high functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders, ADHD, Pervasive Developmental Disorders and less severe physical challenges.	Winter contact: 310-398-5783 Summer contact: 424-202-1792
<b>Camp Barney Medintz</b> (Cleveland, GA)	Autism Spectrum Disorders	Winter contact: 770-396-3250 Summer contact: 706-865-2715
<b>Camp B'nai Brith of Montreal</b> (Lantier, QC)	Offers a fully inclusive program for children with disabilities	Winter contact: 514-735-3669 Summer contact: 819-326-4824
<b>Camp HASC (Hebrew Academy for Special Children)</b> (Parksville, NY)	Mentally and physically disabled children and adults	Winter contact: 718-686-5930 Summer contact: 845-292-6821
<b>Camp JCA Shalom</b> (Malibu, CA)	Intellectual, developmental, physical, neurological, behavioral disabilities, partially physically accessible	Contact: 818-889-5500
<b>Camp JRF</b> (South Sterling, PA)	Developmental disabilities such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, cognitive delays, developmental challenges, moderate speech and/or processing issues, and some forms of	Winter contact: 215-576-0800 Summer contact: 570-676-9291

CAMP	SERVING	CONTACT
	physical disabilities.	
<b>Camp Judaea</b> (Hendersonville, NC)	Autism Spectrum Disorder, hearing impaired, developmental and intellectual disabilities, and communication disorders	Winter contact: 404-634-7883 Summer contact: 828-685-8841
<b>Camp Kaylie</b> (Wurtsboro, NY)	Developmental and Intellectual disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder and other disabilities	Winter contact: 718-686-3261 Summer contact: 845-888-5008
<b>Camp L'man Achai</b> (Andes, NY)	Deaf and Autism Spectrum Disorder	Winter contact: 718-436-8255 Summer contact: 845-676-3996
<b>Camp Livingston</b> (Bennington, IN)	Inclusive of children with various emotional and developmental disabilities	Winter contact: 513-793-5554 Summer contact: 812-427-2202
<b>Camp Massad (Manitoba)</b> (Winnipeg Beach, MB)	Autism Spectrum Disorder, Developmental Disabilities, Deaf	Winter contact: 204-477-7487 Summer contact: 204-389-5300
<b>Camp Moshava Enismore</b> (Ennismore, ON)	Developmental and Intellectual disabilities, hearing impaired and Aspergers	Winter contact: 416-630-7578 Summer contact: 705-292-8143
<b>Camp Ramah in California</b> (Ojai, CA)	Learning, emotional and developmental disabilities	Winter contact: 310-476-8571 Summer contact: 805-646-4301
<b>Camp Ramah in Canada</b> (Utterson, ON)	Developmental disabilities	Winter contact: 416 789-2193 Summer contact: 705-769-3601
<b>Camp Ramah Darom</b> (Clayton, GA)	Autism Spectrum Disorder	Winter contact: 404-531-0801 Summer contact: 706-782-9300
<b>Camp Ramah in New England</b> (Palmer, NY)	Mild to moderate intellectual and developmental disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, neurological disabilities and physical disabilities	Winter contact: 781-702-5290 Summer contact: 413-283-9771
<b>Camp Ramah in the Berkshires</b> (Wingdale, NY)	Children with mild to moderate social and emotional disabilities	Winter contact: 201-871-7262 Summer contact: 845-832-6622
<b>Camp Ramah in Wisconsin</b> (Conover, WI)	Autism Spectrum Disorder	Winter contact: 312-606-9316 Summer contact: 715-479-4400
<b>Camp Simcha</b> (New York, NY)	Free camps open to children battling cancer, chronic hematological disorders, or other debilitating chronic conditions	Winter contact: 212-465-1300 Summer contact: 845-856-1432
<b>Camp Yaldei</b> (Montreal, QC)	Developmental disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, neurological disorders, and learning disabilities.	Winter contact: 514-279-3666 Summer contact: 450-226-1129
<b>Camp Yavneh</b> (Northwood, NH)	Autism Spectrum Disorder, Intellectual Disabilities, ADHD, and other disabilities	Winter contact: 617-559-8860 Summer contact: 603-942-5593
<b>Camp Young Judaea Sprout Lake</b> (Verbank, NY)	Campers are assessed on a case by case basis.	Winter contact: 917-595-1500 Summer contact: 845-677-3411
<b>Camp Young Judaea Texas</b> (Wimberley, TX)	Autism Spectrum Disorder, Intellectual Disabilities, ADHD, and other disabilities, physically accessible	Winter contact: 713-723-8354 Summer contact: 512-847-9564
<b>Capital Camps</b> (Waynesboro, PA)	Physical, emotional, social and developmental disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder	Winter contact: 301-468-2267 Summer contact: 717-794-2177
<b>Eden Village Camp</b> (Putnam Valley, NY)	Camper must be fully independent. Campers are assessed on a case by case basis	Winter contact: 877-397-3336 Summer contact: 877-397-3336

CAMP	SERVING	CONTACT
<b>Herzl Camp</b> (Webster, WI)	Autism Spectrum Disorders, cognitive, some physical or emotional challenges	Winter contact: 952-927-4002 Summer contact: 715-866-8177
<b>JCC Camp Chi</b> (Wisconsin Dells, WI)	Autism Spectrum Disorder, Asperger's Syndrome, and Downs Syndrome	Winter contact: 847-763-3551 Summer contact: 608-253-1681
<b>JCC Camp Kingswood</b> (Bridgton, ME)	Autism Spectrum Disorder, Blindness, and any camper who has a sense of independence	Winter contact: 617-558-6531 Summer contact: 207-647-3969
<b>Ramah Outdoor Adventure</b> (Denver, CO)	Campers with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder	Winter contact: 303-261-8214 Summer contact: 303-261-8214
<b>Round Lake Camp (NJY Camps)</b> (Milford, PA)	Autism Spectrum Disorder, intellectual Disabilities, ADHD, and other disabilities	Winter contact: 973 575-3333 Summer contact: 570 798-2551
<b>URJ 6 Points Sports Academy</b> (Greensboro, NC)	Autism Spectrum Disorder	Winter contact: 561-208-1650 Summer contact: 561-208-1650
<b>URJ Camp Harlam</b> (Kunkletown, PA)	Acceptance of campers with disabilities is made on an individual basis in collaboration with families. We've successfully accommodated campers with learning disabilities, physical disabilities such as cerebral palsy (that don't require a wheelchair), campers on the Autism Spectrum, campers with ADHD and Oppositional Defiant Disorders, and other disabilities	Winter contact: 610-668-0423 Summer contact: 570-629-1390
<b>URJ Camp Coleman</b> (Cleveland, GA)	Young Adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities	Winter contact: 770-671-8971 Summer contact: 706-865-4111
<b>URJ Eisner Camp</b> (Great Barrington, MA)	Autism Spectrum Disorder and Mental health issues	Winter contact: 201-722-0400 Summer contact: 413-528-1652
<b>URJ Camp George</b> (Seguin, ON)	Acceptance of campers with disabilities is made based on the level of support required and ability for a camper to be successful in our integrated environment. Our intake process includes working with families, teachers, and other support staff. We accommodate campers with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, ASD, ADHD, ODD and other disabilities.	Winter contact: 416-638-2635 Summer contact: 705-732-6964
<b>URJ Goldman Union Camp Institute (GUCI)</b> (Zionsville, IN)	Autism Spectrum Disorder, Visual impairments, some physical disabilities	Winter contact: 317-873-3361 Summer contact: 317-873-3361
<b>URJ Henry S. Jacobs Camp</b> (Utica, MS)	Autism Spectrum Disorders	Winter contact: 601-885-6042 Summer contact: 601-885-6042
<b>URJ Kutz Camp</b> (Warwick, NY)	Autism Spectrum Disorders	Winter contact: 845-987-6300 Summer contact: 845-987-6300
<b>Yachad Camp Programs</b> (offers programs at the following camps: <b>Moshava IO, Moshava Malibu, Shoshanim, Neshet, Morasha</b> )	Many disabilities	Contact: 212-613-8229

## Chapter 2:

# Successful Inclusion in Jewish Summer Camp

### Inclusion is an Attitude and Approach, not a Place or a Program: Inclusion Opportunities throughout Camp

Whether your camp's program for campers with disabilities is fully inclusive or separates campers for bunking and certain activities, there are numerous opportunities to facilitate organic and intentional interactions among all campers.

During staff week and repeatedly thereafter, it is important the camp director convey the camp's expectations regarding facilitating an inclusive community. The director might begin by discussing how wide-ranging the camp's admissions practice has been regarding camper differences. Some types of inclusion are quite obvious and expected: campers and staff members come from different geographic locations, religious backgrounds, and family structures including single parent families, two mom or dad families, children who are adopted, etc. People in the camp community have a wide range of physical features, too: some are taller than others, some have lower pitched voices, and some have blonde, red, or brown hair. Each camper learns uniquely and has a unique temperament and personality. The director can discuss embracing and valuing differences from the value concept that we are all created *B'tzelem Elokim* (in the image of G-d). It is up to the director to make clear to the camp staff the strength of this priority: Is inclusion the rule? Then let staff members know up front. Will exclusion be tolerated, and if ever so, under what limited conditions and in what manner?

On the most basic level, all campers share the facilities and walk the same foot paths. These are perfect opportunities for informally inclusive interactions. Camp-wide activities are natural opportunities for full inclusion and may include meals, Shabbat services, camp-wide field trips, Maccabi/Color War, camp plays, song and dance festivals, and more. There are many opportunities for bunk-to-bunk or division-to-division activities including art projects, evening activities and athletic events. Some camps offer peer mentoring/buddy activities, which have proven beneficial for all campers involved.

Remember that **inclusion begins with an attitude and approach** and should guide camp planning, regardless of the activity being offered. Staff members should get into the habit of asking such questions as: Will all campers be able to participate? How can we facilitate full participation by campers with relevant disabilities? What accommodations can we make so that campers who would benefit from them can take breaks and/or have alternative options? Inclusion benefits everyone!

### General Group and Activity Planning Guidelines for Inclusion/Shadow Counselors

Camp inclusion should be viewed as an on-going process; getting it right takes time, planning, action and reflection. Appropriately involving the counselors and campers in each cabin/bunk in the process is one important key to success.

The job of a counselor is to create opportunities to involve his/her campers with disabilities in all aspects of camp life. (It is not to be their friend, just as it is not the counselor's job to be typically-abled campers' friend.) What constitutes appropriate support depends on each individual situation. Here are some aspects of planning to consider when inclusion is a priority:

- **Grouping or arrangements:** For any given activity, there are a number of combinations from which to choose. Counselors or peers can take the lead and then the counselor can step back to assist or engage with other campers. What may work best for fullest inclusion of all your campers?
- **Modify the activity:** Use specialized equipment to adapt the activity and modify the expectations and/or time on task for all campers who might benefit (not only those who come to you labeled with a disability).

- **Use Visual Aids:** Share with campers a visual schedule of each day, in pictures and/or words, and discuss what the day will look like. Revisit this frequently throughout the day to keep expectations realistic. The same approach may be used for behavioral expectations such as bunk clean up, quiet hours and personal hygiene routines.
- **Positive Behavior Plan:** Personalize positive reinforcers for each camper and schedule rewards during the day. One example is to have a treasure box from which campers can pull as a reward for accomplishing their behavioral goals for the day, half day, etc.
- **Social stories:** Use social stories to pre-teach a game, what the rules are and how it is played. Role play or use visual representations. Social stories will help campers learn and use socially appropriate responses. The Wikipedia entry on Social Stories gives enough information for most counselors to write and use them: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_Stories](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_Stories)
- **Sit campers together:** Be sure to seat campers with disabilities with bunkmates during all activities; do not allow them to be isolated and do not seat them elsewhere solely with a counselor. Counselors can sit with the camper and bunkmates, and should facilitate conversation as needed.
- **Model participation in activities:** Get involved as appropriate so that you can model positive participation for your camper. In facilitating inclusion, it is particularly important for counselors not to sit on the sidelines of activities chatting together.
- **Encourage peer conversation and interaction:** If/when a camper asks a question pertaining to another camper's abilities or limitations, direct the questioner to ask the questions directly of the camper with the disability, supervising such exchanges at first and providing such guidance in framing the question and answer that will facilitate a friendly, respectful exchange.
- **Foster Independent Communication:** Look for opportunities to step back when a camper with a disability is interacting with peers. Let all your campers explore taking appropriate social risks, as such independence is among the goals of inclusion.
- **Blend in:** If you are serving as a one-to-one shadow for a camper, try to blend in with the bunk. Interact with all campers and counselors to be less conspicuous in your focus on one child.
- **Making choices:** Encourage your camper(s) to express preferences and, as appropriate, to make choices. When two or more desired options are presented, the camper will feel in control and a positive outcome will be a more likely result.

## Self-Assessment on Inclusion

Self-assessment is essential developing a comprehensive approach to serving campers with disabilities. These key questions were inspired by material developed by the JE & ZB Butler and Ruderman Family Foundations:

1. Does your camp have clear policies and/or existing programs to support meaningful inclusion of people with disabilities?
  - a. Are the policies and programs prominent on your website and in printed materials?
2. Do you have a disability advisory committee/inclusion committee?
  - a. If so, does it include adults with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities?
3. Are Jewish children and youth with *any kind of disability* welcomed to participate?
  - a. If yes, how do you plan to identify, reach and welcome these children to your camp?
  - b. If not, have you defined the types/range of disabilities currently being addressed?
  - c. If not, have you identified the barriers to serving others?
  - d. If not, is there a plan in place to expand the scope of disabilities addressed?
4. Are your programs for campers with disabilities:
  - a. Inclusive (full participation in a program with typically developing campers)?
  - b. Partially inclusive (some activities are separate, or housing and/or meals are separate)?
  - c. Mostly separate ("camp within a camp," with scheduled opportunities to be part of the full camp community, such as meals, Shabbat services and/or evening programs)
  - d. Designed outside of the camp structure (vocational programming, family camps)?
5. Has someone using a wheelchair personally checked the physical accessibility of your offices, bunks, bathrooms, dining hall, waterfront, pathways and program spaces?
6. Has a blind person, who uses sight adaptive computer technology, checked your website and facilities for accessibility?
7. Has a deaf person checked your communications for accessibility to those with full and partial hearing loss, and/or reliant upon adaptive technology? (Do your videos include captions?)

8. Do you employ individuals with disabilities?
  - a. If so, what are their jobs?
  - b. If so, do they receive equal compensation and benefits as all other employees in like positions?
  - c. If not, have you identified the barriers to employment in various positions?
  - d. If not—or if yes, but in limited jobs—is there a plan in place to make more camp jobs accessible to people with disabilities? Is there a plan to attract potential employees?
9. Do you currently educate and train your staff, board of directors, trustees, and other key people about serving and partnering with people with disabilities?
  - a. If no, is there a plan in place to include an education/training program on serving campers with disabilities?

Like many Jewish organizations, you probably must answer “No” to many of these questions. However far along you are or however far behind you feel, do not be discouraged: You are taking action now. Follow this road map and you will be on your way to achieving full inclusion.

## Steps to Achieving Full Inclusion<sup>1</sup>

### 1. LEADERSHIP AT THE TOP NEEDS TO BUY IN AND SHARE THAT VISION

In your camp or movement community, the vision of inclusion may develop among current parents or parents of excluded children. It may be the brainchild of the camp director or the passion of a board member. It may be sparked simply by awareness that the field of Jewish camp is moving toward inclusion. In whatever circles the ideas start percolating, it is up to you, as the camp’s leadership, to validate their importance, to assess the camp’s current status regarding inclusivity, and to develop, implement and communicate a plan of action.

Academic studies show that for inclusion of people with disabilities to be truly successful there must be buy-in from top leadership. The camp’s director and lay leadership must communicate the message that all campers and their parents are of equal value and must be respected and heard fairly. The board of trustees must set the camp’s vision regarding inclusion of people with disabilities into camp life and hold the expectation that this vision is advanced through camp policies, practices, budget and staffing. The camp director and leadership team are responsible for implementation, training and developing feedback/improvement strategies to ensure that the vision becomes reality.

As an agency, we at the Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) followed a similar path. We took our lead on examining the issues of inclusion and exclusion of people with disabilities both from member camps that were already passionate about inclusion and from parents who were frustrated for their children who were excluded from the immersive Jewish camp experience. Our leadership heard and validated the importance of an inclusive vision of Jewish camp. The FJC’s board and professional leaders then bought into the vision of Jewish camps that are inclusive of campers with a broad span of physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities, and developed its own vision of our agency applying its resources and influence to support all of our member camps in becoming inclusive. Work toward inclusivity in camps became a priority in FJC’s programming, budgeting and training.

The FJC has just begun the journey to full inclusion of children with all abilities in member camps. By working strategically and with the full support of our leadership, we hope to set an example not only for Jewish camps, but also for Jewish day schools, synagogues, human service agencies and Federations. We honor those whose early work advances our cause. This year, Howard Blas and the Tikvah program at Ramah Camps won well-

---

<sup>1</sup> This adaptation of an excerpt from an article appearing in the Fall 2014 issue of *The Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, shared here with the permission of the JPRO Network, has been edited for specific relevance to Jewish summer camps. **Subscribe to the journal at [JPRO.org](http://JPRO.org).**

deserved recognition from the Covenant Foundation for their pioneering work in inclusive Jewish camping, where children with and without disabilities are welcomed as equals.

Among the federations, Combined Jewish Philanthropies in Boston, the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, and the UJA-Federation of New York are making important efforts to build support for inclusion. In addition, The Associated in Baltimore has created a user-friendly website where Jewish parents of children with disabilities can easily find agencies that will welcome and serve their children. Some individual Jewish Community Centers have had successful inclusion programs. The Reform Movement, which has long benefited from the able work of Rabbi Lynne Landsberg, now has the added voice of its top leader, Rabbi Rick Jacobs. Yachad, a youth inclusion program through the Orthodox Union, and Friendship Circle, both of which bring together teenage volunteers and children with special needs, have provided quality access and dignity to Jewish children with disabilities for years. Vocal and visible leadership from the top matters tremendously.

## **2. NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US**

People with disabilities need a seat at the table and must be involved in decision making: organizations must work WITH people with disabilities, not FOR them. If currently there are no Jews with disabilities participating in your decision-making process, then bring them in. Value their experiences and opinions. Remember that even people who cannot physically speak have opinions that must be shared and heard. For camps and other organizations that offer children and youth programs, the parents of those with disabilities must also be heard and be represented in decision-making.

## **3. USE “PEOPLE-FIRST” LANGUAGE**

Take the time to learn People-First Language, which respects human beings and their right to be appreciated for the strengths they have and which does not define them by their disabilities. For example, using people-first language, you would call a child with Down syndrome by his or her name, not “the kid with Down syndrome” or, worse yet, the “Down syndrome kid.” A person who uses a wheelchair is a person first, and that wheelchair is a tool of liberation: he or she is not “wheelchair bound.” The focus is on “people with disabilities” not the “handicapped” or the “disabled.”

## **4. WALK THE WALK**

It is one thing to announce big goals and a plan. Implementation is another. NJY Camps, which has nine camps under its umbrella, decided to merge its Round Lake Camp for children with disabilities with three of its camps geared toward typically developing children, to make the entire organization more inclusive. As a result, children with disabilities are no longer in a separate institution and children without disabilities benefit from connecting in a fun, Jewish context with a fuller diversity of Jewish people that God put on this earth. Every camp and movement moving toward inclusion should look closely at how NJY Camps implemented this change: they prepared well and provided significant training to their staff. It worked. This is a true example of walking the walk, in a big way!

## **5. BUDGET ENOUGH TIME AND MONEY TO DO IT RIGHT**

Inclusion is a lot less expensive than most people think, but it takes the right team with the right training to do it effectively. To ensure success and to develop an accurate budget, camps/schools/synagogues need to know how much money is needed to have the right staff in place, give them the training they need to be effective and make the needed accommodations to the physical plant.

## **6. ESTABLISH TRUST THROUGH YOUR REGISTRATION FORMS AND INTAKE PROCESS**

Trust is vital—and it is won or lost before you even meet face-to-face with children with a disability or their parents. Every sign-up form for every program must ask what accommodations are needed for people to participate fully in your program. When participants indicate a needed accommodation, their form must go straight to the inclusion director/coordinator so he or she can ensure that their needs can be met. Parents can be your best assets, because they are already experts in meeting the needs of their child and can help you, too, serve their children successfully.



It is completely acceptable to indicate that you need advance notice of any disabilities so that you can offer needed accommodations or special services at your events. For example, tracking down a good sign-language interpreter or making a “behavior plan” takes time. Have a ready list of providers or volunteers whom you can call on to meet key needs.

## **7. HIRE AN EXPERIENCED INCLUSION DIRECTOR/COORDINATOR**

An expert inclusion director/coordinator can ensure that you are ready to meet the needs of Jews with disabilities. This person does not need to work full time, but does need to be available as needed. Some institutions use highly qualified volunteers. For others this is a paid position. There are many special educators/therapists/social workers who work in public schools or other institutions who are available on a part-time basis. Below is a sample job description from the URJ camps that can easily be adapted for Jewish schools or synagogues.

## **8. TRAINING SEMINARS AND MANUALS**

When the Foundation for Jewish Camp asked its member camps in 2013 what was the “most significant challenge to serving campers or more campers with disabilities/special needs,” the most frequent answer was that they were “only able to accept a certain level of disability and can’t have campers with more severe issues.” The next most frequent response was “we don’t have enough properly trained staff for it.” Parents also cited the cost of camp programs and the need for staff trained to assist children in developing peer relationships and building social skills, as well as to help other campers learn to respect and accept campers with disabilities. Professional training sessions and materials are vital. These are essential training topics:

- Participant assessment/intake process
- Accommodation/inclusion plans
- Adaptations
- Inclusion support staff
- Preparing non-disabled peers
- Facilitating peer interactions/aid and fade
- On-site technical support
- Program evaluation

All groups need an inclusion training manual for staff. MATAN ([www.matankids.org](http://www.matankids.org)), which focuses on professional development and mentorship of current and future Jewish leaders, has good materials on its website, and other groups have helpful resources as well (see the resources list, below). A manual of best practices would be a welcome addition to the field. Here are three excellent training manuals:

1. “Let’s All Play Inclusion Recreational Programs,” National Inclusion Project: <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2010/11/18/the-decline-of-marriage-and-rise-of-new-families/>
2. Community Recreation and People with Disabilities, by Stuart J. Schleien: <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1557662592/rehabtheraonlinm>
3. Including People with Disabilities in Camp Programs: A Resource for Camp Directors, by Glenn Roswal et al.: <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED422152>

## **9. PROMOTE “EXPECTED BEHAVIORS” TO REDUCE TANTRUMS/MELTDOWNS**

One of the main reasons that Jewish institutions deny access to children with disabilities is that they do not yet understand how to promote “expected behaviors” (the PC way of referring to reducing tantrums and meltdowns by children with disabilities). Thus, they are afraid of group and activity disruption.

To expand your capacity to serve participants with more involved disabilities (note they are not called “crippling” or “severe”), staff members need professional training so they can understand the difference between “can’t” and “won’t,” and they need to be given the tools to promote expected behaviors. Simple tools like effective methods for handling transition between activities can eliminate tantrums and keep a group together as a team. Training can make all the difference!

## **10. MARKETING: GETTING THE WORD OUT**

One of the hardest things for families challenged by disabilities is to find out what is available in their communities. Your website is an important tool for letting people know what you offer. Part of the challenge is that, in many cases, the current state of play is “accidental inclusion” instead of “intentional inclusion.” In other words, many Jewish institutions serve who they serve because they were approached by a person with a disability and correctly made accommodations to include them. While this effort should be applauded, inclusion should not stop there. Make intentional inclusion your camp’s goal, then publicize it widely, to get the word out. If you already have inclusion programs, put your diversity policy on your website. Make your website easy to navigate and accessible to people who are blind or deaf.

## **11. FOCUS ON PROVIDING CHILDREN WITH SOCIAL SKILLS AND POSITIVE PEER RELATIONSHIPS**

Parents of children with disabilities want professionals to be trained in assisting their children to develop peer relationships and build social skills at camp. Parents also want counselors and camp leaders to help other children learn to respect and accept their peers with disabilities. In many Jewish institutions the one-to-one CIT/counselor/para-educators who provide support to children with more involved disabilities mistakenly think their job is to be the child’s big brother/big sister/friend. But the best practices role should be to “AID AND FADE,” to facilitate peer relationships, not replace them.

A key purpose of inclusion is to enable children with disabilities to make friends and have experiences with their typically developing peers. The job of a staff member or counselor is not to fix every problem or to constantly hover over participants; it is to help children discover solutions on their own. There will be times when a counselor will need to assist them, either physically or in a conversation, in meeting their needs. Once the immediate need is met, however, it is important that children are given the space to go right back to being as independent as possible. Their support person needs to step away, perhaps gradually to ensure success, allowing more freedom and the space for real friendships to happen.

Stepping back may be difficult for inclusion counselors/shadows, in part because success rests not only on their camper, but also on the developmentally typical campers, who are being asked to strive to be friends with a child who may have limited social skills. But the hard work will pay off for all the children. Nothing is more important to families than enabling a young person with a disability to be able to self-advocate and to become independent. After all, parents eventually will die. They want their child with a disability to have people who will care about them and vice versa, and who are not necessarily paid to do so. And the pay-off for the typically developing children? Greater empathy, a broader pool of potential friends, and an understanding that each person, him/herself included, has gifts and challenges and that, sometimes, even the challenges are gifts.

The AID AND FADE approach for inclusion counselors/shadows is especially important, and more difficult to accomplish, with older campers/students. In telephone interviews with camp directors, we heard repeatedly that it is far easier to provide one-to-one support when campers are young. With older campers, it is more obvious to the bunkmates that the child with disability has personal support. Good training can minimize that difficulty; the support person should understand that he or she is a helper to the whole group, and “aids and fades” as needed for the camper with disabilities and others in the bunk (e.g. aid a very short camper to reach something on a top shelf then fade).

Many groups hire young people to be counselors or aides who have been to camp or religious school for many years and have an affinity for helping kids with disabilities, yet have no educational background or practical experience in working with people with disabilities. At a minimum, these staff members need intensive training before camp begins. At best, they could benefit from a program similar to CLASSP (Consortia of Learning and Service to Special Populations) and College CLASSP, year-long programs in more than 20 UJA-Federation of New York’s Jewish Community Centers and day camps. Both provide hands-on training and academic learning, provided by Ramapo for Children’s Training Institute, to high school and college students who work in their afterschool and weekend programs and in their summer day camps. Participants earn a stipend and college credits. Many subsequently are hired to help staff the agency’s programs, bringing their rich experience and skill and enabling the agencies to enhance their programming for youngsters with disabilities. Their CLASSP experiences have led many students to choose professions directly related to serving people with disabilities.

Moreover, as a result of this rich experience, they are more compassionate individuals who often act as strong advocates for people with disabilities in their daily lives.

An added benefit of these peer relationships was pointed out by Rabbi Steven Weil, in Jewish Action (see [www.ou.org/jewish\\_action/11/2013/inclusion](http://www.ou.org/jewish_action/11/2013/inclusion)), the magazine of the Orthodox Union, about his son's participation in Yad B'Yad, Yachad's inclusive travel program in Israel: by teaching children and teens about inclusion, we educate the parents as well.

## 12. HIRE STAFF MEMBERS WITH DISABILITIES

According to congressional testimony, fully 70% of working-aged Americans with disabilities do not participate in the workforce (compared with 28% of people without disabilities). Camps should be a model for hiring people with disabilities: both Jewish young people who can become program and group staff leaders and from among the broader labor pool, for facilities, kitchen and office positions.

## 13. PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIPS TO JEWISH CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES

Disabilities can impoverish people. Paying for treatments, therapies, equipment, and services that help people with disabilities adapt to daily life places extraordinary financial burdens on families because these services are not fully covered by insurance or public funds. Taking advantage of financial assistance is often the only way these families can have any of their children, with and without disabilities, participate in camp and summer programs. Your intake process should make it comfortable for people to ask about financial assistance.

## 14. CREATING A HOME AWAY FROM HOME: MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT OR AFFINITY GROUPS

Support groups for children with disabilities can provide emotional support as they grapple with issues they face during the long days of camp. Parent groups can empower parents who can then become active volunteers, which helps ensure that the programming will be well attended and successful. These support groups do not need to be facilitated by social workers; existing staff and volunteers can be trained to lead them.

Families will join those camp communities that offer their children—all of their children—the most services and are most welcoming. In reaching out to these parents and engaging both their disabled and typically-abled children, your camp helps ensure that as adults, these people with disabilities will be as independent as possible and their typically-abled siblings will not be alone in supporting their welcomed inclusion in the Jewish community.

**The bottom line: Open our doors to Jews with disabilities and we will be enriched by their abilities.** Every person with a disability has strengths, purpose, equal value and a place in the Jewish community. Let's open our tent!

### RESOURCE LIST:

[http://www.amazon.com/Including-People-Disabilities-Faith-Communities/dp/1557667438/ref=sr\\_1\\_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1390264133&sr=8-3&keywords=inclusion+faith+disability](http://www.amazon.com/Including-People-Disabilities-Faith-Communities/dp/1557667438/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1390264133&sr=8-3&keywords=inclusion+faith+disability).

[http://www.jewishfederations.org/local\\_includes/downloads/61299.pdf](http://www.jewishfederations.org/local_includes/downloads/61299.pdf).

<http://www.njcd.org/blog/news/yachad-announces-hineinu-partnership-across-jewish-spectrum-promote-inclusion/>.

[http://www.boardofrabbis.org/files/Jewish\\_Text\\_ResourcesResources.pdf](http://www.boardofrabbis.org/files/Jewish_Text_ResourcesResources.pdf).

<http://rac.org/Articles/index.cfm?id=21379>.

## CHAPTER 3: PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE

### Words Matter: “What Do We Call Him?”

Camp staff members have an important opportunity and obligation to model respectful Person First Language with all campers and fellow staff members. **Person First language means that what we see first is a person, not a skin color, not a size and not the fact that she is blind or that he has Down syndrome.** Language very much shapes thinking, and camp personnel can do immeasurable good by striving for consistency in making this linguistic shift. For example: Don't say “the disabled” say “campers with disabilities;” Don't say, “She's autism” or “he's Downs,” say, “She has autism” or “he has Down syndrome.”

People with disabilities are — first and foremost — people. People with disabilities each have unique abilities, interests and needs. About 54 million Americans—one out of every five individuals—have a disability. Their contributions enrich our communities and society as they live, work and share their lives.

Historically, people with disabilities have been regarded as individuals to be pitied, feared or ignored: disrespected and devalued members of society. They have been portrayed as helpless victims, heroic individuals overcoming tragedy and “charity cases” who must depend on others for their well-being and care. At times, some have been seen as repulsive. Media coverage frequently focused on heartwarming features and inspirational stories that reinforced stereotypes, patronized the individuals and underestimated their capabilities.

Much has changed lately. New laws, disability activism and expanded coverage of disability issues have begun increasing public understanding and eliminating the worst stereotypes and misrepresentations.

Still, old attitudes and stereotypes die hard. People with disabilities continue to seek respectful, accurate portrayals of people with the same disability as they have, that demonstrate a positive view of these individuals as active participants of society, in regular social, work and home environments. People with disabilities are focusing institutional and public attention on tough issues that affect their quality of life, such as accessible transportation, housing, affordable health care, employment opportunities and discrimination.

### About People First Language

People with disabilities constitute our nation's largest and most inclusive minority group. It represents people of all ages, genders, religions, ethnicities, sexual orientations and socioeconomic levels. This minority group is also the only one that anyone can join at any time: at birth, in the split second of an accident, through illness, or during the aging process. Yet, the only things people with disabilities all share in common are societal misunderstanding, prejudice and discrimination.

If and when you join that minority, how will you want to be described?

Words matter! Old and inaccurate descriptors perpetuate negative stereotypes and reinforce an incredibly powerful attitudinal barrier—the greatest obstacle facing individuals with disabilities. A disability is, first and foremost, a medical diagnosis, and when we define people by their diagnoses, we devalue and disrespect them as individuals. Do you want to be known primarily by your psoriasis, gynecological history, or the warts on your behind? Using medical diagnoses incorrectly—as a measure of a person's abilities or potential— can ruin people's lives. Embrace a new paradigm: “Disability is a natural part of the human experience...” (U.S. Developmental Disabilities/ Bill of Rights Act). Yes, disability is natural, and it can be redefined as a “body part that works differently.” A person with spina bifida has legs that work differently, a person with Down syndrome learns differently, and so forth. People should no more be solely defined by their medical diagnoses than others should be defined by age, gender, ethnicity, religion or height. The use of a diagnosis as the most relevant trait is appropriate only in medical, educational, legal and similar settings when resource distribution is being determined.

## ELIMINATING STEREOTYPES

As part of the effort to end discrimination and segregation in employment, education and communities at large, it is essential to replace prejudicial and dismissive terminology with respectful language. Every individual, regardless of sex, age, race or ability, deserves to be treated and spoken of with dignity and respect. The applicable Jewish value concept is that all people are fashioned *b'tzelem elokim* (in G-d's image), and as such, should be respected for their spark of divinity as well as their humanity.

Even if you are not yet skilled at using People First Language, you can still avoid using negative terms that stereotype, devalue and discriminate. Just as you should banish racial and ethnic slurs from your vocabulary, so, too, you should banish demeaning labels like retarded and gimp. Just as it is appropriate to say "women" in a professional setting rather than chicks or gals, so, too, it is appropriate to refer to a camper by name, not by disability. "It's Ariella's turn," never "It's the wheelchair-bound kid's turn."

Equally important, ask yourself: **Is the disability is even relevant to your comment?** Does it need to be mentioned, or is it simply the bad habit of labeling at work? "Does Ariella like participating in softball," needs no mention of her disability, as opposed to the question: "Did we widen the path between home and first base well enough this time for Ariella to use her wheelchair on it?"

## WHAT DO YOU CALL PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

Friends, neighbors, coworkers, dad, grandma, Joe's sister, our cousin, Mrs. Schneider, George, husband, wife, colleague, employee, boss, reporter, driver, dancer, mechanic, lawyer, student, educator, man, woman, adult, child, partner, participant, member, voter, citizen, Jim, or any other word you would use for a person.

**People first language puts the person before the disability, describing what a person has, not who a person is.** Are you "cancerous" or do you have cancer? Is a person "handicapped/disabled" or does she "have a disability"? Using a diagnosis as a defining characteristic reflects and reinforces prejudiced thinking. It also robs the person of the opportunity to define him/herself.

More than a fad or political correctness, People First Language is an objective way of acknowledging, communicating and reporting on disabilities. At the same time, it eliminates generalizations, assumptions and stereotypes by focusing on the person rather than the disability. A person's self-image is tied to the words used about him. A movement started by individuals who said, "We are not our disabilities," People First Language reflects good manners and should not be brushed aside as "politically correct." We have the power to create a new paradigm of disability and enrich our communities by using and modeling People First Language.

Let's reframe "problems" into "needs." Instead of, "He has behavior problems," we can say, "He needs behavioral supports." Instead of, "She has reading problems," we can say, "She needs large print." "Low-functioning" or "high-functioning" are pejorative and harmful. Machines "function;" people live! And let's eliminate the "special needs" descriptor—it generates pity and low expectations! Some guidelines:

- Recognize that people with disabilities are ordinary people with common goals for a home, a job and a family. Talk about people in ordinary terms.
- Never equate a person with a disability — such as referring to someone as retarded, an epileptic or quadriplegic. These labels are simply medical diagnoses. Use People First Language to tell what a person HAS, not what a person IS.
  - Emphasize abilities not limitations. For example, say "a man walks with crutches," not "he is crippled."
  - Avoid negative words that imply tragedy, such as: defect, suffers from, poor X, and unfortunate.
  - Recognize that a disability is not a challenge to be overcome, and don't say people succeed in spite of a disability. Ordinary things and accomplishments do not become extraordinary just because they are done by a person with a disability. What is extraordinary are the lengths people with disabilities have to go through and the barriers they have to overcome to do the most ordinary things.
  - Use "handicap" as a verb referring to a barrier created by people or the environment. Use "disability" to indicate a functional limitation that interferes with a person's mental, physical or sensory abilities, such as walking, talking, hearing and learning. For example, people with disabilities who use wheelchairs are *handicapped by stairs*.

- Do not refer to a person as bound to or confined to a wheelchair. Wheelchairs are liberating to people with physical disabilities because they provide mobility.
- Do not use “special” to mean segregated, such as separate schools or buses for people with disabilities, or to suggest that a disability itself makes someone special.
- Avoid euphemisms that avoid or diminish the disability, such as physically challenged, inconvenienced and differently abled. It may be challenging to discern the difference between these terms and person with disabilities. Remember that with People First Language the person comes first. People First phrasing does not deny or minimize the presence of a disability, as these terms do. Rather, they are verbal cues to remembering that people are people with various traits, sometimes including this or that disability. “Ariella – you know who I mean: the camper in bunk X who is always laughing and moves like the wind when running bases in her wheelchair.”
- Promote understanding, respect, dignity and positive outlooks.

“The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug.” – Mark Twain

**PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE:**

**DISABILITY-CENTRIC LANGUAGE:**

People with disabilities	the handicapped, the disabled
People without disabilities	normal, healthy, whole or typical people
Person who has a congenital disability	person with a birth defect
Person who has (or has been diagnosed with)...	person afflicted with, suffers from, victim of...
Person who has Down syndrome	Downs person, mongoloid, mongol
Person who has (or has been diagnosed with) autism	the autistic
Person with quadriplegia, with a physical disability	a quadriplegic, a paraplegic
Person with a physical disability	a cripple
Person of short stature, little person	a dwarf, a midget
Person who is unable to speak, who uses a communication device	dumb, mute
People who are blind, visually impaired	the blind
Person with a learning disability	learning disabled
Person diagnosed with a mental health condition or demented	crazy, insane, psycho, mentally ill, emotionally disturbed, or demented
Person diagnosed with a cognitive, intellectual, or developmental disability	mentally retarded, retarded, slow, idiot, moron
Student who receives special education services	special ed student, special education student
Person who uses a wheelchair or a mobility chair	confined to a wheelchair; wheelchair bound

Accessible parking, bathrooms, etc.

handicapped parking, bathrooms, etc.

## CHAPTER 4: PRE-CAMP RESOURCES

### Sample Job Description and Qualifications for Camp Inclusion Director:

- Teaching Certification (Special Education) and/or MSW, CTRL or other appropriate credentials.
- Ability to effectively assess children on multiple levels (social, educational, academic, physical psychological, medical) to determine their suitability for a camp program
- Ability to effectively design individualized inclusion models for each child, that meet the camper's needs and the needs of the camp community
- Experience with and knowledge of a variety of disabilities/disorders, including (but not limited to) the following: Attention Deficit Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder, Obsessive/Compulsive Disorder, Tourette's syndrome, Bipolar Disorder, Asperger's syndrome, Down syndrome, Autism, social difficulties, behavioral challenges, homesickness, cognitive disabilities, and a variety of emotional challenges and physical limitations.
- Ability to work in a team environment and to collaborate effectively with a number of different stakeholders (parents, counselors, unit supervisors, medical staff, camp administration, etc.)

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Work directly with and report to the Camp Director
- Establish, in collaboration with the Camp Director, the policy and procedures of an inclusion program at camp for children and staff with disabilities to ensure their safety and success
- Process applicants who register for camp and have disabilities. This includes:
  - Create forms and questionnaires to obtain information
  - Liaise with parents, teachers, and outside agencies (i.e., medical professionals and government support agencies)
  - Review questionnaires and determine eligibility
- Maintain parent contact before, during, and after the camp session regarding preparation for summer session, implementation of program, and follow up evaluation
- Recruit staff members to support campers with disabilities
- Develop and provide a pre-camp inclusion training module for all staff
- Design modifications to programs and activities to accommodate children with disabilities which could include a learning disability, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder, bipolar disorder, Asperger's syndrome, social difficulties, behavioral challenges, homesickness, cognitive disabilities, selected emotional difficulties, and minor physical limitations.
- Provide ongoing training and support to specialists, unit heads, faculty, health center, and kitchen staff
- Serve on the camp crisis management team
- Document all aspects of the inclusion program and maintain ongoing written accountability regarding information gathered, anecdotal notes, scheduling, programming, outside contacts, responsibilities, and follow up
  - Create and implement behavior contracts for specific campers
  - Provide short- and long-term support of staff members of campers with disabilities
  - Design individual work placements for staff with disabilities and ongoing task analysis
  - Work collaboratively with the camp director around a number of camp issues including inclusion, health and safety, camper issues, and staff morale
  - Model and advocate acceptance and understanding for campers and staff with disabilities

## Sample Counselor Evaluation Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Camper: \_\_\_\_\_ Camp: \_\_\_\_\_ Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Place an **M** in the box that represents performance at the Mid-Summer Review.

Place an **E** in the box that represents performance at the End-of-Summer Review.

**Rating scale:** **A**-Always                      **O**-Often   **S**-Sometimes                      **R**-Rarely

	A	O	S	R	Comments
Demonstrates that safety is a #1 priority					
Performed all necessary pre-camp responsibilities (i.e. parent calls, orientations)					
Comes to work on time, ready to work					
Demonstrates awareness that camp is a job					
Maintains excellent attendance					
Dresses appropriately (Camp shirt, name tag)					
Demonstrates a very positive attitude					
Understands that inclusion is important at camp and helps ensure that it takes place					
Understands his/her role as it relates to the inclusion camper and helps to facilitate successful inclusion					
Is aware and sensitive of camper's needs and helps provide appropriate adaptations					
Maintains positive relationship with counselors in bunk					
Maintains positive relationships with specialists and assists to provide appropriate adaptations for camper to succeed					
Motivates camper to participate, helps him/her to integrate, and encourages independence					
Maintains positive relationships with other campers in bunk in order to assist with understanding and insure inclusion					
Regularly swims with camper, assists swim instructors					
Models appropriate behaviors with campers					
Resolves conflict fairly and effectively					
Maintains positive relationships with all counselors					



Makes improvements based on feedback					
Seeks advice/help when having difficulties					
Keeps Inclusion Coordinator informed/included					
Goes beyond the call of duty					

**MID-SUMMER REVIEW:**

Notable strengths:

Areas that need improvement:

Goals for second half of camp:

Additional comments:

**END OF SUMMER REVIEW:**

Notable strengths:

Areas that need improvement:

Performance since mid-summer review:

Additional comments:

**COMMENTS FROM STAFF MEMBER BEING EVALUATED (YOU MAY USE BACK OF PAGE IF NECESSARY)**

Mid-summer:

End of summer:

Circle all that apply (Staff Person):

Mid-summer

End summer

I have read the evaluation prepared for me by my supervisor.

Y N

Y N

I understand my evaluation and believe it was done properly and fairly.

Y N

Y N

I agree with the evaluation (if not, please explain below)

Y N

Y N

Mid-summer:

End of Summer:



## The Intake and Admission Process and Preparing Campers for Camp

Increasingly, camps are encouraging and even requiring families to register their children online for summer camp. Camps rely on this information and expect parents to be honest, forthcoming, and collaborative; the more information parents share, the better camp is able to be proactive in planning for the summer and meeting the needs of the child. This is true for campers with or without disabilities. It is somewhat of an “open secret” in the camping world that while most parents are honest and open, providing all requested information, some parents, worried their child may be denied admission due to some behavioral or temperamental issue, elect not to be forthcoming.

### TIPS FOR APPROACHING THE INTAKE:

- **Have a member of the senior staff** (i.e. assistant director, staff social worker or psychologist, director of camper care) **review each applications in search of “flags.”** Does the child have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan)? Does he/she meet regularly with a therapist (psychologist, Occupational Therapist, speech and language)? (Please note that just because a child has an IEP, he or she does not necessarily need additional support at summer camp. For example, a child requiring academic support in school may not require support in non-academic settings.) Does one sibling attend a Jewish day school while the applicant attends a public school? This may be an indicator that he/she receives special education services.
  - Oftentimes, the director of inclusion or camper care will **contact the family with additional questions, seek clarifications, ask to speak to a therapist or teacher, etc.** In many cases, no additional supports or services are needed. In some cases, the camp is able to offer the support of an inclusion specialist, additional counselors, shadow counselors, etc.
  - **Request outside reports** from therapists and teachers (including neuropsychological testing if available) and reports from other professionals (OT, PT, speech and language therapist, etc.). They provide additional professional perspectives of a camper.
    - Include a 30 minute telephone interview.
    - If the potential camper sounds like a potentially good fit for the program, a more **extensive supplemental application** form should be provided for parents to complete.
    - Once all forms are reviewed, the director of inclusion or camper care may elect to make follow up calls to outside professionals. It is often helpful to review the camp structure, schedule, staffing ratio, and other relevant information so these professionals can help assess how the child might transition and adjust.
    - Another important part of the process is an **in-person interview**. While such in-person interviews are somewhat unnatural and offer only a window into the camper, it does offer an important chance for parents to sit in person with the inclusion director. This helps develop a rapport and trust between them which will be necessary for communicating and working together over the course of the summer. The in-person interview also serves as an important first (or next) step in helping prepare the camper for camp. In cases where such an interview is not feasible, a Skype interview may suffice.

## Suggestions for Effectively Communicating with Families of Campers with Disabilities during an Intake

### DEMONSTRATE SENSITIVITY TO PREFERRED TERMINOLOGY: DISABILITIES VS. SPECIAL NEEDS

If a parent shows a preference for one of these terms over another in conversation, take their lead. It is the practice of FJC to use the word “disabilities,” yet we recognize that some parents are more comfortable using the words “special needs” when referring to their child.

An individual with a disability is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment. The ADA does not specifically name all of the impairments that are covered.

The term “special needs” tends to be linked to a child’s eligibility for services from the Department of Education. Special needs is a term used in clinical diagnostic and functional development to describe individuals who require assistance for disabilities that may be medical, mental, or psychological.

### USE PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE. TAKE CARE IN HOW YOU DESCRIBE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES – THE WORDS THAT YOU CHOOSE MATTER (SEE CHAPTER 2, ABOVE). BRIEFLY:

- Avoid outdated, derogatory terms like "crippled," "retarded," and "handicapped."
- Put the emphasis on the person and not the disability. For example, use language like "the child who is autistic" versus "that autistic child."
- Avoid referring to non-disabled kids as "normal," since it implies abnormality or a defect in others. Two options are “typically developing,” and “neurotypical.”
- Choose language like “a camp that works for children with autism” instead of “camp that works with autistic children” or “Your child will live in a bunk with peers without disabilities” instead of “your child will live in a cabin with normal or typical campers.”

### THINGS TO BE CAREFUL NOT TO SAY OR DO

- Do not contradict or judge the parent.
- Try not to say things like “God only gives us what we can handle.”
- Do not pretend to be knowledgeable about a topic if you are not.
- Do not promise the parent that a camp will accept their child.

### KNOW OTHER CAMPS AND RESOURCES

To be prepared to talk to parents of children with disabilities, familiarize yourself with the camps in your area and their ability to accommodate children with disabilities.

Different camps in your area are able to accommodate different types of disabilities. Their abilities may change from year to year. Speak to the camp directors in your catchment area to inquire if they are open to talking to parents of children with disabilities and if there are specific disabilities they are better able to accommodate.

### ARTICULATE THE RANGE OF MODELS, PROGRAMS, AND SERVICES CAMP OFFERS

- Inclusion refers to a camp setting where campers with or without disabilities live in the same cabins together and attend all of the same activities.
- Partial Inclusion refers to a program and living situation that is partly merged with typically developing campers and partly separated.
- Camp-within-a-camp refers to a program wherein campers with disabilities live in cabins with other campers with disabilities and attend programs specially geared towards campers with disabilities. They usually spend some percentage of their day interacting with campers without disabilities.

- Camp for children with disabilities is a camp program where all of the children at camp have a disability and have been determined to need extra support at camp.
- Vocational training program refers to a job coaching program, often for teens age 16 and up.

### The Telephone Intake: Balancing Compassion with Obtaining Relevant Information

Most parents who call in search of a camp for their child who has a disability will specify that desire up front, but some will not.

#### WHAT ARE THE THINGS THAT YOU SHOULD DO WHEN YOU RECEIVE THIS CALL?

- **Listen!** Ask the parent to tell you about their child and then just listen. Your primary goal here should be to learn enough about the child and family to help them find a Jewish camp. The only advice that they are looking for at this point is about camp. As helpful as you would like to be, resist offering them advice about how to care for their child in any way besides choosing a camp.

- **Acknowledge.** If a parent expresses feelings about their child that you do not agree with, simply acknowledge their feelings and listen. We are not in a position to make assumptions about what they are sharing. Examples of things to say: “Wow that sounds hard” or “I hate that it’s so difficult for you.”

- **Eliciting information.** When trying to get more information on the child, do not focus on the disability. Ask the same questions you would of any potential camper - age, where they go to school and what, if any, accommodations they receive there. Ask the parent/guardian to describe the child and his or her interests. You can also inquire about what activities the child finds difficult or unappealing.

#### QUESTIONS THAT YOU MIGHT ASK IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND IF THE CHILD MAY BE A GOOD FIT FOR YOUR CAMP OR IF YOU SHOULD REFER TO ANOTHER CAMP PROGRAM.

- Why are you looking for a camp serving children with disabilities?
- Tell me about your child (interests, dislikes, school, interactions with peers and adults).
- What do you hope that your child will gain from a camp experience?
- Are there any supports that the camp would need to provide so that your child’s experience would be most successful?

## BRIEF TELEPHONE SCREEN FORM

The goal of the initial phone call to the family will be to begin to establish a relationship with the family, assess the child's strengths, needs, and goodness of fit. If it seems like it is a good fit and the child might require additional support at camp, a meeting can be set up with the family, and a more detailed intake form sent to the parent(s) to complete prior to the meeting.

Child's Name:\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth:\_\_\_\_\_ Age:\_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_ Child's Grade:\_\_\_\_\_

Returning Camper? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

1) Tell me a little about your child's strengths and challenges.

2) Has your child attended any type of camp before? If yes, which camp? (Assess whether it was a specialized or typical camp, the camper to staff ratio, whether the child had any additional supports, as well as why the camp was/ was not a good fit for the child.)

3a) What type of classroom setting(s) is the child currently in at school (e.g. specialized and/or typical classroom)?

3b) What is the ratio of children to staff in the classroom and what staff are in the room (e.g. assistant teacher/ co-teacher, aide – classroom, shared, 1:1?, SLP, etc.)?

3c) Does your child receive any special supports or accommodations throughout the day at school? (e.g. pull-out services including resource room/learning specialist/therapies; social skills group; accommodations within the environment such as preferential seating or a behavior chart; modifications to classwork or materials such as larger print, less items, use of a computer for writing; assistance with transitions, etc.)

4) Tell me about your child's language and communication skills... (e.g. speaks in full sentences, expresses needs verbally, back and forth conversations, self-advocacy, shyness around speaking, etc.)

5) Does your child have any history of being verbally or physically aggressive? (e.g. calling other children names, hitting, kicking, biting, throwing things, etc.)

6) How much assistance/ supervision does your child require to complete daily living skills (e.g. *toileting* skills – wiping self, going into restroom on own, any accidents; *dressing* – such as changing for swim; *eating* – fine motor skills like opening wrappers, feeding, using a napkin, etc.)

If the child requires assistance, what type of help is needed? (e.g. visual or verbal reminders, physical assistance, etc.)

7) Throughout the call, try to assess whether this child seems like he/ she will require extra support at camp and what types of extra support. If it is still unclear, ask the parent:

What type of extra support do you feel would be helpful for your son/ daughter in the camp environment?

\*If the child seems like he or she could be a good fit and you decide to move forward with a meeting, encourage the parent to bring any documentation of current accommodations or supports that help the child at home and at school to the meeting (e.g. behavior management plan, 504 Plan, IEP, etc.)

# Sample Intake Forms

## Intake Form 1

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Attach picture here

### Family Contact Information

With whom does the camper reside?

Parent living situation and names and ages of siblings.

Briefly describe and characterize your child's disability-related need(s).

Please list any medications that your child currently takes.

Is your child unable to participate in any activity due to medical restrictions? Please explain.

Is your child currently receiving any services in or out of school such as occupational therapy, speech, or counseling? Please list those services along with the names and contact information of service providers.

Does your child attend a public or a private school?

Name of school and teacher

Contact information

Has your child previously attended day camp or overnight camp? Please tell us about his/her experience there and the contact person at the camp.



Describe communication methods that your child uses (speech, written, sign language, etc.).

Describe your child's social interactions and friendships with age peers

What situations might cause anger or frustration for your child?

How does your child react when angry or frustrated?

Please describe the negative behaviors which have been observed at home or at school and the strategies which have been most effective in managing them (e.g. written or picture schedules, point systems, praise, time outs, etc.):

Describe any specific behavioral plan used for your child.

Describe the best way to redirect your child or to engage him/her in an activity.

Does your child wander or run away, display aggressive behavior toward others, harm him/herself or destroy property? Please explain.

Describe the best way to introduce or explain new tasks or make transitions between activities.

Please list any phobias/fears that may cause behavioral difficulties.

Does your child require any assistance or reminders for toileting, feeding, bathing or dressing? Please describe.

What is your child's bedtime routine and wakeup pattern?

Tell us about your child's interests and activities that your child really enjoys.

What are your goals for your child at camp this summer?

Has your child's disability been professionally evaluated? Yes                      No

If yes, date of testing:

By whom/ through what agency?

Please list the diagnosis (ex. Asperger's, ADHD, Anxiety, Intellectual disability, ODD, Tourette 's syndrome, mood disorder, etc.). Please list all.

Does your child receive accommodations in school through a 504 plan or an IEP? Please list the special services or accommodations provided to your child in school (e.g. therapies, one to one aide, special education class, resource room, behavior intervention plan, etc.

Have there been any changes in the family or home situation over the past year?

Please share any other information and offer any suggestions that you think would help us to provide a successful summer for your child.

Special dietary concerns or needs.

Please submit behavior plans, IEPs and psychological reports.

I give permission for Camp XXXXX to contact the school, teachers, social workers, therapists and/or physicians for the purpose of gathering or releasing information regarding my child, named above. The information will be used to help the staff to provide an effective plan for my child while at camp. All information will be kept confidential.

Signature of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Intake Form 2

Before meeting with your family, we would like to have a little more information about your child to help guide our conversation. Please answer as honestly as possible, so that together we can help determine whether New Country Day Camp would be a good match for your child. Thank you!  
Child's Name:

Date of Birth:

Grade in September 2014:

### **CAMP EXPERIENCE:**

Has your child ever attended either day camp or overnight camp? If yes, what camp(s)?

Did your child have any special accommodations or support?

Please tell us what those experiences were like:

### **EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION:**

What school does your child attend?

Please describe your child's classroom setting (e.g. typical or specialized classroom, student: staff ratio, level of support, etc.)

List all services your child is receiving from both the school system and privately (include aides, resource room, speech-language, counseling, social skills group, psychiatry, etc.)

### **STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS**

Please describe your child's strengths.

What are your child's hobbies and areas of interest?

## HEALTH/ MEDICAL HISTORY AND INFORMATION

Vision:

Does your child wear glasses? How often?

Does your child wear contact lenses? How often?

Any other vision issues? If yes, please explain:

Hearing:

Does your child wear hearing aids? How often?

Does your child have cochlear implants?

Any other hearing issues? If yes, please explain:

Other Assistive technology/devices:

Aside from those mentioned above, does your child regularly use any assistive devices (e.g. for communication, writing, mobility, etc.)? If yes, please explain.

Developmental and Emotional:

Does your child have a developmental difference or diagnosis? If yes, please explain.

Does your child experience challenges with behaviors or emotions or have a mental health diagnosis? If yes, please explain.

Sensory Sensitivities:

Does your child exhibit any sensory issues/sensitivities?

If yes, please circle all that apply:

bright light

loud sounds/noise

smells

touch

temperature

pain

textures (food/clothing, etc.)

water

crowds (noise and touch)

other – Please describe:

Please explain how this might impact your child at camp:

Allergies:

Does your child have any allergies? If yes, please list:

Diet:

Does your child have any dietary restrictions? If yes, please explain.

Activities:

Does your child have any activity restrictions? If yes, please explain.

Other:

Please list any other current health conditions that your child is experiencing but that have not been mentioned above (e.g., tics, anemia, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.)

Medications:

Please list all medications and vitamins that your child is currently taking and the purpose of the medication/vitamin/supplement.

Social Functioning:

How does your child tend to do socially – does he/she prefer to participate and be with other children, to be more of an observer, or to engage in more solitary activities?

Does your child require encouragement and support to join in group activities?

Please describe your child's strengths and challenges during social interactions.

Emotional and Behavioral Information:

What are triggers or situations that your child finds challenging?

How does your child show that he/she is feeling frustrated, upset, anxious, or overwhelmed? What are the signs or behaviors?

What have you found to be most effective to help your child manage those situations in which he/she becomes frustrated, upset, anxious, hyperactive, or overwhelmed?

What specific activities help to soothe and calm your child?

What is the best way to redirect your child, if necessary?

What is the best way to help your child transition from one activity to the next?

Does your child exhibit any repetitive behaviors? If yes, please indicate how the behaviors are addressed at home and school.

Does your child have a behavior management plan at home and/or at school? If yes, please indicate the behaviors that are addressed by the plan.

Does your child have any history of the behaviors listed below? If yes, please circle all that apply:

verbal aggression (e.g. name-calling, using disrespectful language towards others)

physical aggression (e.g. hitting, biting, kicking, throwing, scratching people or things)

self-injurious behaviors

wandering away from the group

running away/ "bolting"

being suspended from school

If you checked any of the above behaviors, please explain the circumstances and frequency of these behaviors.

Have there been any recent changes or stressors in your child's life that would be helpful for us to know about (e.g. new baby, move to new home, divorce, death, change of schools, family illness, etc.)? If yes, how has your child reacted to those changes?

Daily Life Skills:

Does your child have difficulty and require support with any of the activities below? If yes, please check all that apply and explain.

eating

dressing/ changing for swim

toileting

riding in a vehicle

reading

writing

Additional Information:

Is there anything that we have not yet covered that you think would be important for us to know?

-----  
Parent/Guardian Name/ Signature

-----  
Date



### Intake Form 3

#### Contact Information

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade level as of Fall 2014: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Residing with Child:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Check Preferred Method of Contact:  Phone  Email

Please list the names and ages of siblings residing with your Child:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Parent/Guardian NOT residing with your Child:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Check Preferred Method of Contact:  Phone  Email

Please list the names and ages of siblings NOT residing with your Child:

-----  
-----  
-----

Address:-----  
-----

Medical Information

Pediatrician's Name:-----

Phone Number:-----

Address:-----  
-----

Psychologist's Name:-----

Phone Number:-----

Address:-----  
-----

Are your child's immunizations up to date?  Yes  No

Has your child's disability been professionally evaluated?  Yes  No

\*If yes ,

Date of Testing:-----

Name of Testing Organization:-----

Please check all that apply to your child. If your child's diagnosis is not listed, check the box labeled "Other" and add the diagnosis to the list:

Developmental or Neurological

- Autism
- Asperger's Syndrome
- Chromosomal Disorder
- Down's Syndrome
- Non-Verbal Learning Disability

Pervasive Developmental Disorder

Seizure Disorder

Sleep Disorder

Other:

#### Sensory and Motor Skills

Apraxia

Cerebral Palsy

Developmental Coordination Disorder

Fine Motor Delay

Gross Motor Delay

High Muscle Tone

Low Muscle Tone

Sensory Processing Disorder

Paralysis

Other:

#### Communication and Speech-Language

Articulation Fluency

Voice Disorder

Auditory Processing

Stuttering

Deaf

Hard of hearing

Blindness

Other:

#### Learning Disabilities

Dyscalculia

Dysgraphia

Dyslexia

Other:

Anxiety/Mood Disorders

Bipolar Disorder

Depression

General Anxiety Disorder

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Panic Disorder

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Selective Mutism

Separation Anxiety

Social Phobia

Tourette's Syndrome

Other:

Behavior

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Conduct Disorder

Impulse Control Disorder

Other:

Does your child have their own specific way of referring to their diagnosis other than using medical terminology? If yes, what terminology is your child comfortable with?

Please list all medications that your child is currently taking:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

Is your child on a special diet?  Yes  No

\*If yes, what type: \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child have any food allergies?  Yes  No

\*If yes, what are they: \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child maintain a regular sleep schedule?  Yes  No

How many hours of quality sleep do you think your child generally receives?

Less than 4 hours

Between 4-6 Hours

Between 6-8 hours

More than 8 hours

If your child is currently receiving any services inside or outside of school such as OT, speech, counseling, etc., please list the services along with the names and contact information of the service providers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any additional health information you can provide that will help us meet your child's medical needs?

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Academic Information

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

School Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

What subjects does your child enjoy the most at school? \_\_\_\_\_

### Personality and Social Skills Information

Please check all that apply to your child. There are three open fill-ins to add your own traits, but feel free to add more if you wish. This is a broad list of traits to help us find a starting point.

- Affectionate
- Passive
- Sad
- Very Active
- Self-confident
- Careless
- Nervous
- Fearful
- Even Tempered
- Aggressive
- Immature
- Talkative
- Sensitive
- Restless
- Cheerful
- Fearless
- Quiet
- Friendly
- Independent
- Dependent
- Reflective
- Moody

Eager to learn

Outgoing

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other:\_\_\_\_\_ Which social/thinking style best fits your child (check only one):

Introverted

Extroverted

Mixed

During conversation, does your child ever find it difficult to (check all that apply):

Maintain focus on one topic

Respond appropriately

Consider other people's perspectives

Be a flexible thinker

Come to a mutual agreement

Understand nonverbal cues

Utilize nonverbal cues

End a conversation

Is your child able to engage and maintain social relationships with same age peers?  Yes  No

Does your child participate in any social events or cooperative activities such as school clubs, sports, dances, music, etc.?  Yes  No

What are some activities your child likes to do with other people? \_\_\_\_\_

What are some activities your child likes to do when they are alone? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any additional information you would like us to know about your child's ability to communicate?  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Daily Operating and Behavior Information

Does your child have difficulty:

- Staying/getting organized
- Staying focused on one task
- Physical transitioning
- Transitioning to a different mindset

Please explain:

---

---

Does your child ever get stuck on a specific task and become unable to break away from it?

- Yes
- No
- Occasionally

Do you consider your child to be flexible?

- Yes
- No
- Occasionally

Is your child able to ignore internal and external distractions and focus on the task at hand?

- Yes
- No
- Occasionally

Does your child ever drift off into his/her own thoughts and daydream for an extended period of time?

- Yes
- No
- Occasionally

Is your child capable of learning from his/her experiences?

- Yes
- No



Occasionally

In the past two years, has your child ever (check all that apply):

Hit anyone

Thrown items

Scratched anyone

Bit anyone

Intentionally broken property that didn't belong to them

Thrown a tantrum

Lied to an adult

Refused to cooperate or follow directions

Yelled at others

Stolen someone else's property

Why do you think your child may have acted in such a way?

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you feel comfortable taking your child and another out into the community without any other adult support?  Yes  No

Does your child ever need multiple reminders to stay on task?

Yes

No

Occasionally

Has your child ever had a 1:1 support at his/her school?  Yes  No

Has your child ever been asked to leave a program or not come back the following session?  Yes  No

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child have a current Behavior Plan at school?  Yes  No

What are some interventions that have worked successfully for your child?

\_\_\_\_\_

Are there any specific situations that will cause anger or frustration for your child?

\_\_\_\_\_

When your child becomes upset, how long does it take him/her to calm down and return to the group activity?

\_\_\_\_\_

Is your child able to calm him/herself down or will they need adult support?

\_\_\_\_\_

Should your child ever require adult support in the de-escalation process, what strategy do you think your child would benefit most from? \_\_\_\_\_

Please feel free to use the remaining space to include any additional information that could help us in supporting your child as they give back to the community.

## Parent Interview

Explain that the purpose of the interview is to be as prepared as possible for each camper. Any information the parents give us will be helpful in creating a fun, safe, and successful camp experience for their child. Most questions should lead to a conversation about the topic as related content, rather than just a specific answer to the question. The goal is to have the parent(s) provide good insights on creating supports and accommodations for their child as a camper.

### Preliminary Info

What is your child's disability related need?

What type of school program does your child attend? How has school been going this year?

Who is the best person for us to talk to from school to get information about your child in a school or group setting? Get name and number.

### Communication Skills

Is your child verbal? If so, how verbal? (2-3 word sentences, conversational level, etc.)

If not verbal, how does your child communicate? Get as many specific examples as possible.

If your child uses a communication device, will it be sent to camp?

Can your child communicate basic needs? (E.g. bathroom, hungry, tired, etc.)

### Social Skills

How well does your child relate with peers?

What is difficult for your child in regard to social interactions?

Does your child have opportunities outside of school to socialize or spend time with peers?

What is the best way for your child to communicate with friends post-camp? (E.g. email, Facebook, letters, etc.)

What supports does your child need to be successful in communication with friends post-camp (i.e. boundaries of when and how to contact, suggestions regarding topics, etc.)?

## Behavior

How does your child communicate when frustrated? Happy? Scared? Sad?

Does your child have any significant behavioral challenges? Such as? (i.e. Aggression, self-injurious, shutting down, tantrums)

If so, describe in detail.

What are common triggers and how often do these behavioral challenges typically occur?

What do you do to intervene?

What helps your child relax?

Does your child have trouble transitioning from activity to activity? What strategies are helpful?

Does your child exhibit any self-stimulating behaviors, repetitive behaviors or speech patterns, or other behavioral quirks?

## Self-Help

How independent is your child in self-care/daily living skills (i.e. dressing, eating, toileting, and showering)?

What supports are used to help your child with self-care? (e.g. hand-over-hand physical assistance, prompting, etc.)

Are there any special concerns/suggestions for supporting your child with self-care or hygiene?

For females: Does your daughter get her period? If so, does she need any assistance with feminine hygiene?

#### Medical Needs

What medications does your child take?

Are there any medical conditions we should be aware of?

Are there any psychological conditions we should be aware of?

Does your child have any history of seizures? If so, how do seizures present? What are specific triggers? What is the current action/treatment plan in the event that your child has a seizure?

Does your child have any allergies?

#### General Interests

What are your child's interests/hobbies?

What motivates your child?

What camp activities do you think your child will enjoy?

What will he/she not enjoy?

Are there any specific things/situations which your child is frightened of?

What are your child's favorite foods? Least favorite foods?

## Sleeping Habits

What time does your child usually go to bed? Wake up in the morning?

Has your child ever slept away from home or attended an overnight camp?

Does your child have any special bedtime rituals?

Does your child have any sleep disturbances? (E.g. Trouble sleeping through the night, Sleep walking, Nightmares, Bedwetting)

Do you have any suggestions for making bedtime go smoothly?

## Camp Related Activities

Can your child swim? How well?

Does your child have any fine or gross motor difficulties, or physical restrictions? How will they affect his/her participation in camp activities?

Are there any physical accommodations that your child will need or would find helpful in navigating the physical space at camp?

Are there any safety concerns that we should be aware of? What are they?

What kind of religious experiences has your child participated in? Does your child attend services? Does your child know any of the prayers?

What expectations do you have for your child's camp experience?

Is there anything else we need to know to make sure your child has a successful, fun, camp experience?

## SENSITIVE TOPICS TO ADDRESS WITH PARENTS/ GUARDIANS

The following topics and questions may be helpful to address directly since they represent information that families may be hesitant to write on a form or bring up in conversation. Families' responses to these topics can provide us with information that can help us to better assess the supports that the child will need in a summer camp program, as well as the goodness of fit with the supports provided at New Country Day Camp. It will be up to those meeting with the parents to determine whether to address most of these questions on a routine basis and explain to parents that it is the policy, or to address only those questions that seem like they may be relevant on a case by case basis. For many of the questions, examples of behaviors are provided, which may be used to make it easier for the parents to understand the questions if necessary. In most cases, these questions are best addressed without the child present ; however, depending upon the parents' responses, some follow-up with the child may be necessary.

\*In addition to these topics, remember to follow-up on any red flags or information that you would like to hear more about, from the parents' responses to the Background Information Form.

### FAMILY

If the child's parents are divorced, who has legal custody of the child and who is able to make decisions about the child's care and services?

Do the parents have joint custody (even if the child lives most of the time with one parent) or is it sole custody?

This information is important with regard to who can sign the child up for camp, who can make medical decisions, who can sign releases for staff to speak with the school, a therapist, etc.

### EMOTIONAL/ BEHAVIORAL

Does the child have any history of being bullied and/or bullying others? What happened? How was it resolved? Does the child still have sensitivities/ triggers related to the incident(s) that may make them act in certain ways (e.g. feel like others are laughing at/ looking at/ talking about them, sensitivity to certain words or comments, etc.)?

Does the child have any specific fears/ phobias?

Has the child ever talked about hearing or seeing things that are not real or that other people do not see or hear?

(Assess any history of psychotic thinking/ episodes.)

Has the child ever tried to hurt themselves, threatened to hurt themselves, or spoken about wanting to hurt themselves or take their own life?

Does the child have any history of psychiatric hospitalization(s)? If yes, how many times? When? What statements, behaviors, or emotions led to the hospitalization(s)? For how long was the child hospitalized (in each incident)?

Has your child ever:

-Kicked or punched holes in walls?

-Broken things in anger/ ruined or destroyed property?

-Hurt or harmed animals?

If yes, when was the last incident? How frequently do these incidents occur? What are the triggers for such incidents? Do the behaviors seem to be accidental or intentional? (e.g. an expressed desire to break something that belongs to someone else or it happens accidentally because the object is in the child's way during a tantrum, etc.) How long does it take for the child to calm down afterwards? How does the child feel about the incident afterwards (e.g. is there remorse, confusion, etc.)?

What methods/techniques help to prevent such incidents? What are the best way to handle these events (in the moment) when they occur?

Have the police ever been summoned to help manage your child at school or at home?

Has the child ever engaged in any sexual acting out behaviors? (e.g. exhibiting provocative behaviors, using inappropriate language, trying to touch others' private parts, exposing themselves, etc.)

If there is any endorsement of touching oneself/ masturbation in public, ask the parents - how are those behaviors successfully addressed at home and at school?

(e.g. ignoring, telling the child another specific behavior to do with hands, providing a fidget toy for sensory input, etc.)

## DEVELOPMENTAL/ HYGIENE

Does your daughter have her period yet? If yes, is she able to handle it on her own or does she need reminders to change pads/tampons or help with any part of the process?

Are there any hygiene issues that it would be helpful for us to be aware of or that your child would benefit from reminders about?

## Camper Intake (Questions to be asked at a Home Visit)

How are you feeling about coming to camp?

What should I know about you?

What are some of the things you like to do at home or at school?

Is there anything you really want to do while you're at camp?

Explain general types of camp activities, majors, and get a sense of what they might like to do...

What are some of the things you don't like to do?



Is there anything about camp that you're worried about?

Do you have any questions for me about camp?

Explain that they can be in touch at any time with questions or things they would like me to know...

### School Staff or Therapist Intake

All questions should be answered specific to the school/community environment only.

#### Preliminary Info

What is your position?

How long have you known the student?

How often and what type of contact do you have with the student?

#### Specific Program Info

Explain the school program in which the student is enrolled (i.e., self-contained, inclusion, etc.)

If self-contained, how much time does the student spend daily with the mainstream school population?

Does the student have an assistant at any time during the day? If so, what does the assistant help the student with?

#### Communication Skills

Describe the student's communication skills (receptive, expressive). What have you noticed is difficult for the student with regards to communication?

How does the student communicate when frustrated? Happy? Scared? Sad?

Does the student communicate basic needs? (E.g. bathroom, hungry, tired, etc.)

Are there any strategies that are helpful in supporting the student with effective communication and self-expression?

#### Social Skills

How often does the student spend time with peers? In what activities/classes?

Does the student interact well with peers?

What is difficult for the student with regard to social interactions?

What supports/strategies are used to assist the student with social interactions?

#### Behavior/Self-Regulation

Does the student have any significant behavioral challenges? Such as? (E.g. Aggression, self-injurious, shutting down, tantrums)

If so, describe in detail.

When and how often do these behavioral challenges typically occur?

Does the student have any difficulty with self-regulation or emotional regulation?

What strategies are successful in helping the student to relax?

Does the student have any difficulty transitioning from activity to activity? What strategies are helpful?

Are there any safety concerns at school? Has the student ever engaged in unsafe behaviors (E.g., running away, climbing, etc.)

#### General Interests

What is motivating to the student?

What activities does the student typically enjoy the most at school?

Are there any things that the student really does not like or is scared of?

Do you think that the student will be successful in an overnight camp environment?

Is there anything else we should know that might be helpful when working with this student at camp?

## Information Release Form

February 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian,

In order to get to know your child better and to assess how we can best support your child at camp, we will need to access confidential information from your child's physician, social worker, caseworker, therapist, teacher or other service provider.

Below you will find a statement of consent. Please sign it, and include it in the completed application packet you send back to us.

Thanks again for applying to Camp XXXX. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Director

Camp XXXXXX

I, \_\_\_\_\_(Name of parent/guardian), give permission for \_\_\_\_\_(Name of Service Provider), \_\_\_\_\_(Title), to provide information about my Child, \_\_\_\_\_.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Mission Statement on Website

It is important to add a statement about inclusion to your mission statement and to publish it on your website so that the commitment becomes an intrinsic part of your message, and is not heard through the intake process or at camp for the first time.

Here is a good example from Herzl Camp's website:

At Herzl Camp, we strive to include all Jewish youth. Thanks to our recent capital campaign, our camp is fully accessible for campers with physical challenges. Campers with cognitive or emotional challenges are also welcomed into our camp program. Campers with special diets or other health considerations can often succeed at camp, too.

We practice inclusion by mainstreaming meaning that all campers participate as they are able in the same camp program. To succeed, we need you to partner with us. We'll have some conversations with you, your child's teachers and caregivers and determine if we can meet your child's needs while at camp. Every child is unique so we start by getting to know you and your child before any decision is made.

If your child would do better in a program that is only for kids with similar challenges, we can connect you with other Jewish and secular programs.

And one from Capital Camps:

The Atzma'im (Hebrew for Independence) program represents a significant commitment to the notion of an inclusive community. Children join this program and are enveloped in a comprehensive support system that helps ensure a successful experience for them and their peers. All campers live in cabins, and the strength of the program is derived from its mainstreamed nature. Our ADA compliant facility provides improved access for those with physical challenges, and our talented supervisory staff guide specially trained counselors to guarantee a superior experience. All new campers participate in a low-key pre-camp screening prior to formal registration to establish that the placement is appropriate and to set expectations that are realistic for each individual camper.

As we teach tolerance and kindness, the Atzma'im program is a powerful hands-on educational element that has proven to be meaningful to all members of our community.

From inception, Capital Camps has had an abiding commitment to the concept of 'camp for all'. Our Atzma'im (Independence) program is designed to provide a meaningful immersive Jewish Camp experience for children with special needs. A shining jewel of our camp program, this fully-inclusive option mainstreams campers into traditional cabins where they receive additional staff support to ensure their success. Our ADA compliant facility provides improved access for those with physical challenges, and our talented supervisory staff guide specially trained counselors to guarantee a superior experience. All new campers participate in a low-key pre-camp screening prior to formal registration to establish that the placement is appropriate and to set expectations that are realistic for each individual camper.

We are proud that we are one of the few quality Jewish residential camps to offer this type of program which at present is available to rising 3rd through 10th grades.

We truly believe that our entire community benefits from interacting with Atzma'im participants as we live, play, laugh and dream alongside one another. Please be in touch with us directly for more information.

Another from Groton Parks and Recreation:

Groton Parks and Recreation recognizes the value of including people with varying levels of ability as a means of strengthening our community. The Department makes all programs, services and activities equally available to children and adults with disabilities, makes special efforts to be welcoming to all citizens, supports efforts to affirm the dignity of all participants, strives to enhance each individual's potential for full and active participation, and provides specialized programs specifically designed for children and adults who need more assistance.

## CHAPTER 5: SUMMER COMMUNICATION

### Ongoing Communication with Parents/Communicating About Campers within Camp

The intake process section of this resource guide stresses the importance of working collaboratively with parents. It takes a great deal of trust and faith for parents of a child with a disability to be ready to send them to summer camp. Until now, they have seen and interacted in person with their child every day. They know his or her eating preferences and habits, as well as showering and other self-care needs. Parents instantly understand what a child is feeling and understand what he or she is communicating or asking, even if the child is nonverbal. Now, perhaps for the first time other than school, which is only for a few hours per day, parents are finding themselves in a position where they must entrust their precious child to strangers—us! With this trust comes a responsibility on the part of camp to communicate with parents. How do we keep parents in the loop? How much, how often, and through what communication mechanisms do we stay in touch?

Consider the camp experience from the parents' perspective. They dropped off their child on the first day of camp and have absolutely no way to really hear how the experience is going. Most camps do not allow phone calls. Campers must write home but what camper, typically developing or otherwise, communicates much in writing? Campers with disabilities may write a few words, which is exciting for the parents, but they can't really capture the camp experience in a handwritten letter.

So what is a parent to do? All camp parents wake up each morning and check the camp website/photo gallery for photos of their children. They scroll through often hundreds of photos until they find a photo or two of their child. And they proceed to carefully study each photo! Why does he look sad? How come no kids are near him? Doesn't he have any friends? Is that a bug bite? Is that sunburn? Where is his sunscreen?

### How and when do inclusion directors keep in touch with parents?

(All directors have different styles but here are some suggestions)

- Call or send an email to parents of all new campers by the first morning. Parents sigh a sigh of relief just knowing their child ate dinner and slept through the night! And directors, proceed to drop a note to all parents, one by one, within the first few days of camp.
- Send out a global, general weekly update to all families, including a few paragraphs about the happenings of the division and about the welfare of the entire division. A few well-chosen photographs of happy children never hurt as well!
- Start a Facebook group open only to parents of campers in the disabilities program; it is a way for parents to view photos and connect with each other as well as with the inclusion director.
- Tell parents how you prefer to be contacted and when they can realistically expect a reply. Some inclusion directors don't have an office and don't go by the main office more than once a day. A message left in the coordinators' mailbox may not get returned for a day or two, which is insufferably long for a parent. Some directors prefer a parent to take their chances and call the director's cell phone. Others prefer an email. Some actually prefer text messages. Decide on your preferred method of communication and share this with parents. And if parents do leave a message, be sure to return it promptly. There are times when it may be necessary to set limits with parents and to let them know that, if you are on the phone or online returning emails, then you are NOT with the campers and staff, which is crucial for the safe running of the program. They will appreciate the honesty and candor and in most cases will be respectful and understanding.
- Tell parents who on the team will be their "point person."

It may be counterintuitive but the MORE you share with parents, the LESS they will call, write, and text to ask about their children! This is why regular updates go a long way. Once per four week session, the bunk counselors should write a camp-issued postcard to each parent. Such postcards are always upbeat and share a few details about the campers' activities. Be sure the division head or director approves the content before it is sent out.

## Communicating About Campers Within Camp: Some “Who’s” and “How’s”

For a parent, the only thing worse than having a child sent home is learning that the child is having difficulties only when the fateful call comes. It is extremely important for camps to devise and utilize systems for keeping timely track of camper issues and then communicating them to parents.

Some camps utilize some version of weekly camper care meetings. The camp director, the director of camper care or inclusion director, and other support personnel participate in one staff meeting per week where each camper is briefly reviewed. In some camps, they are assigned a color: green (all is well), yellow (minor concerns) or red (major concerns). All yellows and reds are discussed at length. Perspectives of bunk counselors, specialists, etc. are shared and this information is documented. In some cases, notes are written in the camper file (Camp Minder, etc.) and the yoetz (advisor) or other designated staff member may call the parent. It is always useful to have a written record about each camper. While certain events and interactions may be fresh in one’s mind during the summer, it will be a distant, unclear memory when discussing this camper or event in the fall or winter. It will also provide a useful script for conversations in the off-season with parents.

Calls home do not always mean the camper is going to be sent home. They are opportunities to share information, invite parental input, and elicit information about similar behaviors in the past. In some cases, the call is the continuation of an already collaborative relationship. Camp staff may be put in contact with the child’s therapist for additional problem solving and consultation. It is crucial that inclusion directors be proactive in reaching out to parents rather than waiting until a problem is beyond repair and the child is being sent home. It is also advisable for each camp to have a clear policy of behavior that will not be tolerated at camp and under what circumstances a camper might be sent home. This policy should be shared with all parents prior to the start of camp.

s

## CHAPTER 6: TEXT BASED JEWISH VALUES FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

The value of inclusion is profoundly Jewish and resonates with our people's soul. The Torah teaches that the whole Jewish people stood at Sinai: men, women and children, regardless of ability or difference. And Deuteronomy 5:2-3 says that even those who are not yet born, all of us, "stood" there at that time. Being Jewish is for all of us. Yet, being Jewish, in our history of exiles and wandering, has meant being excluded or oppressed. All too often, our people have been the outsider: We understand well the stigma of exclusion, the damage of isolation.

There are many traditional Jewish texts which speak of differences and disabilities. We can turn to these texts to open our hearts and minds. Some will provoke us, some will encourage us. All will provide an opportunity for us to talk together about this shared value of inclusion. It is our hope that communities of camp lay leaders and staff members will provoke, challenge, and encourage each other in this study and in our work to recognize each other and welcome each other for who we are: different and yet of one people.

### How Do Jewish Texts Approach Individuals with Disabilities?

וַיֵּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כִּדְמוּתֵנוּ; וַיְרֵדוּ בְּדַגְת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם, וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל הָאָרֶץ, וּבְכָל הַרְמֵשׂ, הַרְמֵשׂ עַל הָאָרֶץ

וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ, בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ: זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה, בָּרָא אֹתָם

And God created man in His image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. - Genesis 1:26-27

---

כל איש ישראל חייב בתלמוד תורה, בין עני בין עשיר, בין שלם בגופו בין בעל יסורים,  
בין בחור בין זקן גדול

Every Jew is obligated in the study of Torah, whether rich or poor whether healthy or suffering with ailments, young or very old. –Rambam Hilchot Talmud Torah 1:8

### הבריות את משנה העולם מלך אלקינו ה אתה ברוך

Blessing upon seeing someone who is different: Blessed are you, Lord our G-d, who makes G-d's creations different. –Based on Blessing from Tosefta Brachot 6:1

ויאמר משה אל ידוד בי אדני לא איש דברים אנכי גם מתמול גם משלשם גם מאז דברך אל עבדך  
כי כבוד פה וכבוד לשון אנכי: ויאמר ידוד אליו מי שם פה לאדם או מי ישום אלם או חרש או פקח  
או עור הלא אנכי ידוד:



And Moses said to the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither yesterday nor the day before, nor since you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said to him, Who has made man's mouth? Who makes the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Is it not I, the Lord? –Exodus 4:10-11

---

## חנך לנער על פי דרכו גם כי יזקין לא יסור ממנה:

Teach the youth according to his way; and when he is old, he will not depart from it. -Proverbs 22:6

---

“Who is considered to be a *shoteh*: one who is repeatedly referred to as one who is free from the commandments and any punishment, whose purchasing is invalid and whose selling is invalid.”

Rashi's Commentary on Haggigah 3b

---

ויקרא פרשת אמר פרק כא  
(יז) דבר אל אהרן לאמר איש מדרעך לדרתם אשר יהיה בו מום לא יקרב להקריב לחם אלהיו:  
(יח) כי כל איש אשר בו מום לא יקרב איש עור או פסח או חרם או שרוע:  
(יט) או איש אשר יהיה בו שבר רגל או שבר יד:  
(כ) או גבן או דק או תבלל בעינו או גרב או ילפת או מרוח אשך:  
(כא) כל איש אשר בו מום מדרע אהרן הכהן לא יגש להקריב את אשי יקוק מום בו את לחם אלהיו לא יגש להקריב

17) Speak to Aaron saying: any man from your offspring that has a blemish should not come near to offer the food of G-d.

18) Any man with a blemish should not come close—any blind man, lame man, or man whose nose has no bridge, or man who has one limb longer than the other.

19) Or a man who has a broken foot or hand 20) Or a man who has abnormally long eyebrows, or a membrane on his eye or a blemish in his eye or a dry skin eruption, or a moist skin eruption, or who has crushed testicles

21) Any man with a blemish from the offspring of Aharon the Priest shouldn't approach to give the offerings of G-d. He has a blemish—he shall not come close to sacrifice. (adapted from English translation of Leviticus 21:17-21 in the ArtScroll/Stone Edition)

כל איש ישראל חייב בתלמוד תורה, בין עני בין עשיר, בין שלם בגופו בין בעל יסורים,  
בין בחור בין זקן גדול. אפילו עני המחזר על הפתחים, אפילו בעל אשה ובנים, חייב  
לקבוע לו זמן לתלמוד תורה ביום ובלילה, שנאמר: והגית בו יומם ולילה (יהושע א, ח).

Every Jew is obligated in the study of Torah, whether rich or poor whether healthy or suffering with ailments, young or very old. Even the poor who have to beg at the doors, whether married with children (or not) is obligated to establish set times for the study of Torah either day or night as it says, "And you shall meditate on it day and night." -Joshua 1:8

הוא היה אומר אל תהי בז לכל אדם ואל תהי מפליג לכל דבר שאין לך אדם  
שאיין לו שעה ואין לך דבר שאין לו מקום :

Ban Azzai taught, "Do not disdain any person. Do not underrate the importance of anything—for there is no person who does not have his hour, and there is no thing without its place in the sun." -Pirkei Avot 4:3

תני תנא קמיה דרב נחמן בר יצחק : כל המלבין פני חבירו ברבים כאילו שופך  
דמים.

A Tanna retold this before Rabbi Nachman son of Yitzchak: One who embarrasses another in public, it is as if he shed his blood. -Babylonian Talmud, Baba Mezia 58b, American Jewish World Service translation)

"Imagine a World..."

By Diana Pastora Carson

Imagine a world where everyone is special.

Imagine a world where respect for all exists.

Imagine people of all races, colors, and abilities valued and loved the same.

Imagine people of all appearances, beliefs, and backgrounds esteemed and honored each day.

Imagine a world where differences are like instruments, bringing unique sounds to a symphony.

Imagine humanity generously dancing and singing along in harmony.

Imagine seeing others' "differentness" with appreciation and with grace.

Imagine recognizing creation's ingenious way of designing the human race,

Where everyone is great as they are and no one is better or less;

Where every person has her place in making the world its best.

Imagine us making a difference in the lives of our fellow men

By letting them be who they are and supporting them how we can.

Imagine a world where everyone is special.

Imagine a world where respect for all exists.

Imagine this world and create it now.

Imagine it.

Be it.

# CHAPTER 7: STAFF TRAINING – A TREASURE CHEST

## Staff Week Topics to Discuss

Staff Week is typically an action-packed, exciting, exhausting week for everyone. Each staff member is happy to be back at camp and see friends, while perhaps a bit nervous about the summer ahead. Camp directors work hard to find a balance between allowing time for staff bonding and fun and setting aside time to learn such important camp procedures and policies having to do with the infirmary, dining room, laundry, night time bunk coverage, etc. Each division needs time to bond, plan daily and special day activities, and learn details about the campers in their division.

In camps with inclusion programs, additional time may be spent learning about ways to best support campers with a range of needs. In camps with specialized programs for larger groups of campers with disabilities, most of staff week may be spent learning about such special issues as seizure management, behavior management, and issues specific to the campers with disabilities who will be in attendance that summer.

There is no one-size-fits-all preparation which can be suggested for staff week. Keep in mind when planning that the need, and many opportunities, will arise for additional training throughout the summer. Ideally, the daily staff meeting should allow time for discussion of camper behaviors and intervention plans.

In a camp offering an inclusion program (where campers with disabilities live in bunks with typically developing campers), it is likely that inclusion staff training will be very similar to the training which all camp staff members receive. The inclusion director or inclusion specialist will spend time with bunk and divisional personnel, covering the following additional, specialized topics:

- Philosophy and goals of inclusion (and what inclusion looks like in this camp setting)
- Things the staff needs to know about this specific camper (areas of ability and disability, behavioral styles, goals, strategies and tricks, “chain of command” when it comes to caring for and managing this camper and communicating with his/her parents, etc.)

In a camp offering a large “camp within a camp” program for campers with disabilities, it is likely that the program’s director and staff will have a great deal of time to work as a group and cover all or most of the following topics. These areas will be discussed and revisited frequently throughout the summer in divisional meetings:

- Staff bonding and ice breakers
- Program overview—history, goals, philosophy
- Roles—director, division head, social worker, head counselor, camp “mom”, inclusion coordinators (titles and roles vary by camp)
- Summer theme and goals (camp wide and for the division)
- Personal goals
- Creating a Positive Behavior Environment in camp and in cabins
- Preparing for and reviewing the needs of each camper in the bunk.
- Review of schedule/expectations of staff week (Be on time; Ask questions/ Ask for help; Participate; Work as a team; Have fun)
- Role plays: simulating various situations you are likely to encounter—camper who won’t get out of the lake; camper who won’t get out of bed)
- Overview of daily schedule and weekly/monthly calendar of events
- Discussion of and division into planning committees such as: evening activities, prayers; Shabbat; special days; vocational training and inclusion
- How to plan an evening activity or special day activity (all day when specialists are off)
- Discussion of bunk set up and time to actually organize and set up bunks
- Discussion of individual campers (go through camper files—important info, goals, etc.)
- Write the division song!
- Planning time (first day, first week, first Shabbat)

- Discussion of:
  - Bunk clean up procedures
  - Letter writing
  - How we speak about campers in camp community (respectfully, confidentiality)
  - Communicating and sharing responsibilities with your co-counselor and fellow staff members (including live-ins from specialty staff)
  - Days off/curfew
  - Meal time procedures/monitoring food intake, balance, allergies
  - Bunk activities/creating a bunk culture
  - Procedures for: laundry, meal times, getting cleaning and art supplies, etc.
  - Creating inclusive opportunities for our campers with rest of camp; discuss how to accommodate camper needs at each activity
  - Supervision and weekly meetings with division heads (when, format, goals)

## Staff Week Sample Schedule 2014 from Ramah New England

Below is the sample staff week schedule offered by Camp Ramah in New England. This schedule was prepared for Staff Week 2014 for all members of the *Amitzim* (camping) program and Voc Ed, the vocational training program. The larger staff participates in all camp wide staff meetings, trainings and evening activities, and *Amitzim* and Voc Ed, have blocks of time each day of staff week for training specific to the programs for young adults with disabilities. Parts of the schedule have been color coded to indicate who is required to attend each training.

### Code

- Amitzim and Voc Ed Together
- Just Amitzim
- Just Voc Ed

### Schedule

#### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

11:00-1:00: Staff Arrival

12:30-2:00: Buffet Lunch

3:30-4:45: Edah (Division) Time

3:30-3:45: Ice breaker

3:45-4:05: Introductions

4:05-4:20: Ice Breaker

4:20-4:40: Staff Week Schedule

Questions?

5:00: Opening Plenary

6:30: Dinner

7:15-8:30: Edah Time

**Amitzim:**

Voc Ed: Why are we here? Why is Vocational Education Important? What are our goals this summer, both for ourselves, and for the Voc Eders?

8:45: Ma'ariv (Evening Prayers) and Peulat Erev (Evening Activity)

#### THURSDAY, JUNE 19

8:00: Prayers

9:00: Breakfast

9:45-12:45: Behavior Management Rotations (for entire camp)

1:00: Lunch

1:45: Mincha

2:00: Chofesh (free time)

3:00-5:00: Edah Time

3:00-3:10: Ice Breakers

3:10-3:50: Tikvah group introductions – Roles and Responsibilities

What is Amitzim, What is Voc Ed? What is Amitzim staff's role with Voc Eders, and Voc Ed Advisor's role with Amitzimers?

3:50-4:10: Disability readings and ongoing training this summer (Howard Blas-Tikvah Director)

4:10-4:30: Systems/Safety

4:30-5:00: Follow-up on Behavior Management from the morning rotations – Tikvah specific behavior management techniques

5:00: Hanhalla Meeting (Camp Administration/Directors/Division Heads)

6:30: Dinner

7:30-9:15:

Amitzim: Diagnoses/Camper Files (Aim to review 10 campers)

Voc Ed:

9:30: Ma'ariv and Peulat Erev

FRIDAY, JUNE 20

8:15: Tfillot – Beit Am Bet, Tikvah Tfillot (demonstrating the unique musical prayer experience of our disabilities program for entire camp community)

9:00: Breakfast

9:45-12:00: Voc Ed Work Time

10:30-12:00: Cee Gandolfo with Specialists (Outside trainer working with our job site supervisors/job coaches)

12:00-1:00: Tali meets with Cee

12:00: AM SKIER Presentation for all staff – Beit Am Bet (insurance company used by many camps)

1:00: Lunch

1:45: Mincha

2:00-3:00: Cee Gandolfo with Voc Ed Advisors, Amitzim begins programming

3:00-3:30: Cee with Amitzim – Life skills, independent living skills

3:30-4:00: Amitzim Edah Time

3:00-4:00: Work Time

4:00: Walmart (time to purchase supplies/small gifts for campers and bunk)

4:45: Snack

5:00: Hachana L'Shabbat (Preparation for Shabbat Time)

7:00: Kabbalat Shabbat and Ma'ariv in Grove

8:00: Seudah Shabbat

## SHABBAT, JUNE 21

9:00: Tfillot

9:45: Breakfast

10:30: Kriat haTorah and Musaf

11:30: Chofesh

1:30: Lunch

2:30: Chofesh

3:00: Optional Learning on Inclusion

4:00: Edah time

Text study on disabilities

Shabbat for Tikvah – How to structure and be aware of down time

Magshimim Buddies, and the role of Amitzim counselors during buddy times throughout the week (learning about our newest peer mentoring program with 13 year old division)

5:15: Peulat Shabbat

6:15: Mincha

7:00: Seudah Shelishit

8:00: Kavanah

8:45: Ma'ariv and Havdallah

9:30ish: Leyl Edah and Reception at Rabbi Gelb's house for non-bunk staff

## SUNDAY, JUNE 22

8:15: Tfillot

9:00: Breakfast

10:00-12:00: A Day in the Life: expectations for counselors at various times of the day, role plays

10:00-12:00: Work time for for Voc Ed

12:00-1:00: Voc Ed Reviews Participant Profiles

12:00-1:00: Amitzim Va'ad Time

1:00: Lunch

1:45: Mincha

2:00: Chofesh

3:00: Anti-Bullying presentation

4:00-6:30: Work Time for Voc Ed

6:30: Dinner

7:30: Allergy Training

8:15-9:00: Edah Time

Programming Check in for Amitzim

Voc Ed:

9:00: Ma'ariv and Camp Rules Meeting

10:00: Peulat Erev

**MONDAY, JUNE 23**

8:00: Tfillot

9:00: Breakfast

10:00-11:00: Tzad Bet with Rabbi Mitch Cohen (Beit Am Bet)

11:00-12:00: Work Time: Peulah Planning, Set up cabins, moadon (our division's multi-purpose space)

11:00-12:00: Voc Ed Reviews Participant Profiles

12:00-1:00: Work Time

12:00-1:00: Review Camper Files (Aim to review 6 campers)

1:00: Lunch

1:45: Mincha

2:00: Menucha

3:00-5:30: Work Time



3:00-4:00: Work Time: Peulah Planning, Set up cabins, moadon

4:00: Amitzim Camper Care with Talya (director of camper care)

4:30-5:30: Review Camper Files (Aim to review 6 campers – IF WE ARE NOT DONE, DINNER IN THE OHEL)

5:30-6:15: Check in – How are we feeling? Fears alleviated? New fears? Goals for the summer?

6:30-8:00: Start of Camp Banquet!

8:15: Edah Time/Final Prep

**TUESDAY, JUNE 24**

7:30: Tfillot

8:15: Breakfast

10:00: Gates Open!!

## An Alternative Staff Week Schedule

This next training schedule can be used for a program that is a stand-alone camp (i.e. a camp that only serves children with disabilities or a division of camp that only serves children with disabilities) or it can be used to supplement a training schedule at a camp that has a full inclusion model (i.e. campers with disabilities living in bunks with campers without disabilities). In the schedule below you will find three sample days of training along with some suggestions of other topics to include.

### XXXXX CAMP

THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2012

#### DAY 1

#### WELCOME TO CAMP!

- 12:00 Staff Arrival
- 5:00 Group Activity and Settling In
- 6:00 Dinner
- 6:45 Getting to Know About Camp (Basic Info: Mealtimes, safety, privacy in living quarters, wake-up, bathrooms around camp, what will tomorrow look like)
- 7:00 Recreation activities led by Division Heads and Senior Staff  
(Volleyball, Kickball, Hike, Scavenger Hunt, Camp Trivia, Canoeing, Camp Jeopardy)
- 8:00 Recreation activities led by Division Heads and Senior Staff
- 9:00 Staff Lounge is available for evening program and refreshments

### XXXXX CAMP

FRIDAY, JUNE 22, 2012

#### DAY 2

- 8:00 Wake up
- 8:30 Breakfast
- 9:15 Large group games and Ice Breakers
- 9:45 All staff to Large Rec for Getting to Know Camp 2
  - Hallmarks of the XXXXX Experience (DH's can share experiences and tell a story about connections made with the kids. Can also show a slide show of last year so counselors see who the campers are. Talk about Inclusion at camp, Camp Philosophy)
  - General Job Description/Responsibilities (Rituals, Routines, Role Modeling, Smoking, Parking Cars, Food in the Bunks, Communal Living, Staying out of People's living quarters, Laundry) (We can break into Groups to focus on the main goals of camp: Learning, Safe, Positive, Fun)
- 10:45 All staff by Divisions: tours of camp
- 11:45 Cabin Staff Training - Introduction

- Game
- Training Expectations
- How will this group interact?
- Time off this week
- Getting your creature comforts met
- Questions
  - Aleph counselors meet at Canteen
  - Bet counselors meet at Small Rec Hall
  - Gimmel counselors meet at Large Rec Hall
  - Dalet counselors meet at

12:45 Dining Hall Procedures

(Kashrut and how meals are served out, meeting the needs of campers at mealtimes)

1:15 Lunch

2:00 Program Area Training (the program area refers to the division in which a cabin counselor will work, or for specialty counselors, the programs they would report to, such as Athletics, Programming or Waterfront/Pool)

- Game (Name Game – 15 min)
- Supervision and Support (Chain of Commands, whom to go to, these are the people supporting you, Senior Counselor is on the top and Director on the bottom, who is giving you your evaluation – 15 min)
- A typical day (an interactive 45 min walk through)
- Specific Job Responsibilities (Hour off, Specific Bunk Life Responsibilities and as far as Programming: when the kids come through the door this is what you do, planning time. As a general cabin counselor your responsibilities are..., as a waterfront counselor your responsibilities are...)
- Teambuilding Activity (such as Stepping Stones, reflect on it, how do we interpret this and what do we do with the information).
- Questions
  - ALEPH general counselors to the
  - BET general counselors to
  - GIMMEL general counselors to
  - DALET general counselors to the
  - SPECIALTY counselors to Headquarters – Beth and Rick
  - WATERFRONT counselors to the ...

6:00 Shabbat Preparations

6:45 Shabbat Services and Dinner

9:00 Staff recreation – Israeli Dancing

### XXXXX CAMP

SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 2011

### DAY 3

8:00 Wake up

8:30 Breakfast

9:15 Shabbat Services

11:00 Fire Safety, Security, Emergencies, Administrative Practices

12:00 Privacy, Alcohol/Drugs

1:15 Lunch

2:00 Area Training

- Game(s)
- Recreational Inventories and Individual Camper Plans
- Questions
  - Aleph counselors meet at Canteen
  - Bet counselors meet at Small Rec Hall
  - Gimmel counselors meet at Large Rec Hall
  - Dalet counselors meet at ...

4:00 Positive Behavior Management – How Do I Manage a Difficult Child and how to put behavior supports in place for all children.

6:00 Dinner

6:45 Area Training – Behavior Management Role Plays with Bunk Life Areas - Part 1 (Mornings, meals, shower time, bunk mtg., bed)

#### XXXXX CAMP

SUNDAY, JUNE 24, 2012

#### DAY 4

8:00 Wake Up

8:30 Breakfast

9:45 Behavior Management II – How Do I Manage a Difficult Child?

11:45 Program Area Training

- Evaluations and Counselor Goals
- Experiential Days

1:15 Lunch

2:00 Break

3:30 Program Area Training: Behavior Management Role Plays

4:30 Cabin Assignments

6:00 Dinner (optional)

#### OTHER TOPICS TO INCLUDE DURING TRAINING WEEK

- Universal Design
- Supervisory Relationships and Goals

- Dealing with Campers' Developing Sexuality
- Nudity, Toileting, Showering, & Affection
- Physical and Emotional Abuse Prevention
- Inclusion at camp, Recreational Inventories and how accommodations are made.
- Each cabin should review camper files with senior staff to get to know the children in their bunks.

Recreational accommodation forms and Individual Camper Profiles should be done after this review occurs.

- Specialty staff should all be trained on how to create accommodations for campers in their areas.
- How do handle questions campers may have about peers with disabilities.
- Specific strategies for managing behavior
  - Social stories
  - Visuals
  - Retreat space
  - Picture schedules

#### STAFF WEEK TO DO LIST:

- Ice breakers
- Roles – Clarifying roles of various senior staff, Howard, Shana, Tali, Ayelet, Counselor, Voc Ed Advisor
- Sensitivity
- Behavior Management
- Task Analysis/Positive Reinforcement
- Communication/Giving Directions
- Diagnoses - Camper Profiles
- Sensory Overload
- Systems – safety, etc.
- A Day in the life
- Counselor expectations at each time of the day
- Role plays
- Misc.
- Setting up bunk
- Posters
- Peulat Tzrif
- Vaads
- Programming
  - Program bank
  - Themes for each week
  - First day programming
  - First week peulat erev
  - Tfillot planned through Sunday – Who is leading?
  - Dvar Torah
  - Torah readings
  - Peulat Shabbat

● What follows below is a treasure trove—of role plays, sensitivity activities, a guide to Person First Language and word choice, information on specific disabilities, and Jewish texts. Each person and camp will use this section differently. Some are grab and go activities which you can use as is with your staff; you will want to adapt others to your specific camp. Some of the terms may be unique to a particular camp. There is certainly something for everyone in this section, and it offers a glimpse into the fine work of so many different camps.

## Role Plays and Inclusion Activities

#### TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Equal Treatment vs. Treatment for Equity

- Role Play Suggestions
  - Late Lucy
  - Pacing Paul
  - Messy Missy
- Building an Inclusive Community – Activity Plan
- Sensitivity Activity
- Inclusion Counselor Training
- Experiential Activities
- Games and Activities to Introduce the Themes of Inclusion and Supporting Diverse Needs
- Positive exposure: The Spirit of Difference
- Understanding The Role of Behavior in Communicating (Behavior Management Session for Staff)

Equal Treatment vs. Treatment for Equity: Equal treatment means treating everyone the same way, regardless of the differences among their abilities. Achieving equity means giving every camper an equal chance at success, even when it means treating them differently to do so.

In the next section, starting on page 94, we have offered some simulation activities which are intended to offer a glimpse into the very complex world of disability. We offer these activities with a very big disclaimer which is summed up beautifully on the University of Arizona website in a section entitled “Disability Awareness and Simulation Activities.” (<http://drc.arizona.edu/outreach-education/disability-awareness-and-simulation-activities>):

To more authentically understand a diverse or underrepresented group, you might think to create a simulation or immersion activity. However, within the disability community, simulations are highly controversial. We do not believe that simulations can truly or completely replicate the disability experience. Focusing on only certain pieces of the disability experience, simulations tend to leave participants with increased negative perceptions of disability—feelings of pity for disabled folks or relief that they are not disabled, rather than engender a feeling of pride or respect for the community.

In preparing their students for understanding fellow students with disabilities, they write, “It is helpful, when planning an event, to ask yourself reflective questions. What do you want participants to gain, learn or appreciate as a result of having attended your program? How would you program around another cultural group? Rather than try to simulate a complex cultural experience, you may want to focus on one aspect, for example, accessibility, sports, or activism.”

And they offer some programming ideas:

- Attend a wheelchair sports event.
- Study disability art.
- Watch and discuss a movie like Murderball (<http://www.metacritic.com/movie/murderball>) or Lives Worth Living (<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/lives-worth-living>).
- Discuss disability activism and the disability rights movement. Check out these resources:
  - Disability Social History Project:
    - [http://www.disabilityhistory.org/timeline\\_new.html](http://www.disabilityhistory.org/timeline_new.html)
  - Disability Rights Timeline:
    - <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/lives-worth-living/disability-rights-timeline.html>
- Reflect on campus design and consider the impact design has on access and equity.
- Watch Aimee Mullins or Roger Ebert on TED.com
- Start a book club. Consider some memoirs: Emily Rapp’s Poster Child, John Hockenberry’s Moving Violations, Simi Linton’s My Body Politic.

Here is a similar perspective worth considering: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/emily-ladau/i-wont-disability-simulation\\_b\\_4936801.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/emily-ladau/i-wont-disability-simulation_b_4936801.html). In her essay, entitled, "I Won't Pretend That Disability Simulation Works," disability rights activist Emily Landau argues against such simulations:

Activities meant to simulate the experience of disability are so often lauded as moving, powerful, eye-opening experiences. With just a few hours in a wheelchair, wearing earplugs, or wearing a blindfold, people supposedly gain a deeper understanding of what life with a disability truly entails. I, for one, don't buy it.

The goal of increasing sensitivity and awareness is a respectable one, but I've long wondered if simulating disabilities ever truly accomplishes this.

How can what amounts to a game of pretend enlighten a person about something that has shaped my entire life? Of course, I realize there are several people and organizations out there that are trying to do their best to use simulation activities to create positive change. But at the end of the day, the temporary glimpse into disability that such exercises provide are just that – temporary. It is simply impossible to fully immerse yourself in another person's being.

Herein lies the problem with disability simulation. It may make a person more aware of another person's experiences, but it doesn't dig deep to the root of discrimination against people with minority identities. Instead, it's more likely to evoke empathy or pity than true acceptance. I've heard reactions that point to this time and time again. For instance, while chatting with an able-bodied friend of mine who had to wheel around Washington, D.C. for a school project, she told me "I don't know how you do it. When I tried to get on the train, I gave up and got out of the chair to lift it over the gap. It's so hard being in a wheelchair."

Assuming that a majority of people who participate in simulation activities have similar reactions (which most that I've encountered do), why isn't this sparking real noticeable change in ending the stigma and accessibility barriers that I face every day? Twenty-three years after the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed, the disability community still encounters inaccessibility in so many places. Clearly, the takeaway message that is hoped for from disability simulation is not getting through.

Some may argue that this is because too many disability awareness activities just aren't being done the right way, or that enough people aren't involved in them. Well, I'd like to counter that they're just not working. Simulation is not an ideal way to transform society's view of disability.

Consider the fact that for so many, disability is an identity and a culture, as are race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc. Now, imagine if schools and organizations began to hold widespread Black Awareness events, during which white people would put on blackface and go around in public for a few hours to gain an understanding of the experiences of black people. I think it's an understatement to say that would rightfully result in a nationwide angry uproar for several reasons.

First of all, the term "awareness" makes minority groups sound like a problem. Second, a brief activity can never replace a lifetime of experiences. If being black and being disabled are both identities, why are disability awareness events the only one of its kind deemed to be acceptable, while awareness events for other identities would undoubtedly be deemed offensive? To me, it feels like the opposite of acceptance to have my entire identity as a person with a physical disability reduced to an isolated simulation experience.

If this logic hasn't convinced you that disability simulation isn't effective, take a moment to ponder the situation in reverse: My disability severely weakens the joints and muscles in my legs, so the only way I can experience walking is by wearing heavy leg braces made of metal and plastic. The awkward waddling I occasionally do around my kitchen during physical therapy in no way gives me a true understanding of what it feels like for an able-bodied person to walk, go upstairs or climb over obstacles each day.

In much the same way, an able-bodied person using a wheelchair to awkwardly push themselves around in no way gives them a genuine understanding of what it feels like for a disabled person to wheel around and be stopped in his or her tracks by a high curb every day. In each case, the simulation isn't natural or accurate. Both myself and the able-bodied person are using nothing more than external devices made of metal and plastic to do something we don't normally do, and this does not translate to comprehension of deeply internal experiences of someone we're not.

Furthermore, it would be silly if while speaking to someone who walks, I said, "I don't know how you do it. Walking is so hard." Of course it's hard – for me. But for an able-bodied person it's instinctive. And using a wheelchair is hard for an able-bodied person. For me, it's innate. Moreover, being disabled is not so challenging solely because of my physical circumstances, a stereotype that simulation often leads participants to believe; it's hard because of environmental, social and attitudinal barriers.

So, you can be "aware" of me all you want. You can attempt to roll a mile in my wheelchair. You can analyze and discuss and dissect the experience from a million different angles. But we must move away from equating empathy with acceptance. We must embrace differences as a fact of human existence without first needing to imitate them, for these kinds of activities are not effectively contributing to long-term advancements in the disability rights movement.

We offer these two important perspectives as a caveat to the simulation activities below. Some camps and staff trainers have found these activities to be useful. It is unclear whether they truly approximate even certain aspects of having a disability; but they are sure to generate important discussion among staff which will hopefully lead to increased sensitivity as we try to better understand some aspects of the experience of having certain disabilities.

## Role Play Suggestions

### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

**Late Lucy:** Lucy is always just a few steps behind. When all of your campers are ready and waiting outside of the bunk in the morning, Lucy is still getting dressed. When the group is walking between activities, Lucy is always many steps behind the group. At lunch when everyone is cleaning up, she is still eating. She seems overwhelmed by any directions that you give and seems to do everything much slower than everyone else.

Have the group brainstorm ideas of how to deal with the specific issue above. Here are a couple of suggestions that you can offer the group if they do not come up with on their own.

- Create a schedule
- Give a grace period in which to get ready. Count down - you have 10 minutes to get dressed, then 5 minutes, then 1 minute
- Give Lucy a task that motivates her to be first. She can help at the flagpole or deliver something to another counselor at the flagpole.
- Play a game with her and the group such as follow the leader to get to the next activity. Play a racing game between activities.
- Start preparing her to end an activity earlier than others so that she can leave right away.
- Create a chart with most frequently used directions. Use pictures on the chart and review them with her.

**Pacing Paul:** Paul is a young camper. On move in day the counselors noticed that almost everything he owned was green. When asked, Paul says "I love green, it's the best color, what color do you like?" He talks a lot about the Incredible Hulk and asks a particular counselor to act like the Hulk and dress in green. He only talks about Hulk and the color green to counselors, and is not social with his peers. During Color War, Paul (a green team member!) was very excited a pacing back and forth alone in the sports field cheering for the green team.

Ask the group the following questions:

- Do you know a child like this?
- What would you do to help him?
- How can you use his focus on green as a motivation?

Have the group brainstorm ideas of how to deal with the specific issue above. Here are a couple of suggestions that you can offer the group if they do not come up with on their own.

- Model social skills for him, encourage him to say hello to others, pair him up for activities

**Messy Missy:** Missy is an energetic kid! She is extremely excited about each and every activity. She speaks loudly and listens to music loudly. The other kids are constantly asking her to be quiet. Her bed and cubby are



a mess! Her clothes are everywhere and her cubby is overflowing. She is constantly asking her counselor “what’s next?”

Have the group brainstorm ideas of how to deal with the specific issue above. Here are a couple of suggestions that you can offer the group if they do not come up with on their own.

- Help to protect her from ridicule while supporting her social skills
- Use signal interference to minimize the noisy behavior. Set up a plan with Missy beforehand where you give her a subtle signal to indicate to her to lower her voice.
- Put signs on her cubbies to indicate where things belong. Have a counselor work with her during clean up and again at shower time.
- Create a picture schedule that Missy or a counselor travels with. Have one in the bunk.

## Building an Inclusive Community – Activity Plan

### ACTIVITY GOALS

- To provide an overview of the inclusion program – what is the program, why is it a beneficial part of the camp community.
- To reflect on personal experiences about inclusion and build on these connections to increase awareness of the issues involved in creating an inclusive camp community.
- To engage counselors in conversations around diversity, equality and equity
- To provide models of different ways to facilitate a thoughtful discussion – continuum from often to never, think-pair-share, “circles” and “speed/circle” discussions.

### MATERIALS

- Sidewalk chalk
- Equity vs equality graphic

### HOW WILL YOU KNOW THAT YOUR ACTIVITY / PROGRAM HAS BEEN A SUCCESS?

- Staff feedback at the end of staff week
- Observe engaged, on-task behavior
- Observe/notice thoughtful, reflective questions

### OFTEN, SOMETIMES, NEVER

#### New Staff Questions

- Those I work or go to school with represent a diverse community including people with disabilities, people from different cultures, ethnicities, religions, races, or sexual orientations.
- I socialize with friends who are different from me in terms of their culture, ethnicity, religion, race or sexual orientation
- My social group includes friends who have disabilities
- My family would be welcoming if I was seriously dating someone who was different from me in terms of race or religion
- My family would be openly accepting of a family member who is gay, lesbian or transsexual.

- I have had friends, colleague, campers, students come out and tell me that they are gay, lesbian or transsexual.
- Growing up, I felt different from my family or friends in some significant way
- I have been excluded because of my race, religion or sexual orientation
- Most of the food you eat is grown, processed and/or cooked by people of color in this country and abroad.
- I feel the language I use is always respectful of others around me.

#### Returning Staff Question

David's dinner party – defining the terms diversity, equality and equity (share visual): “I am having a dinner party and as you all know I have a group of very diverse friends and inclusion is something very important to me. So, I invite my pregnant neighbor from down the hall with her 3 year old who happens to be allergic to peanuts, I invite the young Orthodox couple from upstairs, I invite my religious Muslim friend from work, and another colleague from the office who will come by late after attending his AA meeting. My next door neighbor is also joining us and she politely reminds me that she has recently been diagnosed with Diabetes and is on Weight Watchers.... I am a great cook and want to make sure to provide a good meal for all. For the first course I will serve chicken skewers with peanut sauce and beer, for dinner we will have a lovely pasta in cream and wine sauce along with small meat and cheese pies and carrots cooked in a thick butter sauce, I will open a nice bottle of red wine. For dessert we will have peanut butter cup milkshakes. Everything is equal – everyone is getting the same meal... what's wrong with this story?”

- This past year, I have been more aware of including others.
- This past year, I have noticed diversity, equality and equity and have spoken out when I felt there was a need.
  - I have been a recipient of street harassment.
  - This past year, I felt I was more aware of those who are the vulnerable.
  - If I were to move somewhere new, I could choose what part of the city I want to live in
  - Others have made me feel uncomfortable about the color of my skin, my race or my sexual orientation
  - I don't need to think about sexism every day. I can decide when and where I deal with it.
  - The language spoken at my school is the primary language my parents speak?
  - People have called me “illegal” or an “alien”
  - I am comfortable welcoming a staff member with disabilities into our camp community.
  - I have been called a wimp, queer or fag.
  - I am comfortable helping campers be more aware of the language they use and their actions so that all feel included in our camp community.
    - I have spoken up to stop others from using the terms wimp, queer, fag, retard, or saying it's so gay.

#### REFLECTION QUESTIONS (THINK/PAIR/SHARE)

- Isn't it amazing that we are all made in G-d's image, and yet there is so much diversity among G-d's people? What makes you unique or diverse?
- It is said that you can judge a community by how the community treats the most vulnerable members of the community – who are “the vulnerable” at camp?
  - In Exodus (4:10-11), Moses, one of our great leaders, reminds G-d, I am slow of speech and slow of tongue. Yet G-d had Moses speak for all of Israel. What lessons about accepting difference or disabilities can we learn from this?
  - In Proverbs (31:8) it says “Speak up for those who cannot speak...speak up, judge righteously, champion the poor and the needy.” In Leviticus it says, “Do not curse a person who is deaf and do not place a stumbling block in front of a person who is blind.” What are our obligations as a community towards those who are “different?”

- There is a midrash that challenges us to give others the benefit of the doubt. What judgments do you make when you first meet someone? Do you consider the clothes someone wears, the way they talk, the color of their skin?

## INTRODUCTION (REVIEW), INCLUSION

- The inclusion program allows campers with disabilities to join their peers in overnight camping.
- The inclusion program clearly benefits the campers with disabilities for many reasons. They have the opportunity to: be with typically developing kids; learn to be more independent; get a chance to be outside, away from home and away from therapies; develop social skills and make new friends.
- The inclusion program benefits the typically developing campers by teaching them to appreciate differences, respect others, and become more mentally and emotionally flexible. The experience reinforces the Jewish value of accepting those who are different from oneself and helps them improve their social skills and make new friends.
- The inclusion program benefits us as staff members. If we can keep in mind these campers, and by extension all our campers who may be vulnerable or have moments of feeling vulnerable (homesick, drama, social interactions/pressure, risk of trying something new), and if we can remember to a positive role model for all, then we will all grow, learn and by example, teach our campers how to be mensches (thoughtful, kind people).
  - This program highlights the values of tolerance, individuality, community and mitzvot. It is our hope that having this program helps us all be more accepting of differences.
  - The inclusion program can teach campers about the concept of equality. Explain the difference between diversity, equality and equity.
  - Why do most kids come to camp? Inclusion campers, all campers – for friends.

## CIRCLE OF FRIENDS ACTIVITY (NEW STAFF)

First – ask the group to make a very tight, close circle – move in as close as possible (it may become more of a blob than a circle, but everyone should move in as close as possible). Ask everyone to think for a moment about those whom they love – those who are in their inner circle. Allow a few minutes for quiet thought.

Second – ask the group to move out and form a circle where they are touching shoulder to shoulder. Ask everyone to think about those whom they consider to be close friends, beyond Facebook friends: those who would be on the A-list if they were having a party, those whom they would call if upset, and those with whom they would celebrate achievements. Allow a few minutes for quiet thought.

Third – ask the group to move out to form a big circle where they are just barely touching fingertips to fingertips if they put their hands out at their sides. Ask everyone to think about those in their life with whom a friendship began with, or somehow involves money and scheduled appointments. Examples may be a favorite professional, a coach, a therapist, a teacher, an accountant, a hairstylist, a personal trainer, etc. Allow a few minutes for quiet thought.

Standing inside the circle so you can move to where the inner group started out, say – everyone, including campers with disabilities, has people in this group. We are all blessed to have people in our lives who truly are in our “inner circle” and love us unconditionally.

Move toward where the middle group was and say, it is my guess that most of you have people you thought about for this circle of friends; for some of us it is a relatively small group, while for others it may be a larger circle. Either way, we have a group of friends to whom we can turn in times of joy and of need.

Move toward the third circle and say:

Often due to the need for speech therapy, physical/occupational therapy, social skills groups, doctors monitoring medication, special education teachers, special sports and activity programs... it is my guess that campers with disabilities have more people in this group than most of us. I am not saying they do not have people in a circle of friends. Thanks to advances in inclusion within our schools, camps, and communities,

more and more kids with disabilities are able to form friendships with each other and neurotypical peers. Yet building that circle of good friends is still often more challenging for them. Time and time again, I hear from parents and campers themselves that they are coming to camp to create friendships. So for whatever reason – too much time with paid therapists and specialist or rejection from peers because negotiating social situations is just too challenging – our campers may have more names in this third circle than in their circle of friends.

At camp you have the unique opportunity to help a child increase his or her circle of friends – by modeling acceptance, by inviting two or more campers to share an experience together... (depending on the group, you may want to open up the discussion for a few other suggestion from the group about how to increase the circle of friends for all your campers).

The leader of this activity needs to proceed with caution for this last part:

What I am going to say is not in any way meant to discredit or devalue what you all do... but if you think about it, your relationship to your campers is really in the third circle – you are all paid to be here (OK, not a lot, but it is a job). When you form friendships with your campers, it starts from this circle (move towards the middle of the circle and say – actually, I think it falls more in the area between these two circles because the counselor camper relationships are unique and special). When you help a camper form a friendship with a peer, you have created something magical – so bring your campers together and then step back: in addition to modeling acceptance, spend the time to explicitly talk about and teach acceptance. I am a resource to all of you to help you learn how to do this. More than anything else, camp is about friendship. Together let's help all our campers create strong circle of friends.

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Who do you invite into your circle of friends? Does it include people with disabilities, people from different cultures, ethnicities, religions, races, and/or sexual orientations?
- What's the difference between your bigger circle of friends (closer to those you “pay”), those you may hang out with as opportunities present themselves, and those who are part of your closest, inner circle?
- Who have you reached out to and included since you've been at camp? Old friends, new friends, those who seem different from you?

#### CIRCLES OF ACCEPTANCE AND NORMALITY (RETURNING STAFF)

First – review the circle of friends activity from last summer: Remember how I asked you all to form a circle really close (have them do so) and I asked you to think about those in your inner circle? Now move back to stand shoulder to shoulder. Remember how I asked you to think about your own circle of friends and challenged you to create circle of friends for your campers? Now step back and stand fingertip to fingertip. Remember how we talked about friendships that begin with a monetary relationship and how some campers with disabilities have a lot of folks from this circle? I even had the nerve to put you, in your role as a counselor, in this circle for them.

Next - standing in the outside circle, I want you to think about the environments you live in: your communities at home, the universities you attend. How inclusive are these environments? Are there accessible doors and ramps? Can someone who uses a wheelchair get around? Use the school busses? Are there hearing loops or other aids? Is there a learning center? Now move in a bit to our circle of friends. I want to challenge you all to think about your circle of friends: How diverse is your circle? Does it include individuals with disabilities? Why or why not? (Invite anyone who wants to do so to share)

Just as I did last summer, I challenge you all to help your campers increase their circle of friends. But as returning staff, I offer you a second challenge: to invite our interns and staff member(s) with disabilities into your own circle of friends. I also challenge you to spend time this summer reflecting about how to include such people in your circle of friends outside of camp.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964) specifically prohibits discrimination based on race, color, sex, national origin and religion. In 1990 the American with Disabilities act included provisions for individuals with disabilities.

In the next section, we offer ‘questions to consider.’ We always try to be sensitive to person first language. We prefer to say “camper supported by our inclusion specialist’ or ‘campers supported through our inclusion program.” We feel this is cumbersome and instead use the term ‘inclusion camper.’ We recognize that these campers are first and foremost “campers.” They secondarily receive support from our specialists.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Sometimes those that are “close but not quite” are hardest to include. Notice that our campers are often kind to some inclusion campers but overlook the introvert or those who seem different is some unidentifiable way
- How do we create a bunk community that provides equity? What in our language and behavior needs to change for this to happen?
- How do we move campers from a definition of fairness meaning equal to fairness meaning equity, that everyone should get what he or she needs?

## CIRCLE OF THOUGHTS AND IDEAS – CREATING AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY IN YOUR BUNK

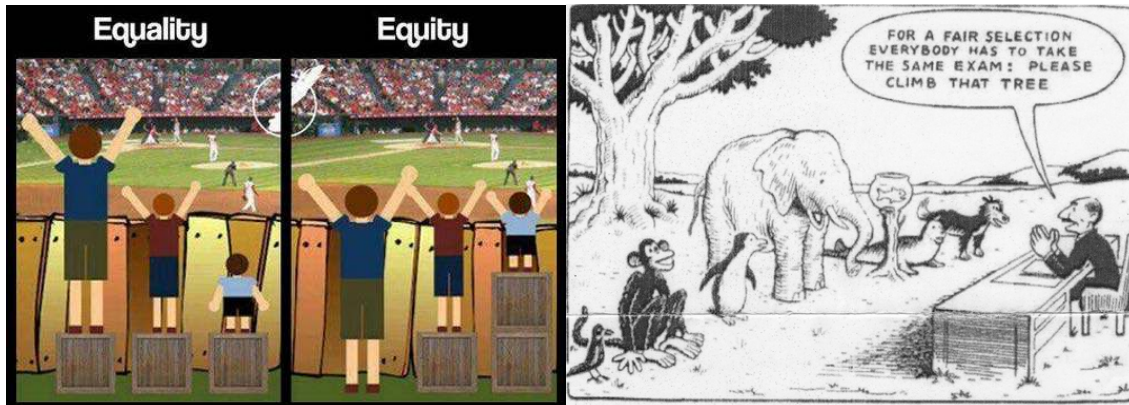
### New Staff

- When your campers say “It’s not fair” they often mean it’s not equal. Are there times when you should treat your campers equally? When and how? When should you treat them for equity – to level the playing field among them?
- Fairness—equity—means everyone gets what he or she needs to succeed. How can you create equity in your bunk community? How can you teach campers the difference between equality and equity?
- Word and phrases like “retard,” “It’s so gay,” and other things we sometimes say without thinking can be hurtful to members of our community. What are these words, and how can you eliminate them from the language you and your campers use?
- How can you celebrate diversity in your bunk?
- How can you teach your campers the difference between laughing *with* rather than laughing *at* a camper? When is something we say in a joking manner not really a joke?
- How do you create programs that are fully inclusive, meaning they are accessible to typically abled and disabled campers, competitive athletes and non-competitive athletes, outgoing and shy campers, and campers who feel in any way different from their peers?
- We all have different roles at camp – how do you support each other? Inclusion counselors who are “on duty” during “off duty” times, specialists vs. cabin counselors, kitchen staff, maintenance staff, friends who are now on leadership
- “*Hinei ma tov u’ma na’im shevet achim gam yachad.*” “Behold how good and pleasant it is when all people live together as one” (Psalm 133:1). We are stronger and more joyful as a community when we invite all types of campers and colleagues into our “circle of friends.”
- Yet few of us will leave camp with everyone here in our close circle of friends. How can you be open to including as many others as possible to your circle of staff friends?
- Not all of your campers will leave camp with everyone included in their inner circle of friends. How can you encourage your campers to be open to inviting others in, or closer in, to their circle of friends?

### Returning Staff

- What’s your story? Have you experienced harassment due to your sexual orientation, your religion, your gender, your race?
- What’s your story? Could your actions or words (your “just jokes”) cause others to feel excluded? Have you spoken out or been silent when you have witnessed others using words such as retard, fag, or “it’s so gay.”
- In your mind, how do you define the typical or “normal” camper in your bunk?
- What type of campers do you see other kids making fun of? What makes those campers different?

- What can you do to model acceptance and equity?
- *“Hinei ma tov u’ma na’im shevet achim gam yachad.”* “Behold how good and pleasant it is when all people live together as one”(Psalm 133:1). We are stronger and more joyful as a community when we invite others into our “circle of friends.”
  - Not all of us will leave camp as part of each other’s close circle of friends. How can you be open to including as many as possible – one step closer – to your inner circle of staff friends?
  - Not all of your campers will leave camp with everyone included in their inner circle of friends, how can you encourage your campers to be open to inviting others in – or closer in- to the circle of friends?



## Sensitivity Activity

**Duration:** 45 minutes

**Goal:** Work on sensitivity for those in our community with differences. To understand what it may feel like to have a disability and that the way people treat us may have nothing to do with what we can and can’t do. Learn to work together as a group and lean on each other. Think about ways to appreciate strengths rather than weaknesses. Apply this to camp. Have fun!

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- blank index cards and index cards with pre-written special instructions, enough for each staff member to get one card (either blank or with instructions)
- Supplies for obstacles (per team): 1 hula-hoop, 1 bat, 4 benches
- Copies of discussion questions for discussion leaders
- Copy of “Welcome to Holland”

### RELAY RACE

**Duration:** 20 min

**Description:** Staff will be split into 8 groups of 15. Each group will have to run through the relay race one by one. The goal is to get all team members to complete the obstacle course in the shortest amount of time. Explain the relay race step by step, emphasizing that the entire team must complete the race in order to win, and to do so they must work together and help each other. Have them stand in single file lines facing the obstacle course. Before they begin, each team member will be given an index card. They may not show or tell anyone what is written on their index cards. Most cards will be blank, but each team will have five cards with special instructions. They must follow the instructions written on the card. The entire team must complete the obstacle course. Emphasize that the team must work together and some team members might need more help than others. Make sure that the first 4 or 5 people get blank cards so the team gets the hang of the obstacle course. Explain that it is a race for glory and honor, and that the team that gets all its members across the finish line first wins! Most members of the team will rush through the obstacles, but when a team gets a member with special instructions they will theoretically all yell at the person to go and then try to figure out

what is going on and hopefully help. Encourage them to pay attention when you see someone who is stuck. Offer them suggestions like, "Ask your team-mate why s/he isn't moving," or "Ask if there is something s/he would like your help with." End the race either when one team wins or when you feel they've had enough.

Special Instructions (one per card of five cards handed out to each team):

- Don't do anything unless you are told to do so by a teammate three times
- Only move when someone is cheering your name
- Only move when a teammate is holding your hand
- Say no unless someone gives you a hug first
- You must do each obstacle twice

Obstacle:

- Hoola-hoop 3 times
- Spin with your head on a bat 4 times
- Weave through cones
- Do ten jumping jacks

## DISCUSSION

**Duration:** 20 min

**Description:** After the relay race have the groups sit down as one group to collectively reflect on the process.

Discussion Questions

- Raise your hand if your card had special instructions (Ask that person to address the experience.)
- They can read their card aloud if that would like, but the important part is to talk about what it felt like to want to rush through the race but not be able to. Hopefully, they will talk about how it was overwhelming to have everyone expect them to do something they couldn't, or embarrassing that they were not able to do what they wanted, or upsetting that they couldn't gain the group's approval.
- Ask the team members with blank cards what it was like to have a teammate who performed differently and how frustrating it was to be in line behind them.
- Talk about how there are many people who are restricted by things that we are unable to see or understand. Although we see them standing still, apparently unaware of what to do or how to do it, the truth is they might be restricted by something else.
- How can we help our campers be more sensitive to differences within the bunk and in the general camp community?
- How can we, as staff members, help inclusion campers feel more integrated into our community?
- How can we help typical campers feel connected to inclusion campers?
- Talk about how inclusion programs are awesome because they are teams that work together to get everyone across the finish line. By working together we can lean on each other's strengths and compensate for each other's weaknesses (and we all have weaknesses). Together we can create strong, reliable, and supportive groups that will comprise an amazing community.

## CLOSING

Read "Welcome to Holland"

Welcome To Holland by Emily Perl Kingsley

I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability - to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It's like this.....

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip - to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum. The Michelangelo David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland."

"Holland?!?" you say. "What do you mean Holland?? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy."

But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.

It's just a different place. It's slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around.... and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills....and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy... and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say "Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned."

And the pain of that will never, ever, ever, ever go away... because the loss of that dream is a very, very significant loss.

But... if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things ... about Holland.

c1987 by Emily Perl Kingsley. All rights reserved

## Inclusion Counselor Training

### WHAT IS A LABEL?

Label game: each person has a ridiculous label on the back of their shirt, but they don't know what the label says. Everyone has to treat everyone exactly as their label says.

- Shout everything at me
- Ask me if I need to go to the bathroom
- Stand within 2 inches of my face
- Start conversation: Do you like horses?
- Only talk to me about sports
- Ask me why I'm sitting by myself
- Ask me a question, but don't listen to the answer.
- Ask me how I'm feeling
- When talking to me, always touch my shoulder
- Speak to me in a high pitched voice (fake sing-song)
- Whisper everything to me
- If I try to talk to you, say "I'm too busy right now"
- Grab my chin and say "don't get distracted"
- Ask me if I'm having fun
- Grab my hands and say "careful, don't fall"



- Ask me if I need help in the bathroom.
- Talk to me really slowly

Why did you treat the person like their label said?

What do labels do to campers/children? You didn't know what your label was – how can we generalize that to our campers?

How can we change the way labels are used at camp?

### ICE BREAKER

- Name
- 1 strength
- 1 weakness
- 1 need for assistance in turning that weakness around
- Favorite thing from Dunkin Donuts

Why do you think we asked for your strengths and your needs? We need to focus on what are our camper's STRENGTHS (everyone has strengths!!!) We need to focus on what are our camper's needs will be from us as their staff contacts. We must always be asking, what do our campers need from us? Our job as inclusion counselors is to support our campers in ways that are useful for them, in ways that help them succeed in the camp environment.

What is success?

- Think about a time when someone praised you for doing something that you didn't necessarily realize was that big a deal. How did those person's words change your perception of your actions? Did it make you feel successful?
- We need to recognize the small and large successes of our campers, and make them aware of even the smallest achievements.
- When a camper performs an action there are three responses you may give: positive praise, negative words, and no praise or exhortation.
- Now, I want you to think of a time when you did something to get someone else's attention. Why did you perform *that* action? Was the person's response what you wanted?
- Children in general, but especially those with disabilities, crave adult attention. We need to lavish them with positive attention, as much and as often as possible. When they perform an action we do not approve of, we seem to pay NO attention. This balance toward the positive should (hopefully) get them in the habit of doing "good" things to elicit your attention.

What does it mean to be part of an inclusion community?

- Think of a story that is often told in your family, that, should it be shared with outside people, would become embarrassing. The typical example is naked baby pictures, cute and funny when family is looking at them, but when it's shown to someone outside the family, you may feel uncomfortable, hurt and belittled.
- Imagine that the Inclusion program is a family. Who is in our inclusion family? People who work directly and intimately with the camper. Other people don't necessarily need to know or hear about the camper's stories of challenge, successes or failures.
- Confidentiality: It is important that only people intimately involved with the camper, who *need* to know about the camper, hear stories about them. While the stories may seem funny or "just cute," for someone who doesn't know the camper well, your story becomes the main perspective from which they see the camper. Whenever you interact with the camper, they will be thinking about your story.
- When and to whom is it appropriate for to turn when you need to vent frustrations?
- When and with whom is it okay for you to laugh about situations regarding your campers?

What are some challenges that we counselors might experience?

- Veterans – share some challenges from last summer!
- Newbies – do you have anything to add? Any apprehensions?
- Possible products of brainstorming:
  - Temper tantrums
  - Refusal to go to activities
  - Homesickness
  - Masturbation/sexual urges/interest in opposite sex
  - Physical violence
  - Attention-seeking behaviors
  - Exhaustion
  - Obsessions (with seemingly insignificant items)
  - Becoming very quiet/shying away from attention
  - Peer frustration

How can we use rewards?

- Don't make rewards the focus of the day. Don't over-do them; pick your "battles."
- Be sure always to follow through when you offer a reward
- Once you have offered a reward, given certain stipulations, you CANNOT change the stipulations; your campers will no longer trust what you say or respect your stated parameters
  - You can establish "roadblocks" to achieving the reward; success doesn't have to be easy! BUT when a camper needs to achieve a reward fairly easily in order to feel successful and to jumpstart good behavior, that is also fine.
  - Discuss long-term versus short-term rewards.
  - Make sure that the entire day is not set up around "extrinsic" rewards as motivation (treats, extra hours awake, etc.). Make sure to encourage "intrinsic" rewards for motivation (An extra turn at bat, more social time, etc. – those rewards that relate directly to what the camper is beginning to succeed at). You can talk this through.
  - The best reward, with no limits, is positive praise. Make sure the camper knows they did something well. Be as specific as possible (i.e. not "good job" but "good job getting dressed fast," or "Wow, you just got dressed in seven minutes! That beats your record so far this summer!")

When you've reached your limit, what to do? How do you know you've reached your limit?

- Veterans – share with us some ways in which you take a break
- Newbies – anything to add?
- Not overreacting
- Being sarcastic
- Laughing – when and with whom?
- Take a break. Ask your co counselors, live ins, or us
- Please don't let a problem fester for days; talk with someone in an appropriate and timely manner
- How to contact your support network at camp when you need help or a quick break.

What should our expectations for the summer be?

- Brainstorming 60 seconds – one word to describe camp GO!
- All campers are only sent home for a certain number of things: stealing, in appropriate sexual behaviors, drinking, drugs. Behavior problems are *not* on this list; your camper will not be sent home for being who they are
  - Amazingness of the inclusion program: having a full and rich camp experience (all campers, inclusion camper, counselors)
  - If you see anyone's full and rich camp experience being jeopardized, talk to us so we can problem solve together.



## Experiential Activities

### SENSORY ISSUES – GUESS THAT!

Leader puts blindfold on participants and asks them to guess the following. Whoever guesses first wins that round. Leader explains that people with ASD sometimes are either very sensitive to smell, taste, touch, sound, or lights...or their senses are blunted and they need more intense sensory experiences. This is part of the neurological component of ASDs.

- Smell – Bandana and Something Scented
- Taste – Bandana and Food
- Touch – Something Squishy in a Bag
- Sound – Name that song

### STRATEGIES WE USE – MATCHING!

Leader gives each participant turns turning over squares and trying to match the strategies. When participant gets a match, they get a piece of candy. Leader briefly describes each strategy.

- Schedule
- Time Prompts
- Breaks
- Social Coaching
- Modeling
- Visuals
- Aide and Fade

### INCLUSION – IMPROV! (GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT SCENE THEY CAN ACT OUT)

Leader asks participants to start acting out a scene and then adds in new instructions to improve the following inclusion techniques. After the improv, the leader briefly reminds the group of the inclusion strategies and gives out candy to everyone at the end. This station will have a take-away tag with the bullet points on it along with the candy to give out.

- Be Welcoming, Say Hello
- Person-First Language
- Inclusion campers connected with cabins
- Don't treat someone with disabilities differently
- Be REAL

### WHAT CAN WE DO IN OUR COMMUNITY? COMPETITIVE LIST MAKING!

Leader gives participants each a piece of paper and 2 minutes to brainstorm as many ways as possible that camp supports and includes the inclusion program. They can each share some of their list, and the leader should wrap up by briefly giving them our list. This station will have a take-away tag with the bullet points on it along with the candy to give out.

- We model inclusion, compassion, and treating others with kindness and respect. Not just for the inclusion campers, but for everyone. We all have our unique strengths and challenges, and we celebrate that here at camp.
- Each camper has unique needs; we try to be accommodating and supportive of them. Sometimes we need to make accommodations, like cutting in line for food, having a camper sit in a particular spot, leaving program spaces at different times, or allowing someone to pace, stand or move around during an activity.

## AUTISM MYTHS – MYTHBUSTER: TRUE OR FALSE

Leader reads ASD myths and asks participants to answer true or false questions. Each participant can answer a question for a piece of candy.

- Autism is related to intelligence high or low - False
- Autism means you can't talk or you talk too much - False
- People with Autism can have relationships, interests, and careers – True
- Autism means you make weird movements or noises - False
- Autism means a person doesn't like or want to be around people - False
- People with Autism may need different levels of support. Some need a lot of help, and some can be completely independent in their lives and daily schedule. - True
- Every person with Autism is like the movie Rainman - False

## GETTING INVOLVED: SPIN THE WHEEL!

Leader has participants spin the wheel and they get candy for whichever option they land on. Leader should invite participants to join us throughout the summer and encourage the participants to get involved and come ask questions if they have them. This station will have a take-away tag with the bullet points on it along with the candy to give out.

- Come say hello
- Help with or run an activity
- 2nd session, come be a counselor for a couple hours
- Hang out with us at the pool
- Let us know about free time activities you're running

## Games and Activities to Introduce the Themes of Inclusion and Supporting Diverse Needs

The games and activities included in this packet can easily be included in any staff meeting to address a variety of topics related to the themes of inclusion and supporting diverse needs. Topics include communication, behavior, the significance of language, giving directions, perception, sensory overload, differentiation, and more. These topics are useful and important for counselors working with all campers, not just campers with disabilities. We are all different. We all have strengths and weaknesses. This packet is intended to support staff while they work to create a strong community where everyone is valued, supported, and celebrated.

## HELPFUL INCLUSION TIPS

- Words Matter – both yours and your campers'.
- When planning programs, create programs so that everyone can participate fully and with equity.
- Remember! Behavior = Communication. Be a detective and address the cause of the camper's behavior, not the behavior itself.
  - Encourage questions and conversations; if you aren't sure of how to manage them, find someone who can help (yoetzet, Tikvah staff, etc.)
  - Get to know your campers as the unique people they are; focus on strengths and interests rather than on weaknesses and diagnoses.
  - When planning programs, incorporate each campers' interests so that every camper is able to shine and succeed.

## ABSTRACT SHAPE: COMMUNICATION

**You will need:** Copies of the Abstract Shape (Appendix A), blank paper, pens

**Instructions:** Counselors pair up and sit back to back. Counselor #1 gets the picture of the abstract shape and counselor #2 gets a blank piece of paper and pen. Counselor #1 needs to describe the shape using only their

words, while counselor #2 does the best they can to draw the shape by following counselor #1's directions. The abstract shape can be found at the end of this document, in Appendix A.

**Takeaway:** What is clear to one person may be very unclear to another. We all have unique perspectives and ways of seeing the world. As counselors, it is our responsibility to meet our campers where there are, and take the time to get to know that so that we can understand their points of view. When giving directions counselors must be clear and explicit. For example, "Clean your area" is not a clear instruction. A clean area might mean one thing to one person and something else to another person. Rather, you should say, "Fold all your clothes and put them on your shelf, make your bed, and sweep the area by your bed." Miscommunication will lead to frustration for both the counselor and the camper!

#### **CHARADES: COMMUNICATION/BEHAVIOR**

**You will need:** Sentences printed on strips of paper

**Instructions:** Instruct your staff that you are going to be playing charades, but rather than acting out a word or a thing, they will be acting out a complete sentence. Have your staff take turns acting out the following sentences without speaking or using sign language.

- I feel funny
- I need to go to the bathroom
- I want a coke
- I lost my homework
- My parents are getting a divorce
- My foot hurts
- I want a hamburger for lunch
- I am allergic to strawberries
- I hate ketchup

**Takeaway:** There will be times when our campers are unable to articulate their wants and needs. As counselors, it is your responsibility to read their nonverbal cues to understand them. You might have a camper whose parents are getting divorced, and the camper may not yet be comfortable telling you about this. Rather, the camper's feelings about the divorce may manifest in other ways. For example, perhaps he/she is having trouble forming connections to other campers. By building relationships with your campers you will be able to notice when something is going on with them that they may not be comfortable talking about, and overtime perhaps they will feel that they can trust you.

#### **WRIGHT FAMILY STORY: ATTENTION/COMMUNICATION**

**You will need:** One copy of Wright Family Story (Appendix B), enough small objects, like Hershey kisses, so that each group member gets one.

**Instructions:** Have the group stand or sit in a circle. Give each person in the circle a small item (you can use candy, but make sure it is individually wrapped). Tell the group that you are going to read a story and that every time they hear a word that sounds like "right" or "left" they pass the item in their hand to the person directly to their right or left, depending on what they heard. Start reading the story slowly, to give them a chance to catch on to what you want them to do. After a few passes, stop the story and ask how they are doing. Check to see that everyone has one item in their hands. If your group is typical, some will have 2-3 items, and other will not have any. Have them redistribute the items again so that each participant again has just one. Continue to read the story through to the end, getting faster as you go.

**Takeaway:** After finishing the story, check in with the group. How did they do? Were they able to keep up with passing the items? Ask someone to retell the story in their own words. Were they able to focus on the content of the story while also concentrating on passing the items? Think about a time that you were talking to your campers and they were not really listening to you. Note that it is important to be aware of what is going on around our campers when we are trying to impart information to them. It is not fair to expect them to listen

when there are too many distractions. Remember! When campers are not giving you their attention, chances are they are not trying to be disrespectful intentionally. Do your best not to take distraction personally, and work with your campers to limit distractions to ensure that messages are received. You may also want to check for understanding by asking campers to repeat important instructions back to you so that you can be sure they understood what you were saying.

## WOULD YOU RATHER: POWER OF LANGUAGE

**You will need:** List of Would You Rather questions

**Instructions:** These questions are designed to start off innocuously to get staff engaged in the activity and become comfortable making quick decisions. Each question is intended to demonstrate the impact of having forced choices and have staff think about how words can bring up different images, both positive and negative. Read the following list, and have staff respond quickly. Make sure everyone is participating. Allow for discussion after each one.

Would you rather...:

- Have bad breath or stinky feet?
- Have a huge booger hanging from your nose that you can't get rid of or have a medical condition that makes you fart every five minutes?
- Have a tiny butt on your forehead or little feet that dangle from your chin?
- Be smart or strong?
- Be called unique or determined?
- Be good looking with no friends or unattractive with many friends?
- Be called geek or dork?
- Never be able to get your driver's license or never go out without a chaperone?
- Believe in yourself or have someone believe in you?
- Make your own decisions or have your parents choose everything for you?
- Win no medals in the Olympics or win 5 gold medals in the Special Olympics?
- Be called stupid for the rest of your life or use a wheelchair?
- Be blind or deaf?
- Cut off both your legs or not be able to read and write?
- Be called lazy or weak?
- Be called crippled or disabled?
- Be called retard or mental?

**Takeaway:** Words matter! Both the words you use, and the words your campers use. You are a role model, and your campers are always listening to you. We also each have our own associations with words, so it is important to be sensitive to how our words might make others feel, even if we don't realize it. Obviously, words such as "gay" (used as an accusation or insult) or "retarded" have no place in camp, but we should take sensitivity to language one step further and always be conscious of our choices of words. You may also show the following YouTube clip, from the Spread the Word to End the Word Campaign, which does a great job of illustrating this message: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T549VoLca\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T549VoLca_Q)

## SOY NUT BUTTER AND JELLY: GIVING DIRECTIONS

**You will need:** Soy nut butter, or other peanut butter alternative, jelly, bread, knife, plate, napkins.

**Instructions:** Begin by instructing everyone to write out directions for how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Briefly look through everyone's instructions and pick one to act out. You should pick the set of instructions with the least clear commands. Have one person act as the sandwich maker, and one person act as the sandwich instructor. The maker must follow the instructor's instructions exactly and literally, without making any interpretations. For example, if the instructor says "put the peanut butter on the bread," the maker should pick up the jar of peanut butter and put it on top of the loaf of bread. Continue until the sandwich resembles a soy nut butter and jelly sandwich.

**Takeaway:** Discuss. What went wrong? What would have helped? Giving clear, concise instructions to campers is an important skill and tool, yet we often assume that our campers understand us, when really they are lost. This activity demonstrates how important it can be to break down instructions so that our campers understand. For example, rather than telling our campers to clean up their areas, we should break down the exact expectations. Cleaning your areas means 1. Making the bed, 2. Folding clothes, 3. Putting clothes on shelf. Etc.

## LABELING

**You will need:** One label for each group member printed with the following sentences:

- Talk to me like I can't hear well
- Don't look at me while you talk to me
- Treat me like you are afraid of me
- Talk to me REALLY slowly
- Talk to me like I am a 2 year old
- Repeat everything 2 times to me
- Talk to me like you can't understand a word I am saying
- Constantly reassure me that everything I am saying and doing is great
- Every time I say something change the topic and talk about something else
- Always touch my shoulder when you are talking to me
- Every time you talk to me come very close to my face
- "Talk" to me with hand motions only

**Instructions:** Everyone is given a label to put on their forehead. Instruct everyone that they should not read their own label. Tell the group to mingle and either get to know each other, if it is a new group, or discuss a recent program, if it is a group that already knows each other well. Allow the group to mingle for 5 minutes or so.

**Takeaway:** Begin by asking staff members to share what it felt like to be labeled. Were they frustrated when they didn't understand why people were treating them in a certain way? Ask staff if they have ever felt limited or labeled or seen others (friends, staff, campers) treated differently? Describe the experience. The message everyone should walk away with is that we must be careful not to treat anyone in certain ways based on outside perceptions of ability or disability. If you are unsure of how to act, ASK! How can we help our campers be more sensitive to differences within the bunk and in the general camp community?

## LEARNING STYLES

**You will need:** Copies of Colors (Appendix C), several sentences written backwards on a piece of paper, for example: "ehT kcalb tac tas no eht toh nit foor" ("The black cat sat on the hot tin roof.")

**Instructions:** Instruct the staff that you are going to do two activities to simulate what it might feel like to have a learning difference. First, pass out the sheet of colors. Have the staff take turns reading it out loud, as fast as they can, being sure to read the words rather than name the color of the print. Next, pass out one sentence at a time. Have staff members each read a sentence correctly, though it is written backwards. Keep interrupting while they read by urging them to hurry or by telling them "This should be easy for you."

**Takeaway:** After completing each activity, discuss. Was it difficult? What would have helped? How can we transfer what we learn from these activities to the ways in which we support our campers? Many of our campers understand what needs to be done, yet, for a variety of reasons, have trouble successfully getting from point A to point B. Rather than rushing campers and getting frustrated, we must learn to calm our own impatience and communicate in ways that will help them accomplish the tasks that add up to a successful day at camp.



## SENSORY OVERLOAD SIMULATION

Divide the staff into groups of 5. Explain that they will each have a job to do. Go over their jobs and tell them they will start when you give the signal. One person in each group will play the part of someone with autism. The other 4 people each have different jobs:

- Person #1 - You will play the part of a person with autism. Your job is to listen to what Person #5 is reading to you so you can take a test on the material. Try to ignore everyone else.
- Person #2 - Stand behind the student playing the part of someone with autism. Rub the edge of an index card (or piece of cardboard) against the back of their neck. You do not need to rub hard, but keep doing it over and over.
- Person #3 - Grab a book (any book will do), lean close to Person #1 and read in a loud voice the entire time.
- Person #4 - Pat Person #1 on the head and shoulder the entire time.
- Person #5 - Using a normal voice, read a paragraph to Person #1 then ask them questions about what you read. Do NOT try to drown out the other noises.

Have each group member take a turn being Person #1 before you discuss it. How did it feel to be have so much commotion going on? Did it make them want to scream or get away? Were they able to concentrate on the paragraph being read? What might have helped?

## TEXT STUDY

**You will need:** Copies of text study (Appendix D)

**Instructions:** Read through texts, discussing each text as you go through. Validate everyone's thoughts and ideas. Remember, texts are always open to individual interpretation.

**Takeaway:** People with disabilities have been part of the Jewish community since the very beginning. Many Jewish texts, such as those included in this set, offer very beautiful values and insights, instructing us that every individual is valuable. The value of inclusion is certainly a Jewish value, and therefore, it is our responsibility to strive to uphold the values we learn from these texts.

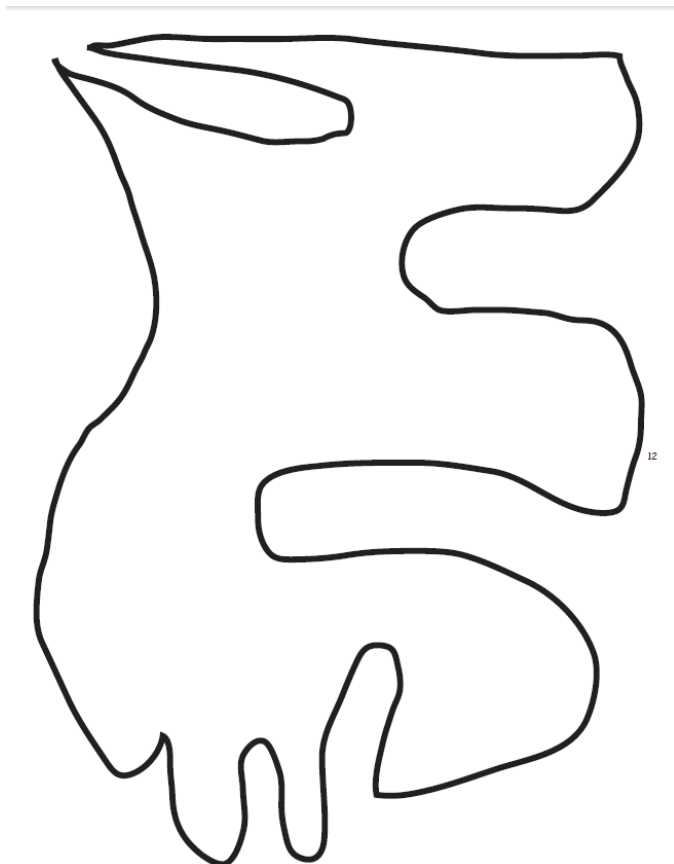
## A MAN WITH A TASK: PERCEPTION

**You will need:** Copy of A Man with a Task (Appendix E)

**Instructions:** Read the attached story, entitled "A Man with a Task," without giving any background information. Participants should not know that the story is about Moses until the very end. After reading the story, discuss.

**Takeaway:** Were you surprised to find out that the story was about Moses? Have you ever considered that the leader of the Jewish people had a disability? What are the implications? What important values can we take away from this? The key is that every person can be a leader with the right accommodations. We need to consider the impact of perception. Moses is not traditionally perceived as a person with a disability. His disability is just one small part of who he is as a leader, and he receives accommodations—Aaron as a speaking aide—in order to support his disability. So, too, should we perceive all of our campers as people with many strengths and talents. In other words, we should see them as potential leaders. Their weaknesses and disabilities are merely parts of who they are: the parts that we are here to support, so that can shine as the divinely crafted humans they are.

Appendix A – Abstract Shape



#### Appendix B - Wright Family Story

One day the Wright family decided to take a vacation. The first thing they had to decide was who would be left at home, since there was not enough room in the Wright family car for all of them. Mr. Wright decided that Aunt Linda Wright would be the one left at home. Of course this made Aunt Linda Wright so mad that she left the Wright house immediately, yelling, "It will be a right cold day before I return!"

The Wright family now bundled up the children, Tommy Wright, Susan Wright, Timmy Wright and Shelly Wright, and got in the Wright family car and left. Unfortunately, as they turned left out of the driveway, someone had left a trash bin in the street so they had to turn right around and stop the car. They told Tommy Wright to get out of the car and move the trash can so they could get going. Tommy Wright took so long that they almost left him in the street. Once the Wright family got on the road, Mother Wright wondered if she had left the stove on. Father Wright told her not to worry. He had checked the stove and she had not left it on. As they turned right at the corner, everyone started to think about other things that they might have left undone.

No need to worry now, they were off on a right fine vacation. When they arrived at the gas station, Father Wright put gas in the car and then discovered that he had left his wallet at home. So Timmy Wright ran home to get the money that was left behind. After Timmy Wright left, Susan Wright started to feel sick. She left the car, saying that she had to throw up. This of course got Mother Wright's attention and she left the car in a hurry. Shelly Wright wanted to watch Susan Wright get sick so she left the car too. Father Wright was left with Tommy Wright who was playing a game in the back seat.

With all of this going on Father Wright decided that this was not the right time to take a vacation so he gathered up all of the Wright family and left the gas station as quickly as he could. When he arrived home, he turned left into the driveway and said, "I wish the Wright family had never left the house today!"

#### Appendix C

**BLUE**

**GREEN**

**YELLOW**

**PINK**

**RED**

**ORANGE**

**GREY**

**BLACK**

**PURPLE**

**TAN**

**WHITE**

**BROWN**

#### Appendix D - Difference in Jewish Texts

And God created man in His image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (Genesis 1:26-27)

Every Jew is obligated in the study of Torah, whether rich or poor whether healthy or suffering with ailments, young or very old.

Blessing upon seeing someone who looks different

“You shall not insult the deaf, or place a stumbling block before the blind.” Leviticus: 19:14

And Moses said to the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither yesterday nor the day before, nor since you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said to him, Who has made man’s mouth? Who makes the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Is it not I the Lord?

Teach the youth according to his way; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

-Proverbs 22:6

#### Appendix E: A Man with a Task

There was a young man who lived a long time ago. He grew up with a disability. Mostly he kept quiet, because his disability was that he had a speech impairment. If he didn’t talk much, then people wouldn’t make fun of him, so he mostly kept to himself. That is, until one day, he saw someone in a powerful position hurt another person. This young man couldn’t stand by while someone else was being hurt, so he stopped the attack. The young man, afraid of the consequences, fled to a place where he would not be noticed.

One day he was working at his job when he heard a voice from afar calling his name. The young man did not fear the voice for he knew it belonged to someone important. The young man was not embarrassed to speak to him for he knew that this person would not laugh at him. In fact, the famous person asked him to do something very special, something that only the young man could do. But, the young man, realizing that he would have to speak as part of this arrangement, said no.

The young man argued that he could not do what was asked of him because he had a disability, a speech impairment. The young man did not have the confidence and faith in himself to do what it, but the person asking knew differently.

God said to the young man, "Who do you supposed made you this way? It is I, God."

It was then that the young man realized that having a disability should not stand in the way of doing what God asked of him, to lead God's people out of Egypt.

God did not see Moses as a person with a disability. God knew that Moses possessed the gifts and the heart that was needed to become a great leader of the Jewish people.

God provided an accommodation for Moses. Moses' brother Aaron became that accommodation, and Aaron spoke for Moses.

We have a heritage and a history of including people with disabilities. Let us ensure that we continue that heritage in our own lives through understanding, awareness and respect.

Adapted from the Disability Awareness Training Workshop compiled by the Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis.

### Positive Exposure: The Spirit of Difference

"It's about reinterpreting beauty. It's about having an opportunity to see beyond what you're told and what we're forced to believe that that's beauty."

Positive Exposure was founded in 1998 by award winning fashion photographer, Rick Guidotti. Rick worked in NYC, Milan and Paris for a variety of high profile clients including Yves St Laurent, Revlon, L'Oreal, Elle, Harpers Bazaar, and GQ. He took photographs of what were considered the world's most beautiful people. But one day, on a break from a photo shoot, a chance encounter on a Manhattan street changed everything. Rick saw a stunning girl at the bus stop – a girl with pale skin and white hair, a girl with albinism. Upon returning home Rick began a process of discovery – about albinism, about people with genetic differences and about himself. What he found was startling and upsetting. The images that he saw were sad and dehumanizing. In medical textbooks children with a difference were seen as a disease, a diagnosis first, not as people.

So Rick turned his world upside down – he stopped working in the fashion industry and created a not-for-profit organization that he named Positive Exposure.

It has always been about beauty for Rick. "In fashion I was always frustrated because I was told who I had to photograph. I was always told who was beautiful." It became clear to him that it was essential for people to understand and see the beauty in our shared humanity. But how? How do you lead people down a different path? How do you get people to see those with differences not as victims, but kids and people first and foremost? The pity has to disappear. The fear has to disappear. Behavior has to change. These kids need to be seen as their parents see them, as their friends see them, as valuable and positive parts of society, as beautiful.

The photos give people the permission to see beauty and interpret beauty in their own right. Not to see beauty that is dictated by industry's ideas of what is acceptable. What started with photographs, has grown into a wide variety of programs created to empower people living with difference – and to educate the world around them.

### Understanding The Role of Behavior in Communicating (Behavior Management Session for Staff)

**Goal:** Counselors should leave this session knowing that behavior is a form of communication. They should learn to be behavior detectives, working to uncover and address the root causes of their campers' behaviors, rather than reacting to the behaviors. Counselors will receive tips to help them preempt negative behaviors and become proactive in encouraging positive ones. Counselors should also walk away knowing that they are not alone, and that there are many people in camp available to support them as they develop these skills.

**Duration:** 45 minutes

## Materials

- Flip Chart
- Marker
- Emotion Cards (including a few blank cards)
  - Singled Out
  - Overwhelmed
  - Hungry
  - Tired
  - Angry
  - Sad
  - Happy
  - Excited
  - Scared
  - Anxious
  - Bored
  - Stressed
  - Embarrassed
  - Hurt
  - Lonely
  - Upset
  - Uncomfortable
  - Mad
  - Worried
  - Awkward
  - Nervous
  - Flustered
  - Misunderstood
  - Let Down
  - Annoyed
  - Cranky
  - Excluded
  - Judged
- Copies of Scenarios, including descriptions of camper perspective and counselor perspective
- Copies of Behavior Tip Sheet for each counselor

## OPENING (10 MINUTES)

Welcome counselors and introduce myself and my role. Then have counselors list/describe challenging behaviors they have seen/expect to see from their campers. Help counselors to describe what they see, not what they interpret from what they see. For example, rather than “being disrespectful,” the behavior might be “talking when the counselor is trying to get quiet.” List all behaviors on flip chart.

## EMOTIONS ACTIVITY (10 MINUTES)

In the middle of the room, a variety of index cards will be laid out with various emotions. There will also be a few blank cards. Counselors will be instructed to choose an emotion card, and complete the following sentence.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and when I feel (read chosen emotion card) , I (describe how you act) .

Example: My name is Tali, and when I feel hungry, I snap at people.

**Takeaway:** Behavior = Communication! When you see your campers act a certain way, you need to be a detective and figure out what might be leading to that behavior and what they are trying to communicate! What

happened right before they started to act that way? What factors might be influencing the camper's mood? Put yourself in their shoes and you will be much more effective in addressing the behavior.

### SCENARIOS/ROLE PLAYING (15 MINUTES)

#### Prayers

Camper: It is early in the morning and you are really hungry. You also went to bed late last night because of a special evening program and didn't get as much sleep as you really need. You know that you need to go to prayers, but you decide that you are just going to sit in the corner and not participate because you just don't have it in you this morning. Plus, if you sit in the corner then you don't have to deal with the anxiety of choosing a seat next to one of the other campers, with the possibility of them saying that they don't want to sit with you. When your counselor comes over and tells you to open your prayer book and sing along, you struggle to find the place in the prayerbook, but are afraid to ask what page you are on. Because you don't know what page to turn to, you simply keep your prayer book shut so that the other campers don't see you fumbling and judge you for not knowing what page to turn to. When your counselor comes back and gets upset that you still have not followed their instructions, you snap back that prayers are stupid and you don't do them at home and you never want to do them again at camp, even though you really wish that you could learn to follow along.

Counselor: At prayers one morning, you notice one of your campers sitting in the corner and not participating in prayers. You are not really in the mood to deal with a camper who clearly is not interested in prayers, but you know that you are supposed to tell them to participate so you go over and tell them to open their prayerbook, and then go back to your seat. Ten minutes later, you look back and notice that the camper's prayerbook is still sitting closed in their lap and that they are still not participating. You are cranky because you were up late the night before planning tonight's evening program for these campers, but they are always so ungrateful, they never listen, and they do not recognize all of the work you put in for them. Due to your frustration, you walk back over to the camper and say (a little too harshly) "Why are you not listening to me? You are being so disrespectful!"

#### Clean-up

Camper: You return to the bunk for clean-up and clean up your area by putting your clothes from the day before on your shelf. You then sit on your bed, waiting to see what the other campers will do when they are done with clean-up. You are anxious about initiating a conversation with other campers, but you really want to be included. Today, your counselor gets really upset with you, and you do not understand why, so you shut down and lie on your bed with your face in your arms, and refuse to leave the bunk when it is time for the next activity.

Counselor: Every day during clean-up, you tell the same camper to clean their area, and they never listen. You are getting really frustrated and fed up with this camper, and do not understand why they will not listen to you and clean up their area. Their shelves are a mess and their bed is never made. Today, you've really had it with the camper, and lose your cool. You know you should not get so upset with the camper, but we are all human, right?

#### Meals

Camper: You enter the dining hall for lunch, and it is really loud, as always. The lights are bright and you are squeezed in on the bunch in between other campers. You eat quickly so that you can leave the dining hall when you are finished, but when you finish eating, ten minutes into the meal, your counselor tells you that you need to stay in the dining hall until after announcements. You try to sit still but you become increasingly anxious due to the sensory overload. When the camper sitting next to you accidentally bumps into you, you are set off and stand up quickly, knocking over the bench, and run out of the dining hall holding your ears and screaming.

Counselor: It is time for lunch yet again, and you are worried about keeping track of all of your campers. Between making sure they get their medications, making sure all allergies are accounted for, and making sure

everyone eats and drinks enough, but not too much, you hardly have time to sit down and eat yourself. When a camper finishes eating 10 minutes into the meal and asks to leave, you tell them that they have to stay in the dining hall until after announcements. The camp rule is that all campers must remain seated until after announcements, and on top of that, you need to be able to keep an eye on all your campers and you cannot do that if this camper leaves the dining hall..

**DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS (10 MINUTES)**

# CHAPTER 8: SPECIFIC DISABILITIES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

## Seizure Disorders

### INTRODUCTION

Seizures happen when your brain cells, which communicate through electrical signals, send out the wrong signals. Having just one seizure doesn't mean you have epilepsy. Generally, several seizures are needed before there is a diagnosis of epilepsy.

Epilepsy can happen at any age, but it is most common in the elderly. Many children with epilepsy outgrow the condition. However, even mild seizures that happen more than once should be treated. Seizures can be very dangerous if they happen while you are driving, walking or swimming, for example.

### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Seizures are classified in 2 main categories:

**Partial seizures** involve a part of the brain. They can be:

- **Simple Partial Seizures** Symptoms may include involuntary twitching of the muscles or arms and legs; changes in vision; vertigo (dizziness on standing); and experiencing odd tastes or smells. The person does not lose consciousness.
- **Complex Partial Seizures** Symptoms may be like those of partial seizures, but the person does lose awareness for some time. The person may do things over and over, like walking in a circle, rubbing hands together, and/or staring into space.

**Generalized seizures** involve much more or all of the brain. They can be:

- **Absence Seizures (petit mal)** Symptoms may include staring and brief loss of consciousness.
- **Myoclonic seizures** Symptoms may include jerking or twitching of the limbs on both sides of the body.
- **Tonic-Clonic Seizures (grand mal)** Symptoms may include loss of consciousness, shaking or jerking of the body, and loss of bladder control. The person may see an aura or feel an unusual feeling before the seizure starts. Grand mal seizures can last from 5 to 20 minutes.

### WHAT CAUSES SEIZURES?

Seizures are caused by over-excited nerve cells in the brain firing abnormally. In about half of cases, the cause is not known. Some things that can cause seizures include:

- Head injury
- Genes – researchers have linked specific genes to epilepsy
- Dementia
- Injury to the brain before birth
- Some medical conditions, such as meningitis and lupus
- Stroke and heart attack

### FIRST AID FOR SEIZURES

First aid for seizures involves responding in ways that can keep the person safe until the seizure stops by itself. Here are a few things you can do to help someone who is having a generalized tonic-clonic (grand mal) seizure:



- Keep calm and reassure other people who may be nearby.
- Prevent injury by clearing the area around the person of anything hard or sharp.
- Ease the person to the floor and put something soft and flat, like a folded jacket, under his head.
- Remove eyeglasses and loosen ties or anything around the neck that may make breathing difficult.
- Time the seizure with your watch. If the seizure continues for longer than five minutes without signs of slowing down or if a person has trouble breathing afterwards, appears to be injured, in pain, or recovery seems otherwise unusual in some way, call 911 and send another camper for the inclusion director or a member of the camper care team.
- **Do not** hold the person down or try to stop his movements.
- Contrary to popular belief, it is not true that a person having a seizure can swallow his tongue. **Do not** put anything in the person's mouth. Efforts to hold the tongue down can injure the teeth or jaw.
- Turn the person gently onto one side. This will help keep the airway clear.
- Don't attempt artificial respiration except in the unlikely event that a person does not start breathing again after the seizure has stopped.
- Stay with the person until the seizure ends naturally and he is fully awake.
- Do not offer the person water or food until s/he is fully alert
- Be friendly and reassuring as consciousness returns.
- Be sure a camper care team member or the inclusion director is there to offer support afterwards

Here are a few things you can do to help someone who is having a seizure that appears as blank staring, loss of awareness, and/or involuntary blinking, chewing, or other facial movements.

- Stay calm and speak reassuringly.
- Guide him or her away from dangers.
- Block access to hazards, but **do not** attempt to physically restrain the person.
- If the camper is agitated, stay a safe distance away, yet close enough to protect him or her from harm as needed, until full awareness has returned.

Consider a seizure an emergency and call 911 if any of the following occurs:

- The seizure lasts longer than five minutes without signs of slowing down or if the person has trouble breathing afterwards, appears to be in pain or recovery is unusual in some way.
- The person has another seizure soon after the first one.
- The person cannot be awakened after the seizure activity has stopped.
- The person became injured during the seizure.
- The person becomes aggressive during or after the seizure.
- The seizure occurs in water.
- The person has a health condition like diabetes or heart disease or is pregnant.

## Autism Spectrum Disorders (PDD-NOS—Pervasive Developmental Disorder—Not Otherwise Specified)

### WHAT ARE AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASDs)?

ASDs are developmental disabilities, usually appearing during the first three years of life, with symptoms ranging from mild to severe. All children demonstrate some variation of dysfunction in communication, social, and behavioral patterns. Autism is a "spectrum disorder," which means that not everyone with autism demonstrates all of the characteristics.

Some people with autism struggle to learn. Other people with autism are very smart and can do complicated math when they are 3 years old. Some people with autism have trouble being touched while others like to hug.

Many people with autism like to do things in the same order all the time and have things arranged the same way. This helps them stay calm. Other people with autism have a very hard time ignoring noises, especially if they are upset or in a new situation. They may try to calm themselves by rocking, moaning, talking loudly or

even screaming. The moaning, talking or screaming helps them drown out the other noises so they can calm down. They may also try to go under a desk or in a small, dark place where they feel safer.

### COMMON FEATURES IN CHILDREN WITH ASDs

- Decreased social interaction
- Problems with verbal and nonverbal communication
- Repetitive behaviors and/or interests

PDD-NOS includes atypical autism, autism and what was formerly known as Asperger's syndrome

- Replaced as separate diagnoses by inclusion along the ASD severity scale.

Individuals with what had been called Asperger's

- DO NOT typically have language deficits
- Show normal to above average cognitive ability
- Typically WANT to be social, but lack the skills to do so and come across as awkward.

### CAUSE & CURE

- Unknown cause and cure
- However, there are different treatments:
  - Medicine
  - Applied behavior analysis
  - Positive behavior support

### POSSIBILITIES OF MEDICAL ISSUES ACCOMPANYING ASDs

- Seizure disorders
- Genetic disorders
- Gastrointestinal disorders
- Sleep dysfunction
- Pica (eating things that are not food)
- Sensory Integration Disorder (hypersensitivity/hyposensitivity)
  - Sensory input may be interpreted as painful, unpleasant, or confusing for all senses
  - Extremely low or high tolerance for sensory stimulation.

### SIGNS/INDICATORS OF AUTISM

- Impaired social interaction
- Avoidance of eye contact
- Unaware/lack of recognition of social cues
- Repetitive movements (flapping/rocking)
- Inappropriate laughing and giggling
- Hypersensitivity or hyposensitivity to sensory input
- No fear of real dangers
- Lack of/impaired speech
- Echolalia (repetition of others' words)
- Gross and fine motor skill impairment
- Lack of demonstrated affection
- Need for routine,
- Resistance to change
- Unaware of nonverbal cues

## SIGNS/INDICATORS OF ASPERGER'S SYNDROME

- Impaired social interaction
  - Problems with eye contact, facial expressions, social gestures, etc.
- Failure to develop age-appropriate peer relationships
- Lack of social or emotional reciprocity
- Lack of spontaneity in sharing enjoyment, interests, and/or achievements with others
- Preoccupation with an area of interest (abnormal intensity)
- Inflexible adherence to specific, nonfunctional routines or rituals
- Repetitive mannerisms (e.g. hand flapping)
- Preoccupations with parts of objects

## COMPARING AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER AND ASPERGER'S SYNDROME

- Language Development
  - Autism: Individuals may show severe deficits. Some may never develop language at all.
  - Asperger's Syndrome: Individuals do not typically have language deficits; they may even be above average (impaired social skills may interfere with this, however)
- Cognitive Ability
  - Autism: Individuals may show cognitive impairments
  - Asperger's Syndrome: Individuals show normal to above average cognitive ability
- Social Interaction
  - Autism: Individuals may come across as not caring about others around them
  - Asperger's Syndrome: Individuals typically want to be social but lack the skills, coming across as awkward.

## PDD-NOS, PERVASIVE DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDER—NOT OTHERWISE SPECIFIED

- Atypical autism
- Not considered autistic, because certain criteria are not met such as age of onset, etc.
- Usually, person will have better social skills, but still tends to have difficulty with interactions
- Unusual likes and dislikes
- Difficulty with change

## MAY 2013: DSM-V CHANGES THE LANGUAGE WE USE

- Merging all PDDs into one category: "Autism Spectrum Disorder"
  - No more use for the terms Asperger's Syndrome or PDD-NOS
  - Clinicians now rate the severity of individual's clinical presentation of ASD as severe, moderate, or mild.
  - Individuals already classified as having a diagnosis of Asperger's syndrome or PDD-NOS were allowed to keep that diagnosis.

## HELPING OUR CAMPERS

Be routine-oriented

- Have calendars, schedules and/or picture schedules available for your campers
- TIP- LET THEM HOLD A CALENDAR, AND ALWAYS CARRY EXTRAS
- Prepare campers for the day by reviewing the schedule and alerting the camper of changes as early as possible.
- Role Play:
  - On red days, the senior girls end their day with swim. Ally checks the forecast for the day and sees that there is an 85% chance of thunderstorms and rain. Sure enough, it begins to pour around lunch time and Robyn changes the day to a rainy day schedule. Campers handle the change

well except for Megan. Megan becomes teary-eyed and says, “But we ALWAYS end red days with swim!” How do you ease the situation?

- Tomorrow is the trip to Verona Park! For weeks your group has been talking about how excited they are to go to the lake. Robyn checks tomorrow’s weather forecast and sees that there is a 90% chance of thunderstorms. The trip is rescheduled for next week; tomorrow you will go to the movies. Everyone in your group is okay with the change except Jon. Jon keeps saying “but tomorrow is July 29!” What can you do to ease the situation?

Use constant and specific reinforcement

- Praise campers for their ACTIONS, not for who they are.
- “Nice catch!” vs “good boy!”
- \*CATCH THEM **BEING GOOD** AND PRAISE SPECIFICALLY.\*

Give simple, slow directions, and relay them in more than one way

- Limit the number of directions
- Use words, pictures, symbols, gestures
- Role Play:
  - Your group is eating lunch and your co-counselor realizes that you are going to be late for swim. S/he quickly announces to your group, “Okay everyone, lunch is over! Finish what you’re eating, make sure your area is all clean, put all of your things back into your lunch bag, and throw out all of the trash in the garbage. Don’t forget to wipe your hands and mouth!” Kate just sits there not doing anything, she seems confused. How can you help?

Create structure and be clear about parameters:

- Decide the rules and routine of your group (e.g. snack time, what’s expected of the campers) with your co-counselors
- Be fair and firm when they try to test you
- Examples of setting clear parameters:
  - Behavior: You need to use the glue correctly or I will do it for you
  - Time: There are 10 minutes left of computers... 5 minutes left... This is your last game... 1 minute left... this is your last race.
  - TIP: Do not end your instructions with “Okay?” This, or anything that sounds like a question, may give the child a sense that the rules are merely suggestions or are up for discussion. Rules must be delivered consistently and in a calm, matter-of-fact tone; hearing instructions should not cause campers to feel personally admonished or attacked.

Remain Calm

- While camp can be hectic and stressful, it is important for staff members to remain cool and calm. This will help campers to remain calm and focused.
- Role play:
  - Matty has been having an “off” day today. You are in cooking and he has become upset over another camper’s actions. You tell him just to worry about himself and that you will worry about the other campers. Matty yells, “Everyone in this group is so annoying! Why do I have to be with these people!?” He gets up, runs outside the cafeteria, across the parking lot, and toward the fields. What would you do?
- Eye contact, gestures, and nonverbal language
- Model this behavior
- Some ways to help them with eye contact:
  - Point
  - “Find my eyes”

- Do not embarrass the upset camper!
- Do not force compliance, it can be painful
- Camp is all about practice for “the real world.” If campers are expected to use eye contact, gestures, and non-verbal language at camp, they will likely generalize the behavior and continue it at home and in school.
- Role play:
  - Sam is telling you all about his weekend but keeps looking behind himself rather than at you. What strategies can you use to get him to make eye contact with you?

#### Be aware of conversation

- Teachable moments
- Use lunch, snack, transition, arts & crafts as good times to teach conversation
- You might have to help a camper begin conversations with others. Encourage campers to talk about topics of mutual interest with their friends.
- It is common that children with ASD get along better with adults than their own peers; use a camper’s comfort with you to facilitate conversation with other campers.

#### Communication is key

- Help your campers use their best language.
- For example, if a camper says “I’m sorry,” ask what he is apologizing for and what he means by “I’m sorry.”
  - Is he remorseful?
  - Is he just repeating what he’s been taught to say?
  - Is he just trying to get out of trouble?
- Role play:
  - Jordan has trouble controlling his anger sometimes. He is usually a great friend; however, he will hit or push someone if they are frustrating him beyond his threshold. He feels bad when he hurts people and cries when he is in trouble, but keeps getting physical when frustrated. What might you say to him?

#### Teach by Example

- If you want campers to behave a certain way, you must show them how. You are the campers’ biggest role model.
- Children with ASD might appear not to be listening, but often they do hear and see what’s going on around them.
- When might this be an issue? When can this also be at your advantage?
  - Going swimming when the water isn’t the “perfect” temperature
  - Participating in activities, every day, all day.

#### ACTIVITY

This activity is designed to show how people with autism can be bothered by things most people don’t notice. People with autism are often extra sensitive to noise, movement and even things like background noises most of us don’t notice. Remember, though, not everyone with autism has these problems.

Divide the group into teams of five. Explain that they will each have a job to do. Go over their jobs and tell them they can start when you give the signal. One student in each group will play the part of someone with autism. The other 4 people each have different jobs:

- Person #1 - You will play the part of a person with autism. Your job is to try and listen to what Person #5 is reading to you so you can take a test on the material. Try to ignore everyone else.

- Person #2 - Stand behind the student playing the part of someone with autism. Rub the edge of an index card (or piece of cardboard) against the back of their neck. You do not need to rub hard, but keep doing it over and over.
- Person #3 - Grab a book (any book will do), lean close to Person #1 and read in a loud voice the entire time.
- Person #4 - Pat Person #1 on the head and shoulder the entire time.
- Person #5 - Using a normal voice, read a paragraph to Person #1 then ask them questions about what you read. Do NOT try to drown out the other noises.

Have all the students take a turn being Person #1 before you discuss it. How did it feel to be have so much commotion going on? Did it make them want to scream or get away? Were they able to concentrate on the paragraph being read? What might have helped?

## Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

### WHAT IS ADHD?

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or ADHD is a **medical diagnosis** that affects approximately 11% of children ages 4-17 (Center of Disease Control, 2013).
- Boys are 3 times more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD than girls.

### SYMPTOMS

Children with ADHD have symptoms such as...

#### Inattention

- Easily distracted
- Difficulty paying attention to one thing. The child wants to do a lot at one time.
- Becomes bored easily
- Often loses or forgets things
- Doesn't seem to listen when people talk to him/her
- Daydreams often
- Trouble following directions
- May need an adult to repeat what they are saying to him/her

#### Hyperactivity

- Can't sit still (squirms in seat or gets out of seat often)
- Talks non-stop
- Runs around and touches everything
- Constantly moving
- Difficulty doing quiet tasks or activities

#### Impulsivity

- Blurts out inappropriate comments
- Difficulty waiting his/her turn
- Very little patience and/or difficulty sharing
- Interrupts often
- Difficulty controlling his/her emotions
- Often acts without thinking

## DIAGNOSIS

Children can be diagnosed with...

- ADHD - predominantly inattentive type
- ADHD - predominantly hyperactive/impulsive type
- ADHD - combined type - hyperactive/impulsive and inattentive

In order to be diagnosed a person, must have at least six symptoms for at least six months. These symptoms must create significant difficulty in their functioning in at least two areas of life (home, school, social setting, etc...)

## TREATMENT

- ADHD is often treated with medication (psychostimulants)
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Or a combination of medication and therapy

## STRATEGIES FOR CAMPERS

Catch them being good

- Praise children for anything they do right (e.g. you are doing an awesome job sitting quietly)
- Focus on important issues and plan to ignore smaller ones
- Work with your team and your supervisor to decide which issues are important to address (hitting, running away constantly, interrupting other conversations) and which smaller issues you can ignore (humming, fidgeting, tapping feet)

Have a positive attitude

- Smile at campers
- Use a positive upbeat tone of voice
- Encourage children who are “stuck” and remind them of their successes (e.g. I know you can do this, you followed directions so well at art!)
- Try to remind them of different motivations (awards, parent praise, trips, etc.)
  - I know your mom will be so proud if you try to participate
  - Your favorite activity, swimming, is next. So let’s try our best at bikes until then.

Give positive and clear directions

- Explain the type of behavior you want instead of the behavior you don’t want. Say “Please walk in line” instead of “Don’t run!”
- Try to give only one direction at a time
- Use simple words that children understand
- Give campers a heads-up when activities will be changing to prepare them (e.g. in five minutes we will be getting out of the pool).

Help children to express their feelings

- Model for campers, through your own actions, how to wait, share, and speak to others politely

- Intervene and gently suggest how campers could communicate their needs and wants appropriately (e.g. Johnny, I know you want to play with Legos. Let's try asking Ryan nicely if you can use the Legos when he is done).
- Encourage children to talk about what is upsetting them. Understand that it might take some time for them to be able to put their feelings into words.

## CAMPER SCENARIOS

Gregory is a 7-year-old camper. He loves camp, but has a difficult time sharing and waiting his turn. In the morning he insists on playing his favorite board game, even if his friends have already started playing. Other children get upset because he does not wait to take his turn, and he fidgets with different pieces from the game. After a while he walks away and starts to interrupt other children while they are playing. What can you do to help Gregory?

Casey is a 12-year-old camper. While in the changing room, Casey always walks around and talks to the other girls in her group. After quite a bit of prompting, she starts to go into her bag to get her things to change. Unfortunately, half of her bathing suit is missing and her towel is on the other end of the room. She gets frustrated for a moment, then she starts talking to the girl next to her. Meanwhile, you are already five minutes late for swim. How can you help Casey?

Jamal is a 9-year-old camper. He loves sports but often becomes too aggressive when playing with his peers. If Jamal gets into an argument with another child he frequently loses his temper, and ends up hitting or pushing the other child. What can you do to help Jamal?

Have patience

- You may need to repeat directions often
- You may need to remind children of the rules often
- Remember, although these behaviors may be challenging to you, they are not aimed at you.
- Always be empathetic; try to imagine what it might feel like to experience the world through this child's eyes.

## Communication Disorders

Communication disorders are disabilities that keep a person from being able to speak or make their speech understood. This can be caused by many different disabilities or injuries. Some people with difficulty speaking may use sign language, gestures or small pictures they carry with them.

### ACTIVITY 1 - DIFFERENT WORDS

If you have students in your class who speak a different language, have them stand in front of the class and say one sentence in their language. Have the class try to guess what was said. If you have more than one student who speaks the same foreign language, have them carry on a short conversation. Then have the class try to decide what was said.

Discuss how it feels to not be able to understand something. How quickly did the class give up? What are some other ways they could have tried to communicate? How is this similar to listening to people with disabilities who can talk but are hard to understand?

### ACTIVITY 2 - NO WORDS

Write a simple sentence on a piece of paper, for example, "The cat sat on a hot tin roof." Show this sentence to 1 student. The student must let the rest of the class know the sentence without writing, speaking or using any letters of the alphabet.



Discuss: Was it difficult to communicate using this method? What would have helped? How can we communicate with someone who can't talk back? How can we help them communicate? If you want to give more students a chance to try this activity, here are some suggested sentences:

- I feel funny.
- I want a glass of water.
- I lost my homework.
- My parents are getting a divorce.
- My foot hurts.
- I want a hamburger for lunch.
- I'm allergic to strawberries.
- I hate ketchup.

## Hearing Impairments

Hearing impairments include everything from not being able to hear certain sounds to being totally deaf. In most cases, a hearing loss does not mean that sounds are simply not loud enough. It usually means that sounds are garbled or unclear. A hearing aid may make speech louder, but usually will not make speech clearer.

### ACTIVITY 1 - NOT BEING ABLE TO HEAR

You need:

- a pair of foam ear plugs for each student
- a radio, TV, fan or anything else that can make "white noise"

What to do:

Show students how to put in the earplugs . Put on the "white noise". If using a TV, put it on a station with no reception and turn up the volume — loud enough to be distracting. If using a radio, set it between stations so you only hear static. If using a fan, turn it up on high. Read a long newspaper article or book passage. Read rapidly, using a soft voice, mumbling monotone, running words together and pausing in odd places. Ask students 5 questions about the content of what you read. Continue talking quickly in a soft, mumbling voice. Remove ear plugs, turn off white noise and discuss (in a normal voice) how not being able to hear clearly felt.

### ACTIVITY 2 - LIP-READING

Instructions for teacher

Divide the class into pairs. One of each pair is A, and the other B. Give them the relevant instructions (below) and briefly explain the exercise. They should not see each other's instructions. Have them take turns lip-reading, while their partner reads aloud by silently (moving their lips but making no sounds) a list of words or sentences. In their pairs, they should: "say" each word or phrase once only; go through the whole exercise before telling each other the answers. When they finish, have each pair discuss what they learned about lip-reading. When returning to the main group, each pair should share their ideas.

Allow 15 minutes for the exercise in pairs, then have everyone return to the main group. Ask questions like:

- How successful were you at lip-reading?
- What helped make lip-reading easier?
- What does this show about lip-reading?

Points about lip-reading

- Lip-reading is not easy;

- a lot of guessing is involved;
- most people can lip-read a little;
- some people are better at it than others;
- some people are easier to lip-read than others;
- it is impossible to lip-read unless you can clearly see the mouth and face of the person talking;
- some words look alike on the lips, so single words are very difficult to lip-read;
- it helps if you know the topic.

#### Ways to make lip-reading easier

- the person lip-reading must see the speaker;
- the speaker's mouth, jaw and eyes must be clearly visible and it helps to see the speaker's eyes.
- use sentences rather than single words;
- give clues to the subject;
- speak a little slower than usual, keeping the normal rhythm of speech;
- if you are not understood, try saying the sentence another way; and speak clearly (but don't exaggerate mouth movements).

#### Instructions for person A

Don't let your partner see this page!

Read the following list of words - moving your mouth but making NO sounds and not moving your hands. Say each word only once. After each word, give your partner time to write down the word.

Word list: ship, Jim, chimp, punk, mud, bun, jeer, cheer, jib, chip

Now your partner will do the same for you but with a different list of words. Write down what you think was said.

Next, read the sentences below to your partner. Move your mouth but make NO sounds and don't move your hands. Say each sentence only once. Give your partner time to write each one down.

#### Sentences

- Would you like tea or coffee?
- Do you take sugar?
- Here's the milk for your cereal.
- Would you like more toast?
- Do you prefer jam or marmalade?
- Would you like some eggs?

Now your partner will do the same for you with different sentences. Write down what you think was said.

This time tell your partner (really talking) that you will read sentences about breakfast. Now silently (moving your mouth but making NO sounds) read the sentences again. This time you can use your hands if you want. Give your partner time to write down what you said.

Now your partner will tell you a clue and then silently read their sentences again. Write down the sentences.

Show each other the words and sentences you read out. Check how many you got right each time. What did you learn about lip-reading that you can share when you return to the main group?

#### Instructions for person B

Don't let your partner see this page!

Your partner will say a list of words to you. Try to lip-read your partner and write each word down.

Then read the following list of words to your partner - moving your mouth but making NO sounds and not moving your hands. Say each word only once. After each word, give your partner time to write down the word.

Word list: bad, man, pat, bat, sheep, cheese, tea, she, pound, mount

Now your partner will read you some sentences. Write down what you think was said.

Next, read the sentences below to your partner. Move your mouth but make NO sounds and don't move your hands. Say each sentence only once. Give your partner time to write each one down.

Sentences

- It looks a bit cloudy.
- It might be quite hot.
- I think we're in for a storm.
- It looks like the wind's getting up.
- It looks like we're in for a good day.

Now your partner will tell you (out loud) a clue. Then they will read sentences and may use hand gestures. Write down what you think was said.

This time tell your partner (really talking) that you will read sentences about the weather. Now silently (moving your mouth but making NO sounds) read the sentences again. This time you can use your hands if you want. Give your partner time to write down what you said.

Show each other the words and sentences you read out. Check how many you got right each time. What did you learn about lip-reading that you can share when you return to the main group?

## Learning Disabilities

There are many different kinds of learning disabilities, and their impact on a person can range from mild to severe. This is a fantastic, new, go-to website, which is very helpful understanding all aspects of learning disabilities: <https://www.understood.org/en>.

Activity 1 gives a general idea what it is like to have to struggle against what your brain may be telling you. Dyslexia can cause a person to see letters switched around when they read (seeing "bule" instead of "blue", for example). Activity 2 will give you an idea of what this is like.

### ACTIVITY 1 - SAY WHAT?

Project the next page onto a screen. Have the group read it out loud, but must read the COLOR the word is written in, not the word itself. Afterward, discuss how your brain wants to read the actual word. Even when you can make yourself do it correctly, you have to read much slower than normal. This is an example of how difficult it is for students with learning disabilities to get through the day. Their brain understands what needs to be done, but they have to struggle to make it come out right. Not being able to do this activity correctly does not mean you are not smart. It just means that your brain is inclined to do the task differently.

**YELLOW BLUE ORANGE**

**BLACK RED GREEN**

**PURPLE YELLOW RED**

**ORANGE GREEN BLACK**

**BLUE RED PURPLE**

**GREEN BLUE ORANGE**

10

## ACTIVITY 2 – BACKWARDS

Write a number of different sentences backwards on a piece of paper. Giving participants very little time, ask different people to read them correctly. Keep interrupting the readers by urging them to hurry or tell them “This should be easy for you.”

Example:

- “ehT kcalb tac tas no eht toh nit foor”
- “The black cat sat on the hot tin roof.”

Discuss

What were the difficulties faced in deciphering the sentence? Did being told to hurry help or make it harder? What would have helped?

## Intellectual Disabilities

When a person has an intellectual disability, it means that they learn more slowly than typical learners. Because they learn more slowly, they don't learn as much as other people might in the same timeframe. There are over 200 known causes for intellectual disability. For about one third of people with intellectual disabilities, the cause is unknown.

Not everyone with an intellectual disability is alike. One person can have mild problems while another may have severe problems. A person with an intellectual disability may:

- have difficulty understanding what other people say or mean;
- may have difficulty saying what they mean or how they feel;
- have difficulty understanding social cues (for example, if you turn away they may not know this means you don't want to talk to them);
- have difficulty learning and concentrating;
- have to do things many more times than average before they acquire the skill;
- act younger than their age;
- not understand when someone is making fun of them;
- may find it hard to read or write;
- may not understand what is happening when someone tells them to do something wrong.

### ACTIVITY 1 - DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING

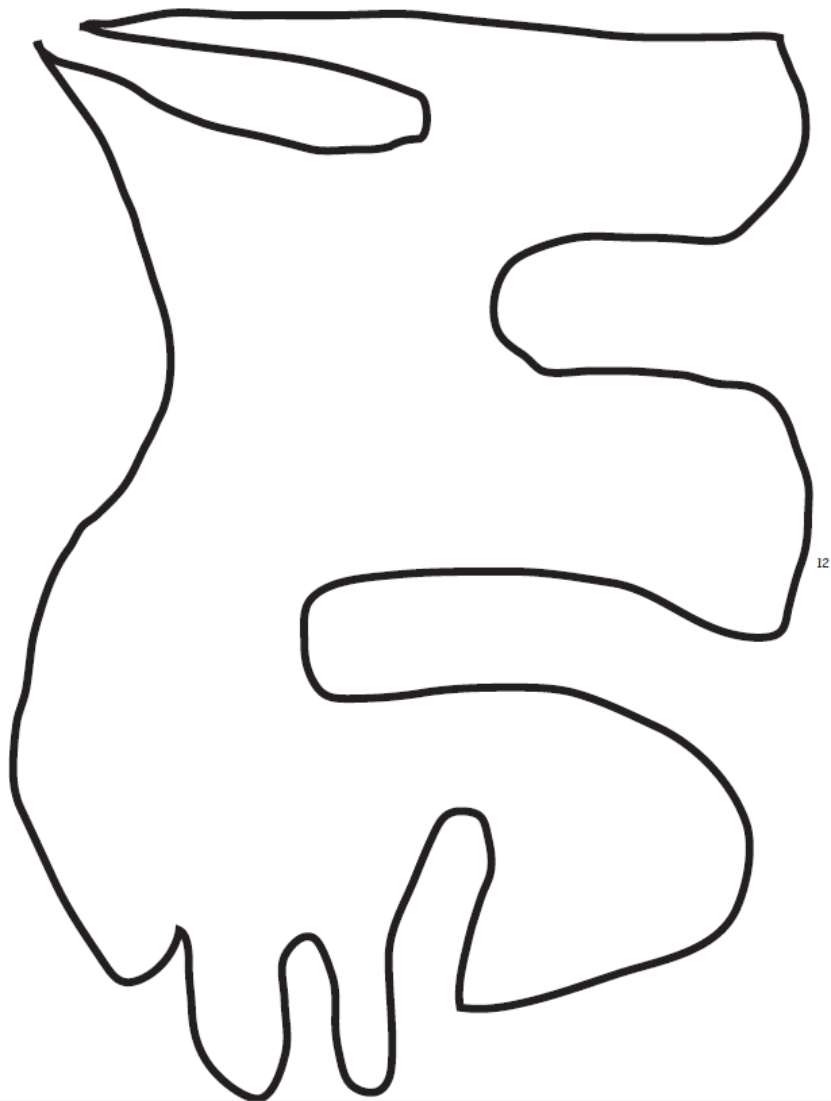
Have two students sit back to back. Give one student a paper with an abstract shape on it (page 11). Give the second student a pencil and piece of paper. Without facing each other, one must explain to the other how to draw the shape. The partner draws the shape, following the first student's directions.

Discussion: How did it go? What were the problems? What would have helped?

### ACTIVITY 2 - HOW IT FEELS

Make a paper copy for each student of the "German Test" below. Do the same with "Test Your Awareness" below. Hand out the "German Test." Tell them they have 5 minutes to read the paragraph and answer the questions. Tell them it is an easy test and all the answers are right there in the paragraph. When students complain they can't do it, tell them to "try harder." As soon as the time is up, take up their papers. Hand out "Test Your Awareness." Tell students to follow the directions on the page. Tell them this test should be very easy because it is in English. When they are finished, have them raise their hands to show if they found 3 Fs. How many found 4 Fs? 5 Fs? Did anyone find more? The correct answer is 6. Most people miss the Fs in the word "OF". This is because we pronounce this as "ov" so our brain skips right over this when we are looking for "f."

Discuss how it felt to be given a German test and told to "try harder." Did that help them do it? How many people stopped trying when they saw what the test was? How did it feel to realize they didn't count all the Fs? How did it feel to have your brain "trick" you on this test? How would it feel if this happened to you all the time, every day?



Difficulty Understanding \_\_\_\_\_

#### German Test

Der Deutsche hat an und für sich eine starke Neigung zur Unzufriedenheit. Ich weiß nicht, wer von uns einen zufriedenen Landsmann kennt. Ich kenne sehr viele Franzosen, die vollständig mit ihrem Geschick, mit ihren Erbuissen zufrieden sind. Wenn sie ein Handwerk ergreifen, so stellen sie sich die Aufgabe, durch dasselbe, wenn's möglich ist, vielleicht bis zum 45., 50. Jahre eine gewisse Vermögensquote zu erreichen; haben sie die, so ist ihr ganzer Ehrgeiz, sich als Rentier bis zu ihrem Lebensende zurückzuziehen. Vergleichen Sie damit den Deutschen; dessen Ehrgeiz ist von Hause aus nicht auf eine nach dem 50. Jahre zu genie ende Rente gerichtet, sein Ehrgeiz ist schrankenlos. Der Bäcker, der sich etabliert, will nicht etwa der wohlhabendste Bäcker in seinem Ort werden, nein, er will Hausbesitzer, Rentier, er will nach seinem größeren Berliner Ideal schließlich Bankier, Millionär werden. Sein Ehrgeiz hat keine Grenzen.

1. Eine starke Neigung zur Unzufriedenheit hat der \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Mit ihrem Geschick und ihren Erbuissen sind viele \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Sie stellen sich die \_\_\_\_\_ eine gewisse Vermögensquote zu

\_\_\_\_\_.

4. Der Ehrgeiz der Deutschen ist \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Der Bäcker will Hausbesitzer, \_\_\_\_\_ werden.

6. Nach seinem größten \_\_\_\_\_ Ideal will er Bankier, Millionär  
\_\_\_\_\_.

7. Keine \_\_\_\_\_ hat sein Ehrgeiz.

The above text is from a speech by Otto von Bismarck before the German Reichstag on 9 October 1887.

Test Your Awareness

First read the sentence in the box below.

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF  
MANY YEARS.

Now count the F's in the sentence. Count them only once. Do not go back and count them again.

## Physical Disabilities

There are a large variety of different physical disabilities, all of which can range from a mild disability to complete immobility. Many people will have more than one disability, such as not being able to use their legs or hands.

### ACTIVITY 1 - IN A WHEELCHAIR:

Borrow a wheelchair from a disability agency or see if the school nurse has one. Have each student take a turn sitting in the chair. Have them try different activities:

- Going from one part of the building to another, pushing the wheelchair with their hands
- Going through the lunch line
- Getting a book off the top shelf in the library
- Playing a game in the gym or playground (soccer, basketball, chase, etc.)
- Going to the bathroom
- Going through an outside door
- Being in a group where everyone else is standing up

Discuss how being in the wheelchair felt. What would have made things better? Students in wheelchairs are often left out of games or gym class, or are given the job of keeping score. Discuss how this would feel. What if you hate keeping score? No one likes to be treated as if they are helpless. If you see someone in a wheelchair, don't assume it's helpful to do things for them: ask first if they want help, and accept no as an answer.

### ACTIVITY 2 - USING ONE HAND

Have students try different activities using only one hand.

- Tying their shoes;
- Going through the lunch line and eating lunch;
- Opening a jar that has a screw-on lid;
- Playing catch;
- Holding a stack of papers and handing out one at a time; and
- Going to the bathroom.

Discuss the problems the students had. What if they couldn't use either hand? What problems would there be if they were in a wheelchair AND couldn't use their hands?

## Vision Impairment

The term vision impairments is a category that includes conditions correctable with glasses, like being near-sighted or far-sighted, conditions that are only somewhat corrected by glasses, and partial and total blindness.

### ACTIVITY 1- BLINDNESS

You need

- A good blindfold
- A room with several occupied chairs and one or more vacant chairs
- Put odd obstacles on the way to the chair, and/or face the chair in an unexpected direction.
- Leave the door halfway open.

What to do

Explain that you will need two students - a "guide" and a "blind person." You will be rearranging the room. Make sure the blindfold is fully on. The guide's job is to help the blind person come into the room and go to the



chair without running into anything. The guide can give instructions verbally and touch the blindfolded participant to help guide their way.

Send the two participants into the hall and rearrange the room. The vacant chair should not be too easy to get to.

Hint: In this exercise, the guide often grabs the blind person and pushes them around. This usually results in the blind-folded person running into things. Guides usually don't describe the path, and say "look out," instead of "stop," at major obstacles. When the chair is reached, guides often spin the blind-folded person around and push them into the seat then leaving without explanation.

NOTE: If you get an exceptional "guide" who does it correctly, use that as a way to talk about why their method was successful.

Discuss

- Did the guide do a good job?
- How would it feel to be the blind person being dragged or pushed?
- What would be more helpful than saying "look out"?
- How did the two participants feel?

Repeat the activity a better way, as was brought out in the discussion. Discuss the differences.

## ACTIVITY 2 - BLURRED VISION

Project the text on the next page ("More Than 60 Percent of U.S. in Drought"), or any page with a lot of text, onto a screen. Make sure the page appears out of focus, so that the words cannot be read. Tell the class to copy the information. Then ask questions about the text. Discuss how frustrating it is when you are trying and paying attention, but cannot see clearly. How could peers be helpful to someone who has vision impairments? As always, point out that they should ASK before helping a person with a disability. Some people would rather do things for themselves.

More Than 60 Percent of U.S. in Drought

By JAMES MacPHERSON, AP

STEELE, N.D. (July 29) - More than 60 percent of the United States now has abnormally dry or drought conditions, stretching from Georgia to Arizona and across the north through the Dakotas, Minnesota, Montana and Wisconsin, said Mark Svoboda, a climatologist for the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln.

A farmer attempts to harvest the shriveled up wheat in his drought-stricken field near Linton, N.D. An area stretching from central North Dakota to central South Dakota is the most drought-stricken region in the nation, climatologists say.

An area stretching from south central North Dakota to central South Dakota is the most drought-stricken region in the nation, Svoboda said.

"It's the epicenter," he said. "It's just like a wasteland in north central South Dakota."

Conditions aren't much better a little farther north. Paul Smokov and his wife, Betty, raise several hundred cattle on their 1,750-acre ranch north of Steele, a town of about 760 people.

Fields of wheat, durum and barley in the Dakotas this dry summer will never end up as pasta, bread or beer. What is left of the stifled crops has been salvaged to feed livestock struggling on pastures where hot winds blow clouds of dirt from dried-out ponds.

Conclusion: We hope these role plays, inclusion activities and the information on various disabilities has been useful. Please keep in mind both the benefits and limitations of simulation activities, as suggested at the start of this section.

## CHAPTER 9: Anticipating, Understanding, and Managing Behavior

Perhaps the best way to “manage” difficult behaviors is to know in advance what precipitants have historically led to such behaviors. For campers with autism, sudden changes in routine may lead to such behaviors. Some campers “melt down” when swimming is cancelled due to an unexpected thunderstorm, or when arts and crafts are cancelled for a play rehearsal. Or, a camper expecting to wear an item of clothing which she cannot find, since the laundry has not yet been returned, may exhibit an unexpected behavior. Very few camps, with the exception, perhaps, of camps who work with campers with aggressive behavior, are trained in or utilize restraints for camper safety. That said, all camps have situations where campers display behaviors that may become unsafe. There are times when a camper tantrum or melt down may require us to remove other campers from the area, remove potentially dangerous objects, or even hold the camper. As the useful resources below suggest, the camper’s behavior is a form of communication. We need to work hard to figure out what they are trying to communicate. Is it anxiety? Boredom? Sadness? Hunger? Hurt feelings? We can often plan ahead and create environments which pre-empt such behaviors and support success.

## Behavior Identification and Planning Tool

Camper Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

### KNOWLEDGE OF STRENGTHS/INTERESTS (RELATIONSHIP)

What are this young person's strengths and areas of interest? What do you know about him/her?

### BEHAVIOR IDENTIFICATION

Describe the young person's observable behavior that you experience as disruptive/disturbing. Be specific. (What does it look like?)

Choose the ONE specific behavior that you want to reduce/eliminate and state it clearly below:

### TRIGGERS, UNMET NEEDS, AND LAGGING SKILLS

Can this behavior be anticipated? If so, when, where, and with whom?

Mark the primary triggers, lagging skills or unmet needs that most influence this behavior below:

Structural	Relational	Lagging Skills	Unmet Needs
Difficulty w/transitions Time of Day Unstructured/down time Long periods of sitting/focusing Location/specific area in camp Other:	Conflict with peers (Who?) Conflict with adult(s) Peer relationships Relationship with counselor Issues at home Authority figures saying NO or making demands Other:	Lack of skill(s) Lack of challenge Not understanding instructions/expectations Learning disability Keeping track of materials/instructions Difficulty calming down when angry/upset Asking for help Other:	Lack of interest in subject matter Hunger/Sleepiness Feeling ignored/wanting attention Wanting control/power. Difficulty slowing body down/lots of energy Lonely/isolated Other:

## STRATEGIES FOR BEHAVIOR CHANGE

- What strategies/approaches have been used that are **NOT** effective with this young person?
- Mark the management techniques/strategies below that may be effective in minimizing this behavior.

## BEHAVIORAL STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS

Meet Needs	Teach Skills	Change Environment
<p>Create connections through regular 1-on-1 check-ins w/specific adult</p> <p>Express interest in young person/find out strengths and interests</p> <p>Reinforce positive behavior</p> <p>Get support from other adults who have relationship with young person</p> <p>Increase opportunities to engage in favorite/preferred activities</p> <p>Provide choices and identify options</p> <p>Other:</p>	<p>Explain the rationale for expectations</p> <p>Cultivate investment in behavioral change by clarifying how meeting expectations will help student</p> <p>Check for understanding of instructions/expectations</p> <p>Break down instructions step-by-step into achievable tasks</p> <p>Break down social skills into specific, core behaviors</p> <p>Use visual cues/schedules</p> <p>Provide individualized checklist</p> <p>Other:</p>	<p>Change student's seat or furniture configuration</p> <p>Clarify &amp; Review bunk routines</p> <p>Implement routines for transitions</p> <p>Provide systems to organize/manage materials</p> <p>Introduce materials for quiet hands</p> <p>Use pre-established visual signals or code words</p> <p>Use "antiseptic bouncing" (provide break from activity)</p> <p>Provide a "home base/retreat" space</p> <p>Other:</p>
Increase Engagement	Respond, Reflect, Repair	

<p>Increase counselor enthusiasm/energy</p> <p>Engage camper in problem solving conversation</p> <p>Develop individual contract</p> <p>Use incentives based on camper interest to motivate change (When you _____ then you can_____.)</p> <p>Provide choices and/or alternative activities</p> <p>Give camper a job/responsibility/mentoring opportunity</p> <p>Arrange for camper to visit/work with other bunks</p> <p>Change schedule to build on preferred activities/interests</p> <p>Other:</p>	<p>Avoid confronting non-harmful behavior &amp; address later</p> <p>Position yourself deliberately</p> <p>Confront camper privately in the moment</p> <p>Decode negative behavior into feelings and offer alternatives</p> <p>Allow camper space &amp; time</p> <p>Develop a “calm down” routine</p> <p>Use W.O.W. to learn from and process conflict.</p> <p>Work with young person to identify consequences &amp; rewards</p> <p>Other:</p>
---	--

**BEHAVIOR PLAN**

What 2-3 strategies from above will the team use to support this student in changing the behavior of focus? Outline these below along with your concrete action plan for putting them into place.

Strategy	How? (Be concrete)	Who?	When?
1)			
2)			
3)			
Follow-up Plan			

(Ramapo for Children, NYC)

## The Ramapo Toolbox: Creating Environments that Support Success

### ROLE MODELING

Observational learning and role modeling are powerful teaching tools

- **Demonstrate community values and expectations.** Be consistent in modeling the expectations of your community. Follow the rules you set.
- **Be the thermostat not the thermometer.** Set the tone, don't reflect it. For example, if you want campers to be positive and engaged, smile and demonstrate that you are excited to be with them.
- **Match your voice and body language to your message.** Modulate your voice: soft tones are calming; firm tones are directive; loud tones may be experienced as angry. Be mindful of your posture and gestures.
- **Model social and emotional skills.** Demonstrate how to manage emotions such as anger, excitement, frustration and disappointment. Admit when you make mistakes; don't hesitate to apologize. Be the person you want young people to be.
- **Model professional skills.** Be on time, organized and prepared.
- **Model collaboration and communication with other members of the community.** Share ideas, suggestions and important information. Ask for help. Resolve interpersonal conflicts.

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Personal relationships are essential to motivating behavioral change and the skill of building relationships can be learned

- **Welcome campers into your bunk or activity.** Greet campers by name. Try to make eye contact. Notice if a camper looks unhappy or withdrawn and find a time to check in.
- **Express interest in campers.** Ask questions, listen and let campers share their interests, experiences and aspirations. Find topics to talk to them about such as sports, music, food, pets, etc.
- **Identify and celebrate individual strengths.** Find, acknowledge and reinforce something each camper does well.
- **Have fun.** Be joyful. Laugh. Find opportunities to be playful and use games. Avoid teasing campers or using sarcasm.
- **Reinforce positive behavior.** Be specific. See it, name it and praise it. Highlight and label behaviors that reinforce community values and effective habits.
- **Have more positive than negative interactions.** Create connections with campers. Set aside time to check-in with the campers with whom you may be struggling to connect.
- **Share some of yourself.** Let campers learn about your own relevant interests, experiences and feelings.

### CLARIFYING EXPECTATIONS

Expectations clarify behaviors that support community goals and values

- **Identify and promote community expectations.** Articulate and post standards for behavior to which all members of the community are expected to adhere. Remind campers (and counselors) of expectations routinely.
- **Break down expectations into specific core behaviors.** Identify, label and model behaviors that are aligned with community expectations. Be specific about what desired behaviors look like and sound like. Teach and practice behaviors step by step. Give feedback on what to stop, start, or continue.
- **Take time to explain the purpose and benefits of community expectations.** Develop and use consistent language to reinforce and generate buy-in for community expectations.
- **Create agreements that ensure youth voice and input.** Include campers in the process of developing community expectations. Promote group goal-setting and problem solving. Have regular, short, structured community meetings.
- **Check for understanding.** Ensure that campers know what is expected and why, by observing their behavior, asking follow-up questions, and using non-verbal signals. Be sure to allow time to process.

- **Set individual and collective goals.** Encourage the development of core behaviors by setting specific, observable and achievable goals with individuals and groups. Track progress. Celebrate achievements.
- **Identify alternative behaviors.** Teach campers what they can do, not just what they can't do. Provide options for managing difficult feelings. Teach calming techniques.

## ESTABLISHING STRUCTURES AND ROUTINES

Campers thrive in organized environments where routines teach, reinforce, and celebrate desired behaviors

- **Establish routines and procedures.** Make daily schedules and stick to them. Be consistent and predictable. Forecast changes. Plan carefully how to transition from one activity to the next. Use visuals to communicate steps and provide reminders.
- **Develop rituals that reinforce positive behaviors through shared experiences.** Create rituals—special events, cheers, activities—that are unique to your community and create a sense of belonging.
- **Plan opportunities to celebrate success.** Celebrate individual and group accomplishments at community meetings and special events. Give shout-outs, awards and appreciations.
- **Organize space, time, people and materials.** Create pathways that allow you to move around the space. Remove objects that are tempting or distracting. Position campers and counselors in ways that facilitate success and minimize distractions.
- **Vary activities and pace to maintain engagement.** Create activities and lessons that address various learning and processing styles. Break activities down into segments. Provide choices and movement breaks.
- **Use visuals and non-verbal cues to communicate instructions and information.** If it's important—create a visual. Post schedules, reminders, sequences and step-by-step instructions. Use non-verbal cues when quieting youth or getting their attention.
- **Anticipate problems** Learn which parts of the day are challenging. Identify and anticipate triggers for problematic behavior; manage the triggers, not the behavior. Reduce downtime, over-plan and keep activities on hand for unexpected changes.
- **Use goals and incentives to motivate behavioral change and promote independence.** Identify specific behaviors of focus. Use visuals to track progress over achievable time increments. Celebrate success with rewards campers find meaningful.

## ADAPTING TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Campers who struggle to meet community expectations require additional supports and targeted planning

- **Decode negative behavior into feelings and offer alternatives.** Read a camper's actions and body language. Explore and identify unmet needs and difficult feelings. Validate feelings even as you offer alternative behaviors for expressing emotions.
- **Engage campers in constructive problem solving.** Have a private one-to-one conversation with a child who is struggling to meet community expectations. Listen actively. Share specific and direct feedback focused on observable behavior. Avoid making assumptions or giving feedback on attitude, motives or personality
- **Develop tools for self-management.** Create visual reminders, schedules, contracts, images and checklists to help campers communicate their feelings, organize their responsibilities and practice independence.
- **Use pre-established visual cues and verbal reminders.** Create signals (nonverbal cues or code words) with campers to redirect their behavior in a non-embarrassing way.
- **Use "Antiseptic Bouncing."** Provide campers with opportunities to take a break from a task, a group or an environment. Ask an over-stimulated or stressed camper to deliver a message, complete a job, get a drink of water or run an errand.
- **Create a "Retreat" or "Cool Down Spot."** Identify a space or corner of the room with quiet and calming materials such as stress balls, art supplies, soothing music or a journal in which to write.
- **Use interests and abilities to motivate participation and engagement.** Find out what a camper is interested in and enjoys doing. Put it on the schedule. Use interests to motivate campers to complete less-preferred tasks.



- **Consider flexible scheduling, time shifting or partial participation.** If a camper is struggling to make it through the day safely or successfully, adapt his or her schedule. Identify times when you anticipate problems and provide breaks or alternatives.

- **Create an individual behavior plan.** Set aside time to meet with all staff who work with a specific camper. Use a protocol to clarify a specific behavior of focus, consider possible triggers and identify two or three specific strategies to address this camper's behavior. Revisit the plan periodically to assess effectiveness.

## RESPONDING, REFLECTING, REPAIRING

Supportive communities commit to responding to challenges, reflecting on experiences, and repairing relationships

- **Pick your battles.** Avoid confronting negative behavior that can be tolerated. When considering confronting a negative behavior, ask yourself: "is this behavior unsafe?" Utilize strategies other than direct confrontation for behaviors that do not pose a threat to safety.

- **If a behavior is unsafe, be firm in your words and actions.** Always address "Big No" behaviors—those that are emotionally or physically unsafe. Tell campers: "it is my job to keep you safe."

- **Confront privately.** Position yourself deliberately to calm a camper and redirect his or her behavior. When a camper is escalated, avoid an audience. Use quiet tones or step aside with the camper.

- **Allow space and time to cool down.** When campers are escalated, allow time for them to drain off their negative emotions. Give space, time and quiet to cool down.

- **Drop the rope.** A power struggle is like a game of tug-of-war. Your best move is often to simply drop the rope. Remove yourself from an escalating power struggle. Later, when the camper (and you) are calm, follow through and address the issue involved.

- **Recognize your own triggers and angry feelings.** Moments of anger, frustration and other difficult feelings are opportunities to model and teach. Take space, deep breaths or a minute to think when you are feeling agitated. Enlist the help of other counselors.

- **Use consequences carefully.** Whenever possible, caution campers about potential consequences. Consequences should be clear, consistent and connected to the behavior. Avoid giving consequences when you are angry.

- **Have a plan for processing conflict and allowing for restitution.** Develop structured responses to crisis and conflict that provide opportunities for campers (and adults) to reflect, repair and plan for the future.

- **Debrief critical incidents with counselors and campers.** Set aside time to debrief and reflect. Provide information, identify feelings, flag triggers and brainstorm next steps and solutions.

(Ramapo for Children)

## Setting Camper Goals, Tracking Them and Achieving Them!

Most campers participating in disability and inclusion programs in summer camps have IEPs (Individualized Education Program/Plan) in their school settings.

IEPs can take a long time for the team to write—and they can take a long time for camp staff to read! They usually provide useful information about goals, what successful attainment of those goals will look like, and which professionals, providing which supports, will help the student reach those goals.

It is similarly important to set specific goals for each camper, develop a plan of how to help the child achieve them (including what staff members play which roles to support achievement of those goals), and track progress regularly.

Camps may wish to adopt the IEP concept and adapt it for camp as an Individualized Camper Program (ICP) . Sample areas to consider include:

- socialization
- activities of daily living

- meal time/nutrition
- vocational
- transitions
- sports
- chugim/electives
- others (behavior at present, etc.)

Begin by asking parents what *they* would like to see their child achieve this summer. They may state social goals, daily living skills goals, activities they would like to see their children try (examples: climb the alpine tower, become a deep water swimmer, lead *haMotzi* for the whole camp), and more. It may be useful to ask parents to consider goals for this summer and for the longer term, perhaps setting 5 and 10 year goals. This is often a useful way to decide which incremental goals to prioritize; it also helps parents to think about their child's future in manageable steps.

Once parents offer their goals, staff members begin to observe and assess campers in their bunk and in the division. They begin to get a sense of campers' areas of interest and what they need to work on in terms of self-care. It is useful to write down these goals—in preparation for the ICP (Individualized Camper Profile) conference.

Here are two sample ICPs filled out by counselors: one for an 18 year-old participant in a vocational training program and the other for a 14 year-old camper in a disabilities camping program.

One ongoing challenge for staff is how to keep track of camper goals and continue moving campers toward achievement of these goals. One suggestion is to devote time in each daily/weekly staff meeting to discussing several (or all) campers to assess how they are progressing, which goals should be amended/added, etc. Another suggestion is to have a member of the team responsible to track all campers' progress toward ICP goals. The ICP will be a useful tool for future reports—orally or in writing—to parents and school districts.

## Individualized Camper Program 1 (sample form)

Camper Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Bunk # \_\_\_\_\_

Counselors' Names \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Socialization

*Behavior at Present:* very social, loves to say hello to every counselor and at camp, she says hello by giving a giant frontal hug and then hanging on to the counselor's arm. At each activity the camper prefers to sit or stand next to a counselor and will usually lean on or hold on to the counselor throughout. The camper also asks very personal questions of her counselors.

*Overall goal:* to learn appropriate social interactions

*How this is going to happen (step-by-step):* have her answer her own questions, point out that if she knows the answers, that the questions she is asking are unnecessary. Camper will give high fives or wave hello to counselors as she passes them in transition or at the dining room. Counselors will discuss with her and write/review with her a social story about appropriate times to give hugs and to lean on counselors for social contact. Counselors will carve out specific times when they will sit together and read the story. Give a good morning and good night hug.

### Activities of Daily Living

*Behavior at Present:* is very slow to get out of bed. She takes a long time to move from one activity to the next or to get dressed. In the dining hall she asks for help cutting her food, peeling her oranges and putting butter on her bread. These are all things that she is capable of doing. When she wants a drink from the water cooler, she asks someone else to get it instead of walking over to get it herself.

*Overall goal:* Get things for herself, move faster, abide by time limits

*How this is going to happen (step-by-step):* utilize her watch, remind her to time things and to look at what time she starts and when she should end.

### Meal Time/Nutrition

*Behavior at Present:* she overeats at meals, filling her tray with many more items than she should consume in one sitting. She does not understand nutritional value of food or how to eat just enough to satisfy her hunger.

*Overall goal:* understand what foods are considered healthy and what it means to eat in moderation

*How this is going to happen (step-by-step):* point out the healthier components of meals in the dining hall. Also emphasize that everything is healthy enough, in moderation. Help her to determine what an appropriate serving size is. Have her eat slowly and take a break before deciding if she is still hungry. Provide a healthy snack if she is hungry between meals.

### Vocational

*Possible jobs:* keeping area clean, making her bed, cleaning the bathroom, taking out trash, kitchen, caring for the horses

## Transitions

*Behavior at Present:* She complains that she needs to go back to the bunk because she forgot something there or she needs to do something or get something (brush her teeth, her hair is knotted, she forgot to wear a hair tie)

*Overall goal:* minimize the number of times that she needs to go back to the bunk each day.

*How this is going to happen (step-by-step):* remind her that she can only go back to the bunk at rest hour and at shower time. Five minutes before leaving the bunk, check in to see if she has done everything that she wants to do, has everything she wants to take with her, and is ready to leave.

## Sport

*Behavior at Present:* loves to play sports but feels that she is not very good at it.

*Overall goal:* work on dribbling and throwing a basketball

*How this is going to happen (step-by-step):* have a counselor or someone who is good at basketball participate in the game and teach how through modeling.

## Activities

*Behavior at Present:* nature, follows directions, loves to touch and hold the animals. She tends to interrupt others

*Overall goal:* to minimize attention-seeking behavior from the specialty counselor

*How this is going to happen (step-by-step):* tell the counselor to remind her that they have already said hello to each other at the beginning of the activity and that she will be sure to say goodbye at the end. Encourage her to wait until the specialist is done talking to other campers before calling her name out, and then, only to call it once.

## Other

*Behavior at Present:* wakes up very early and is very loud before the rest of the cabin wakes up

*Overall goal:* to self-entertain when she wakes in the morning, without disrupting others

*How this is going to happen (step-by-step):* she will have a crate near or bed with books, pens and paper to keep her busy in the morning. She can also listen to music with headphones in the morning.

## Individualized Camper Program 2 (sample form)

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Summer: \_\_\_\_\_

Camp Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Support Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Division Head: \_\_\_\_\_ Group Counselors: \_\_\_\_\_

Floater: \_\_\_\_\_

BASIC CAMPER PROFILE: (Refer to Phone Screen & Background Information Form.)

Camper's Strengths and Interests:
Camper's Dislikes:
Camper's Challenges and Triggers:
Signs That Staff Should Intervene (e.g. behaviors, body language, statements, etc.)
Helpful Interventions & Coping Strategies
Areas of Accommodation: (Please indicate all that apply.)

(Refer to Brief Telephone Screen Form & Background Information Form.)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vision            | <input type="checkbox"/> Socialization                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Auditory          | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotion and behavior management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sensory           | <input type="checkbox"/> Activity level                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication     | <input type="checkbox"/> Self Help                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Style    | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical/ Physical |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other - _____     |  |

Sensory Sensitivities: (Refer to Background Information Form.)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bright light      | <input type="checkbox"/> Textures (food/clothing, etc.)      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loud sounds/noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Water (texture, touch, temperature) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smells            | <input type="checkbox"/> Crowds (noise, touch)               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Touch             | <input type="checkbox"/> Temperature                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pain              | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other - _____     |  |

Please describe:

Settings In Which This Camper May Benefit From Support:

(Refer to sensory, behavioral, and safety information from Phone Screen and Background Forms and consider that in the context of camp.)

- |  |                                       |   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parking Lot   | <input type="checkbox"/> Bus          | <input type="checkbox"/> Division Shelter             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bathrooms     | <input type="checkbox"/> Upper Field  | <input type="checkbox"/> Lower Field                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Pools | <input type="checkbox"/> Frog Pond    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science/Technology Field     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Locker Rooms  | <input type="checkbox"/> Boating Pond | <input type="checkbox"/> "Pioneer Village" (CCP)      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking Trails | <input type="checkbox"/> Infirmary    | <input type="checkbox"/> Large Amphitheater (Shabbat) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other - _____ |                                       |   |

Please describe:

Activities In Which This Camper May Benefit From Support:

(Refer to personal strengths and challenges, sensory, behavioral, and safety information from Phone Screen and Background Forms and consider that in the context of camp.)

Group constellation:

\_\_\_ Activities with assigned group (e.g. morning)

\_\_\_ Activities in which campers are in mixed groups (e.g. bus, by program unit)

\_\_\_ Activities that include the whole camp (e.g. Shabbat, Maccabiah games)

Transitions and less structured times:

\_\_\_ Bus Rides

\_\_\_ Morning Meetings

\_\_\_ Transitions (from bus to shelter, between activities, changing for swim, etc.)

\_\_\_ Lunch

\_\_\_ Afternoon bus lines/ Snack

\_\_\_ Times when other camps are present (pool, locker room, parking lot, etc.)

Specific Activity:

\_\_\_ Sports

\_\_\_ Yoga

\_\_\_ Gymnastics

\_\_\_ Zumba

\_\_\_ Martial Arts

\_\_\_ Boating

\_\_\_ Instructional Swim

\_\_\_ Mini Golf

\_\_\_ General Swim

\_\_\_ DJ Dance Parties

\_\_\_ Performing Arts

\_\_\_ Maccabiah Games

\_\_\_ Arts and Crafts

\_\_\_ Weekly Shabbat Celebration

\_\_\_ Science and Technology

\_\_\_ Mainstages Theater Company

\_\_\_ CCP (Cooking, Camping and Pioneering)

\_\_\_ Trips

\_\_\_ Photojournalism

\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

STAFF COVERAGE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff To Be Informed of ICP			
<input type="checkbox"/> Camp Director	<input type="checkbox"/> Director of Program Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Support Supervisor	
<input type="checkbox"/> Division Head	<input type="checkbox"/> Group Counselors	<input type="checkbox"/> Floater(s)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Assistant Director	<input type="checkbox"/> Program Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/> Bus Staff	
<input type="checkbox"/> Activity	Specialist(s)	-	Please specify:
-----			
<input type="checkbox"/> Swim Instructor/ Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Camp Nurse/Doctor	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:-----	
Support Ratio			
<input type="checkbox"/> Camper requires a 1:1 throughout the course of the camp day.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Camper benefits from a 1:2 (floater) throughout the course of the camp day.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Camper benefits from a 1:3 (floater) throughout the course of the camp day.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Camper requires a 1:1 during these particular activities/transitions (please check a 2 <sup>nd</sup> support ratio level for all other activities):			
<input type="checkbox"/> Child would benefit from a floater assigned to the group for extra assistance as needed.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Child would benefit from a floater assigned to the group for extra assistance during these activities/transitions:			
Recommendations regarding staffing			
If possible and available, this camper would benefit from:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Male floater	<input type="checkbox"/> Group counselors that are more structured		
<input type="checkbox"/> Female floater	<input type="checkbox"/> Group counselors that are more easy-going/ flexible		
<input type="checkbox"/> Floater who is hands on and facilitates			



Floater who takes a step back, observes, and intervenes only if necessary  
 Staff that has a background in (e.g. education, S/L, OT, PT, social work/psychology)

Support Supervisor Involvement\*

How often will the Support Supervisor receive information and consult with this camper's counselors/floaters?

Morning and Afternoon       Daily       Every other day       Weekly

How will information be shared?

Verbal report       Communication notebook  
 Written report       Team meetings

When will the information be shared (e.g. days of the week, time of day)?

Under what circumstances should the Support Supervisor be contacted during the camp day to assist with this camper?

\*At a minimum, each camper ICP should be reviewed on a weekly basis and if necessary changes proposed and reviewed with Support Administration to determine whether revisions will be made to the ICP.

Communication With The Camper's Family

Who will be be this family's main contact for reports on the camper's progress?

Camp Director       Director of Program Support  
 Support Supervisor       Division Head

Name of staff assigned:

Will a daily communication notebook be used for this camper to communicate with the parent(s)/guardian(s)?

No       Yes

If yes, please indicate the staff responsible:

If no communication notebook is used, how often can the parent expect to receive a progress report for the camper?

Daily       Weekly       At the end of each camp session.

Feedback will be:  Verbal       Written       Other:

#### MEDICAL INFORMATION

(Refer to Background Information Form.)

Does the camper have any allergies?

No       Yes

If yes, please list:

Does the camper take any medications?

No       Yes

If yes, please indicate times during the camp day that medication will be dispensed:

#### CONSULTATION

Current signed release on file to consult with community professionals or helpers who know the camper, as needed?

No       Yes

If yes: Name of professional/agency/helper

SUPPORT PLAN

TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE\*

Time	Activity	Support?
8:15am	Bus Pick Ups	
9-9:30	Morning Meeting	
9:30-10:15	Activity 1	
10:30-11	Instructional Swim	
11:15-12	Activity 2	
12-12:30	Lunch	
12:30-2:15	Unit/Choice Time 1	
2:30-3	Free Swim	
3-3:30	Unit/Choice Time 2	
3:30-4	Snack/ Bathroom	
4:00	Buses Depart	
4:45pm	Arrival at Bus Stop	

\*On days that involve special events, please consult ICP for information about whether additional support will be required.

#1 - Target Behavior/ Challenge/ Area for Accommodation:
Goal:
Activities/Settings:

Accommodations Required/Helpful Techniques:	Staff Responsible:

#2 - Target Behavior/ Challenge/ Area for Accommodation:	
Goal:	
Activities/Settings:	
Accommodations Required/Helpful Techniques:	Staff Responsible:

#3 - Target Behavior/ Challenge/ Area for Accommodation:

Goal:	
Activities/Settings:	
Accommodations Required/Helpful Techniques:	Staff Responsible:

#4 - Target Behavior/ Challenge/ Area for Accommodation:	
Goal:	
Activities/Settings:	
Accommodations Required/Helpful Techniques:	Staff Responsible:


#5 - Target Behavior/ Challenge/ Area for Accommodation:	
Goal:	
Activities/Settings:	
Accommodations Required/Helpful Techniques:	Staff Responsible:

### Daily Camper Report form: (used at Camp Harlam)

This form, used for internal purposes only, is another way in which we can “take the pulse” of campers (and staff) and gather information about everyone’s health and well-being. Completed daily by cabin counselors and specialty counselors for all campers in a bunk, it is reviewed by their unit leadership and our Camper Care professionals. The form provides basic information about overall well-being, any challenges campers may be facing, areas that staff are concerned about, and issues needing follow-up attention or inclusion staff support. Once submitted and reviewed, unit leadership and camper care staff can consult with cabin staff as needed to address any issues or concerns and, if needed, intervene directly with campers. These forms are kept confidential and are used to track camper concerns over time and emerging issues related to individual campers or groups of campers. They create a record of a camper’s experience that can be useful as a reference throughout and in future summers.

# Camp Harlam Daily Camper Report (DCR) '14

Sun. Mon. Tue. Wed. Thu. Fri. Sat.  
 Month/Day: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

*This is CONFIDENTIAL, and may not be shared without permission of Professional Staff.*

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_  Please mark which counselor(s) completed today's DCR  
 \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_   
 \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CHECK BOXES: Put a ✓ in boxes to mark a YES response

RATINGS: 1-Difficult/Poor 2-Below Average 3-Average 4-Good 5-Great!

Overall Behavior	Participation at Activities	Overall Happiness	Friendship/Getting Along	TOTAL	NAME	Feel Home-sick	Camper-Camper Issue	Not Eating Well	Poor Hygiene	Accident/Injury	Cold/Cough/Flu	Sunburn/Rash/Cut/ Bruise	Went to H Center	NEED CAMPER CARE HELP
OVERALL CABIN RATING														

1. Please provide more information/details for any boxes marked 1, 2 or 3 (above):

UNIT LEAD. Initials	PRO STAFF Initials	CAMPER CARE Initials
USE BACK OF FORM AS NEEDED...		

2. Please provide more information/details for any health-related boxes CHECKED (above):

3. Is there assistance or follow-up needed for any camper issues described (above), and if so, what? What steps have already been taken or are planned?

4. Please provide OTHER INFORMATION about campers, cabin or any other issues that you are feeling/seeing that you feel are important:



## Sociogram Form: (used at URJ Camp George and Camp Harlam)

While camps have a number of systems in place to observe, assess and provide support for individual campers, the interpersonal relationships and overall group dynamics at camp are also worth our attention, to ensure the overall health of a community. The sociogram, adapted from colleagues at URJ Camp George, provides camp staff a tool for gaining insight into the bunk's group dynamics. It provides a focal point and opportunity for cabin staff to collaboratively process what is happening within their group and to strategize improvements, often with the help of the Camper Care team.

At URJ Camp Harlam, every bunk staff meets with the Camper Care team about a week into each session to map out its group dynamics using the sociogram form. As cabin counselors and specialty counselors complete this exercise, Harlam's Camper Care team are able to process their experiences with the group, problem-solve, and empower staff to model and support healthy relationships within their bunk. Strategies to improve the overall dynamics are discussed and the unit leadership and Camper Care team can make note of any issues needing follow up attention. Camp leadership can learn a lot, not only about how individuals are doing and how certain peer groups are getting along, but also about how to support bunk staff in managing challenging camper behaviors and relationships.

### 2014 Camp Harlam Sociogram Form

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/2014

Unit/Cabin: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Completing: \_\_\_\_\_

Please read these instructions carefully before completing the Sociogram for your cabin.


#### How to Use the Sociogram

1. Write the names of every camper into one of the circles. If you have more campers than there are circles, please consult with Camper Care.

2. The connections (or lines) between the circles are to detail personal information, observations, or challenges of each individual camper and how they relate to others in the cabin.

a. Use \_\_\_\_\_ to connect two circles where a friendship exists.

b. Use - - - - - to show a "wannabe" friendship (i.e. Shira wants to be friends with Hannah but isn't). Write why the friendship is not happening.

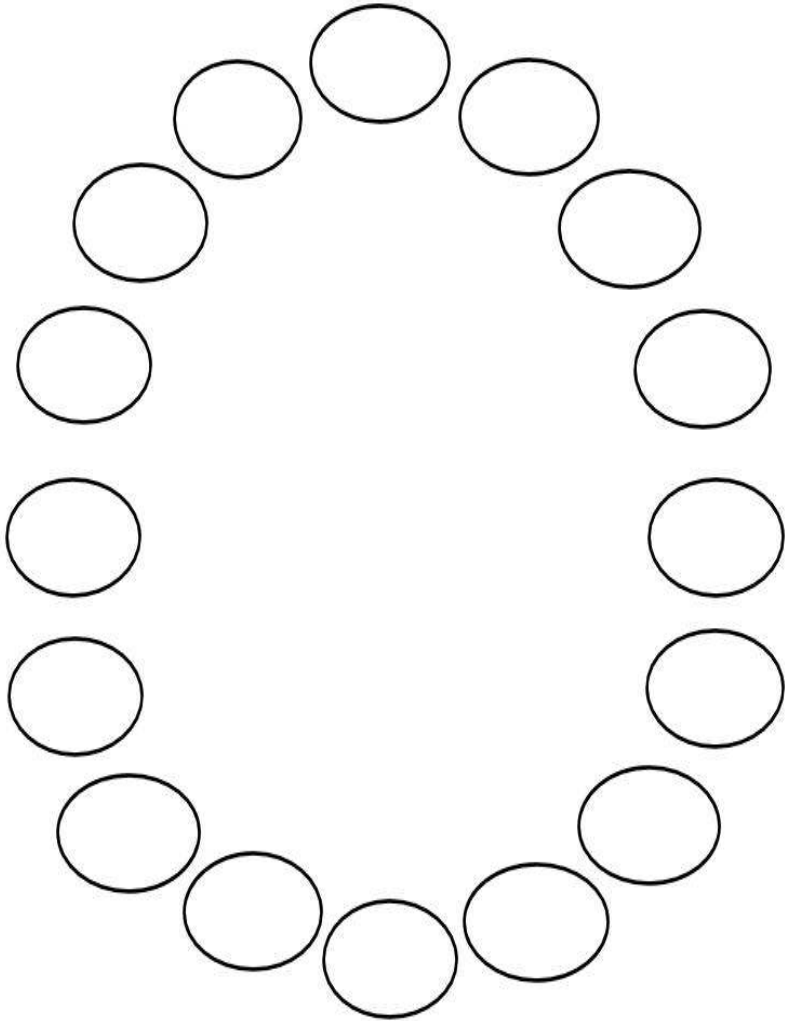
c. Use  to show a clash, or conflict. Explain why there is a conflict.

Please complete the following questions in reference to the Sociogram on the next page.

Use the space below to add more information about who's who among the cabin: who's in, who's out, who's the target of any negative behaviors? Are there cliques (exclusive groups) within the group? What's going well?

What are you, as staff, doing to manage these relationships?

Use the space below to write out any action steps the staff will take to help make this group even stronger and the relationships stronger. What tools will you use to help improve the well-being of the group?



# Behavior Planning Charts

This section was shared with us by Gateways: Access to Jewish Education, based in Boston. They “provide high quality special education services, programs, and resources to enable children with diverse learning needs to participate meaningfully in Jewish life.” Some of these materials, created for use in the classroom, may be adapted and used in a camp setting. The rich materials below combine short social stories and reminders of expected behaviors as well as consequences and rewards. These materials may be helpful in reviewing expectations and rules for a camper. They may also be useful in helping campers name and process feelings

Table of Contents:

- Behavior Chart 1
- Behavior Chart 2
- Behavior Chart 3
- Positive Plan of Action
- Processing Graphic Organizer
- Five Point Scale

## Behavior Chart 1

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I enjoy coming to Gateways! When I am at Gateways, it is important for me to have fun and be kind to my friends. When I stay calm, keep my voice at a regular level and use kind words, then I get to participate in class. My teachers and friends will want to pay attention to me. Sometimes I might want to raise my voice, yell or slam things because I am frustrated, When this happens I will remember to keep those thoughts inside. I can take deep breaths, count 1-5, ask to get a drink of water or take a walk. My teachers, friends and volunteer will be very proud of me for keeping my voice at a normal level and using only positive words. When I say negative words out loud, when I raise my voice or use a negative tone of voice I will get an X below. On the third X, I have to go in the hallway for 2 minutes. I can also choose to go to the hall if I need a break.

	2	3	Leave Room
--	---	---	---------------

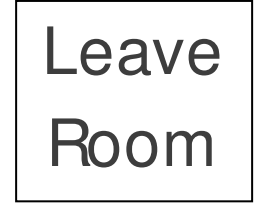
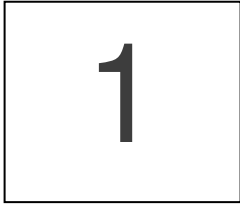
Since I have already had my Bar Mitzvah, I understand that it is important that I show more mature behavior. I can be kind to others by saying helpful things to my friends, keeping my tone of voice at a normal level and keeping angry words that express my frustrations inside. When I am patient, say nice things to others, and keep angry words and actions to myself, I will get a star below. I will get special coloring sheets or stickers to take home whenever I get 5 stars in the same class period.

--	--	--	--	--

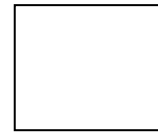
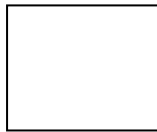
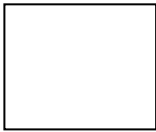
## Behavior Chart 2

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I enjoy coming to Gateways! When I am at Gateways, it is important for me to use nice language. When I use appropriate language, I get to participate in class, and my teachers and friends will want to pay attention to me. Sometimes I might want to say a non-school word or say something to a classmate that might be hurtful, and when this happens I will remember to keep those thoughts inside. My teachers, tutors and buddy will be very proud of me for keeping non-school words and actions to myself. When I say non-school words out loud, when I act aggressively toward another person, or when I say something hurtful to a classmate, I will get an X below. On the third X, I have to go in the hallway for 2 minutes.



Since I have already had my Bar Mitzvah I understand that it is important that I show more mature behavior. I can be kind to others by saying helpful things to my friends, and keeping non-school words and actions inside. When I am patient, say nice things to others, and keep non-school words and actions to myself, I will get a star below.



### Behavior Chart 3

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I enjoy coming to Gateways! When I am at Gateways, it is important for me to have fun and be kind to my friends. I can work hard and follow my rules to be able to trade my stars in for a special activity (a choice I make!). These are my rules:

- Quiet and calm body
- Listen to my volunteer when they say nice things
- Use an indoor voice
- Use positive phrases
- Use my words to tell my volunteer how I am feeling (use my 5 point scale)
- When my new ways to show that I am angry:
  - squish a ball
  - ask for “one more minute”
  - take deep breaths
  - Ask for a break outside (get a drink of water or go to the bathroom)
  - Re-read my story

When I follow my rules and use my new ways to show that I am angry, I can earn my stars. When I collect all of my stars, I can trade them in for a super, awesome surprise that I get to choose!

--	--	--	--	--

## Positive Plan of Action

If I follow this plan, I will be a mensch, a good guy and a positive presence in my Gateways class:

1. I will participate in class and do the things that everyone else does. This includes: Circle time, art and music. I can do my own thing during the first 10 minutes of class, from 9:30-9:40 am.
2. I will maintain a positive attitude with my volunteer, Liz, and other Gateways staff (like Dori). This means: not talking back, arguing or pushing back. I may ask a question 1x only and even if I don't agree with the answer I will let the issue go.
3. I will get the chance to go first sometimes, but not every time. Everyone deserves a chance to go first and when it is someone else's turn I will not complain or get upset.

If I earn 2 checks for positive behavior in each part of class then I will get a reward.

Music

--	--

Circle Time

--	--

Art

--	--

Hebrew

--	--

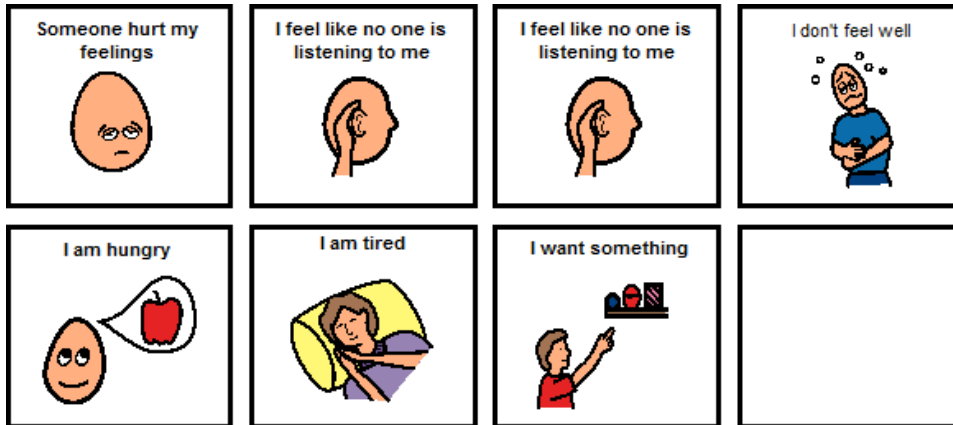
# Processing Graphic Organizer

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Right now, I am feeling:



I am feeling this way because:








A strategy I can use to help me feel better is:



My teachers, friends and family will be so proud of me for making good choices.

## Five Point Scale

Sometimes it is useful to help a camper assign a level/number value to how he is feeling in a given situation. As the pictures suggest, level 1 is happy and calm, whereas 5 is “ready to explode.” This chart helps camper and staff member “take the temperature” of a given situation, identify *what* is happening to cause this feeling, and what can be done to potentially help improve the situation.

Level	What is happening	Makes me feel...	What I can do
<b>5</b>			
<b>4</b>			
<b>3</b>			
<b>2</b>			
<b>1</b>			



# Behavior and Social Skills Tips



## Behavior Tip Sheet

- **Behavior = Communication.** Be a detective and address the root of the behavior rather than reacting to the behavior itself.
- Beware of unstructured downtime.
- Don't take behaviors personally.
- Ensure that expectations are clear and understood.



- Get to know your campers well and **focus on strengths and interests** rather than weaknesses.
- Know when you need support and ask for help! There will be times when you are not up to the task, and need to “tag out.”
- Utilize **natural consequences**, not vengeful punishments, to help campers change their behavior for the future.



"I wouldn't say your son is a bad child.  
He's gifted at disruptive behavior."

- If a camper does not want to participate, **provide choices**, ensuring that both options are acceptable.
- The best behavior management plan is a well-planned and engaging program!

## Integrating Social Skills

### BEING A FACILITATOR

It is important to use every opportunity to have the child practice social skills throughout the camp day.

Your job is to be the facilitator and prompter. What do you think your responsibility is as a facilitator or prompter? Answer as a group.

Here are some ways that can help the child utilize his or her social skills better in a group setting:

- Focus on getting the child to have a simple conversation with another child.
- Encourage active listening skills, such as maintaining eye contact,
- Encourage the child to utilize the help of their peers (e.g. having the child ask a friend for help vs. a counselor).
- Encourage independence: If the child is able to complete a task on his or her own (without prompting), allow it and praise it.
- Provide positive reinforcement when the child is appropriately using social skills.
- Make sure the child knows that it is fun to socialize, motivate the campers to use their social skills.

## WHEN AND HOW TO PROMPT

When should you prompt a camper? Answer as a group.

Observe the situation and wait 10 seconds to assess if the child is able to complete the task independently. Then, intervene with the following prompts:

- Gestural
- Model
- Verbal
- Physical

As a group, provide examples of each type of prompt.

## WHEN AND HOW DO I ASSIST A CHILD WHO NEEDS SUPPORT?

- You will want to use prompting techniques when the child is not engaged in an activity. You should assist the child when s/he:
  - Is not motivated to play with others
  - Is not responding to others in a play or academic situation
  - Is not interacting in group play
  - Is not using verbal and nonverbal communication skills appropriately
- Know what social skills are going to be taught each week so that you can reinforce the skill with your campers every day
- Provide reminders and visual cues for target behaviors that the campers are learning
- Be patient and listen: Children learning a better or more adaptive way to respond to a particular situation or event will often have trouble with the change.
  - Maintain discipline, structure, and routine. Consistency is a key for both comfort and learning.
  - Remember behavior = communication. What is the behavior telling you and what can you teach as a more positive, appropriate replacement behavior for that child?
  - Use praise and positive feedback. Let children know what they are doing right and remind them to use that skill, or make that choice, again next time.
  - If campers are exhibiting negative behaviors, provide an opportunity for them to go to safe places and calm down.
  - Take time in getting to know your campers' strengths and triggers are in order to better assist them during the camp day.
  - Maintain communication with your campers, co-counselors, and supervisors so that everyone knows what is going on in a child's day.
  - Encourage an environment of inclusion and acceptance.
  - Always model the behavior we expect our children to exhibit and be a positive example to your campers.

## ACTIVITY

In a small group, identify at least three target social skills that apply to your campers' age group (what you teach or are responsible for) from the list of "Common Social Skills." Then come up with the following:

- Identify where and when during a typical camp day you could reinforce those skills (think about potential teaching or learning opportunities)
  - Describe the strategies you would use to help the group or individual work on that skill
  - Talk about how you would provide feedback on the campers' skill or understanding afterwards

## COMMON SOCIAL SKILLS

- Compromising
- Sharing
- Taking turns
- Dealing with winning and losing/being a good sport
- Accepting differences
- Good listening
- Greetings
- Meeting new people/introducing yourself
- Initiating a conversation
- Maintaining conversations (asking questions/making comments)
- Staying on topic during conversations
- Nonverbal cues/interest vs. boredom
- Ending a conversation
- Sensitive topics
- Being a friend/showing empathy
- Helping others
- Being patient
- Asking for help
- Giving/receiving compliments
- Praising others
- Showing modesty (avoid bragging)
- Personal space
- Asking for permission/respecting others' belongings
- Apologizing/repairing relationships
- Using good manners
- Respecting others' opinions
- Working cooperatively in groups
- Self-control (stop, think, breathe)
- Accepting consequences and disappointment
- Peer pressure
- Dealing with teasing
- Accepting "no" for an answer
- Dealing with being left out
- Accepting criticism
- Being assertive ("I" statements)

## Responding to Behavior Challenges

- Any camper engaging in challenging behaviors is not "bad" or "freaking out," and s/he is not directing the behavior toward you personally, or intending to disrespect you with it.
  - BEHAVIOR = COMMUNICATION
  - Campers may lack the verbal skills to handle stressful or anxiety-provoking situations appropriately
  - We must always ask the questions, "Why," and "What is s/he trying to communicate?"
  - Look for "triggers"; what preceded the challenging behavior?

- Triggers (upsetting situations that spark a negative behavioral response) may be immediate, such as an unpredicted transition, a change in the schedule, sensitivity to heat, having to wait his or her turn, etc. But responses to triggers may also be delayed: he did not sleep well or eat breakfast; she got in a fight with a sibling or another camper, etc.
  - Observe patterns in behavior
  - Look to identify “precursors” to challenging behavior, such as change in tone of voice, increase in motor activity, agitation, dulled responses and changes in facial expressions/mood. With this information, you can act to forestall a negative behavior:
    - Ask your camper to take a walk with you, take him or her for a drink of water, ask him or her to help you with something (interrupt and provide a distraction)
    - Encourage your camper to request a break
    - Offer to talk about what is bothering him or her (if verbal abilities are strong enough) or to help problem-solve after the break is over (can also use pictures of feelings)
  - Prevention is the best medicine.
  - If we know our campers’ specific “triggers” and behavioral patterns, we can intervene earlier and avoid or prevent challenging behavior
    - Provide a countdown for a camper with trouble transitioning
    - Visually or verbally show a camper when his or her turn is coming
    - Remind the camper what s/he can do immediately before an activity or situation which has led to a challenging behavior in the past

### General Tips and Strategies (these will vary from camper to camper)

- Obtain eye contact prior to delivering any directions or instructions to assure that you have your camper’s attention
  - Avoid excess language, only use key words
  - If a multi-step direction is given, break it down by giving one direction at a time
  - Ask your camper to repeat directions back to you to ensure comprehension
  - Provide encouragement to stay with your current activity
  - If your camper is off-task or begins to wander from an activity, provide redirection back to the activity.
  - Redirection can be gestural or verbal
  - If verbal, make directions clear and concise
  - Use “first \_\_\_ then \_\_\_” statements if the camper is requesting something other than the activity (when appropriate). For example, “first we will make your bed, then you can sit on the porch with your friend”
  - If a camper begins to show signs of becoming upset or an increase in anxiety, ask if s/he needs a break
    - Be careful that breaks do not begin to be used too often to avoid certain activities
    - Ask for help from the inclusion team when you need it!!

### Effective Praise

A goal of educators (camp counselors and staff) is to help children to become intrinsically motivated. Children's self-worth develops as an outcome of working hard, surmounting frustrations, and overcoming obstacles. Honest praise provides children with the opportunity to gain a realistic understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. In order to feel strong, confident and independent, children must receive truthful valuation. Children, who have grown accustomed to continuous applause, may develop anxiety about their abilities, a fear of failure, a reluctance to try new things, and be ill-prepared to cope with future setbacks.

Failure is an essential part of skill-building. Children must feel encouraged and safe to attempt a skill that they have not yet mastered; if they wait to have full mastery before attempting a skill, they will never attempt it and therefore, will never master it. Only through trying, failing, trying again, adjusting, and trying again, does anyone build and internalize skills. This is true for all people and skills in every domain: language, athletics, mathematics, social, music, art, self-care, etc.

Effective praise focuses on a child's effort rather than on what is actually accomplished. When educators (camp counselors and staff) give genuine praise that is specific, spontaneous and well-deserved, it encourages

continuous attempts and learning, makes trying new things feel safer, and decreases competition among students.

How can educators (camp counselors and staff) use praise effectively?

- Think in terms of acknowledgment and encouragement rather than praise. Praise helps most when it conveys not only approval but information about the progress a child is making. For example, "You have been trying so hard to learn those new words; now look how many you are able to read!"
- Demonstrate interest and acceptance in children because they have innate value that is not contingent on their work. For example, say, "(Child's name), I am so glad you are in my class."
- Use positive body language such as smiling, looking directly at the child, standing close, listening intently, and assisting when needed.
- Acknowledge a child's effort or progress without judgment using clear, specific language. Offering descriptive praise shows that you are paying close attention. For example:
  - "I noticed how you took time to show the new student around the school. I am sure she appreciated the help."
  - "I can see that you enjoy math. You have worked on these problems for over half an hour!"
  - "I'm glad to see you are working so hard on your spelling words!"
  - Whenever possible, take the time to say something similar to the above examples, instead of using a generic response like, "Great work," "That's terrific!" or "You're super!"
- Communicate constructive observations. For example, say,
  - "You listened without interrupting."
  - "John is sharing with Thomas."
  - "Lily is waiting patiently in line."
  - "Margaret and Suzanne are working quietly."
  - "You put the books away without being asked."
- Acknowledge a child's specific behavior rather than commenting on his/her character. For example, "Since you have been doing all your math homework, you have brought up your grade!" rather than saying, "You are such a good student."
- Foster children's discussion and evaluation of their work by asking questions, "I can see that you worked hard on this project. Can you tell me about it?" or "How do you feel about your report? Is there anything else that needs to be done?" When adults listen to children, they are demonstrating interest and caring. You can go even further, by indicating that their efforts sparked your interest: "Your experiment makes me wonder what might happen if..." "That is so interesting! Now you've caused me to want to learn even more about..."
- Encourage positive character traits in students by naming them. For example, "Boys and girls, I appreciate that each of you was quiet while I talked to Mrs. Jones. You were being respectful."
- Relate praise to effort and to how it benefited the child as well as others. Say things like, "Since you remembered to make your own bed, you have more time to relax and I have had more time to spend helping the other campers."
- Promote initiative and attempting new skills. For example, "You listened well and followed directions without any help," and "Last week you could not kick the ball, but you practiced, and now you can!"
- Encourage perseverance and independence by saying things such as, "That experiment did not work out. What's next?" and "Instead of asking for my help, you went over another camper and said, 'Hi,' by yourself!"
- Acknowledge independent thought and creativity, "That's an interesting idea. Tell me more."
- Reinforce problem-solving skills by saying things like, "As a group, you decided who would be responsible for each part of the project."
- Sometimes, you should compliment a camper privately in order to provide an opportunity for an open, honest exchange. This will also decrease student competition that can occur when children feel that you favor some more than others.
- Reserve exuberant praise for outstanding effort. "That's amazing," is inappropriate in scale to tying one's shoe independently, unless that skill is a tremendously high reach for the camper.

## CHAPTER 10: VISUAL SCHEDULES, SOCIAL STORIES, AND OTHER PLANNING TOOLS

The predictable routine of summer camp—both day and overnight—is generally beneficial for all campers. Campers with disabilities, especially those with autism, rely on this sameness; sometimes, children with autism have difficulties with unexpected changes of routine. Changes of schedule are inevitable at camp, as in the case of an unexpected thunderstorm which means cancelling swimming, boating or the ropes course. Campers often benefit from visual schedules, which they can consult throughout the day. It is possible to design a schedule which reflects contingency plans. For example, a schedule might note “special activity with life guards,” with pictures of swimming OR games with the lifeguards, depending on the weather.

This section includes a number of useful schedules and picture icons. Each camp uses slightly different words for certain activities and for division names. Included here is a detailed schedule of a division in one camp. It was created to help parents and therapists prepare campers ahead of time for camp, and (at the request of parents), for school districts that might consider funding camp if the educational and therapeutic components are in line with the child’s goals.

The concept of a social story is introduced in this section, with samples from several camp and educational settings. Feel free to adapt them to your setting.

### Visual Schedules

**Definition:** A daily visual schedule is a critical component to a structured environment. A visual schedule will tell the camper what activities will occur and in what sequence.

Visual schedules are important for children with disabilities because they:

- Help address difficulty the child might have with sequential memory and organization of time.
- Assist children with comprehension problems to understand what is expected of them.
- Lessen the anxiety level, and thus reduce the possible occurrence of challenging behavior, by providing the structure for the camper to organize around and be able to predict daily and weekly events. Schedules clarify that activities happen within a specific time period and that “break time” is coming, but after activity time. This also will alert the camper to any changes of schedule that might occur.
  - Assist the camper in transitioning independently between activities and environments by showing them where they go next.
  - Are based on a “first-then” strategy; first you do\_\_\_\_, then you do\_\_\_\_, rather than an “if-then” approach. This first-then strategy allows the first expectation to be modified as needed. Example: A camper is having particular difficulty with participation in learning to float on his back due to anxiety, change of instructors, etc. The task can be modified so that the child has to attempt the skill for 3 minutes first and then he/she has a break as indicated on the visual schedule.
  - Can incorporate various social interactions into the camper’s daily schedule (e.g. requiring appropriate social greetings, initiating a conversation at lunch, showing a completed project to a friend or counselor, etc.)

**Checking Schedules:** Some campers may need a “check schedule” visual or physical prompt to teach them to independently check their schedule, as well as learn the importance of their schedule. The child who relies too heavily on adult prompts rather than learning to check the schedule independently may have more difficulty understanding the importance of following the schedule and thus, will have limited success in using it.

A visual schedule for a camper with a disability must be directly taught and consistently used. Schedules are not temporary crutches from which campers are to be weaned. Rather, consider these schedules to be prosthetic or assistive tech devices. For a child with autism, the consistent use of a visual schedule is a life skill/habit with the potential to increase independent functioning throughout his/her life at camp, school, home, community, and later on, in work environments.

## Division Detailed Schedule

### 7:15: WAKE UP

When campers wake up, they begin getting ready for this day. Counselors encourage campers to increase their independence in ADLs (Activities of Daily Living) such as getting dressed and brushing teeth. Campers are expected to get ready and be on time for morning prayers.

### 7:45: TFILLOT (MORNING PRAYERS)

During morning prayers, campers learn the words as well as meanings of the prayers. Campers learn through engaging activities along with repetition of the prayers each day. During morning prayers campers are expected to sit with the group, follow along in the prayer book to the best of their abilities, participate by singing along as much as possible and sharing their ideas, and take on leadership roles, which are prompted regularly, by coming to the front of the room to help lead a prayer.

### 8:30: BREAKFAST

At camp we work on ADLs with our campers, and this includes proper behavior during meal time. Campers eat at a table with 2 staff and 5 or 6 campers. Campers are encouraged to make healthy choices, including going to the salad bar independently, helping to refill family-style dishes when they are empty, and helping to clean up and clear the table when the meal is over.

### 9:15: NIKAYON (CLEANING THE BUNK)

Every morning after breakfast campers return to the bunk to clean their areas and the common spaces. Campers work on independent skills in the areas of making a bed, folding clothes and organizing them on the shelves, cleaning the bathroom, using a broom and dustpan to sweep, taking out the garbage, and other skills in this area. Counselors work with campers using methods including task analysis to break down the tasks into manageable chunks to help the campers learn and become increasingly independent.

### 10:00: SWIM CLASS

Campers receive instructional swim each day in our beautiful lake. A trained swim instructor works with our campers to develop confidence and skills in the water. Depending on their level and ability, campers swim either in the shallow or deep areas of the lake, and receive specific instruction in swimming basics and stroke mechanics.

### 11:00: JEWISH STUDIES CLASS

An experiential education model is utilized for the Jewish Studies class. Campers may hear Jewish stories, participate in hands-on projects, act out bible stories, or have discussions about Jewish topics. Campers participate in activities and learn lessons related to their lives as Jewish kids and teens. Campers apply the lessons learned in Jewish Studies class to other aspects of life at camp, with the goal of helping them truly internalize the values and ideas discussed during this class. Topics covered include *Derech Eretz* (treating others with respect), *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world), and Jewish texts and holidays.

### 12:00: SPORTS

Structured as a time for our campers to interact with and form relationships with typical peers, campers participate in sport games and activities with typical campers, developing technical skills as well as social skills. They play physically active games that promote social interaction with peers as well as exercise. We have found this combination to work really well, as peers motivate each other and have a lot of fun exercising and playing sports together.

### 1:00: LUNCH

See Breakfast

### **1:45: REST HOUR**

Knowing how to well use down-time is something that is challenging for many of our campers. Rest hour serves the dual purpose of giving our campers some relaxation in the middle of a very active and busy day and helping them develop the skills to decide how to spend unstructured time. Campers may take a nap, or they may engage in a quiet activity on their bed, such as reading and writing letters to friends and family, doing activities in a workbook or coloring book, talking to their friends and counselors, or playing a quiet game, among other things. Some campers come to camp with activities and games specifically for use during rest hour.

### **2:30: ELECTIVES**

Campers choose from a variety of activities, including, but not limited to, arts and crafts, basketball, tennis, ceramics, woodworking, krav maga (a form of martial arts), cooking, ropes course, drama, and boating. During elective hours, campers build skills in the specialty areas they choose. Campers rotate their activity every 2 weeks, so that they get to participate in and learn about up to four activities per summer.

### **3:30: SHIRA/RIKUD (SINGING/DANCING)**

Our dance and music specialists run activities for our campers during this time. Over the course of the summer, campers have the opportunity to perform for the camp on several occasions, and this time is used to plan and practice those presentations, and to have fun while learning Hebrew songs and Israeli dances.

### **4:30: VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION**

This block of time is used to encourage our campers to begin thinking about what it means to have a job and develop specific job skills. Campers help prepare snacks for the younger kids in camp and deliver them, to see the impact of their work. Campers also help take care of our garden by planting, weeding, and watering the plants. Many campers do additional work at other times of the day, including working in our guesthouse folding towels, making beds and sweeping, working in the bakery run by our full-time vocational program for graduate campers, or working in the mail room.

### **5:30: BECHIROT (CHOICE)**

This is a flexible block of time. The counselors will often plan special activities for the campers during this time, such as boating or visiting the water trampoline. This time period is also sometimes used as shower time on busier days when campers need a break. Shower time is another time when campers are encouraged to increase their independence in ADLs. Counselors support campers, and aim to fade their support over the course of the summer to encourage independence in self-care skills such as showering and dressing.

### **6:30: DINNER**

See Breakfast

### **7:15: EVENING ACTIVITY**

The evening activity is planned by the counselors each day. The evening activity always has an overarching goal that focuses on growth, skill building and learning in some way. Examples include building go-carts to race, doing “mad-science” projects, or learning about Israel through fun, hands-on activities.



### **8:30: BEDTIME**

Once again, independence in ADLs is encouraged as campers prepare for bed. Each night, after everyone is ready for bed but before lights are out, counselors plan a special wind down activity, either by bringing in a guest who might tell a story, sing, or play guitar, or by going around the room and having everyone share the best part of their day. This is to help the campers wind down after an exciting day at camp and fall asleep.









## Day Camp Sample Picture Schedule

9:30-10:00	Photography 
10:00-10:30	A&C 
10:30-11:00	Nature 
11:00-11:30	Sports 
11:30-12:00	Lunch 
12:00-12:30	Tennis 
12:30-1:00	Drama 
1:00-1:15	Change 
1:15-1:45	Swim 
1:45-2:00	Change 

2:00-3:30	 Special Event
3:30-3:45	 Snack and Dismissal

### Overnight Camp Sample Picture Schedule

7:15-7:45	 Wake up
7:45-8:30	 Morning prayers
8:30-9:15	 Breakfast
9:15-10:00	 Cleaning the bunk
10:00-11:00	 Swim class
11:00-12:00	 Drama
12:00-1:00	 Sports

1:00-1:45	Lunch 
1:45-2:30	Rest hour 
2:30-3:30	Music 
3:30-4:30	Tennis 
4:30-5:30	Nature 
5:30-6:30	Shower time 
6:30-7:15	Dinner 
7:15-8:30	Evening activity 
8:30	Bedtime 

### Cool Down Strategies

It's ok to feel mad or frustrated, but you should not hurt or bother other people or yourself.

\*Choose a physical activity - brain break



\*Breathe deeply



\*Count to 10



\*Sit and think



\*Drink some water



\*Think of a happy place



\*Smile anyway



\*Talk to someone



\*Quiet spot/cool-down box



\*Write about it



\*Draw a picture



NOW: I will participate in an activity for 15 minutes



THEN: I can take a break and go get a drink of water



WHEN I NEED A BREAK:



I will go to:  
*the divisional office*

If the office is too busy, I will go  
to:  
*the pavillion in front of my bunk*

WHEN I AM FRUSTRATED:



I WILL

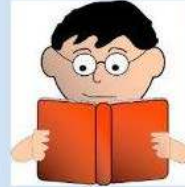
1. Sit on my bed
2. Take five deep breaths
3. Not dump my clothes out of my cubby
4. Count to ten
5. Go back to the activity

When I wake up early:

1. I will sit quietly on my bed



2. I will read a book or write a letter



3. I can also listen to music with my headphones on

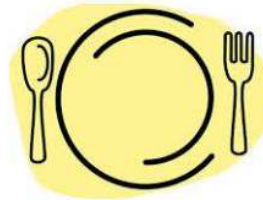


4. I will not wake anyone else up



In the Dining Hall, first we sit together to eat a meal

1. We walk together to the Dining Hall
2. We sit at our table and wait for our turn to get food
3. We wait on the line to get food



After we get our food, we sit at the table



1. We eat our food
2. We clean up
3. I ask to sit outside with a counselor when I am finished

## Social Stories

This technique can be preventative (used in anticipation of a situation you know will be difficult for the individual) and crisis-oriented (used as an intervention following a crisis, to both solve the problem at hand and as a coping technique for future use). Social stories provide a “road map” of what to do when encountering a new or challenging situation. There is no such thing as “social story time” and the stories should not be generic. They are written for and with a particular individual in response to, or in anticipation of, a particular event.

General guidelines to follow when using a social story include:

- Ideally, the story should be developed with the individual prior to the occurrence of the problem situation. When this cannot be anticipated and is developed after the fact, it must be when the child is calm and can focus on the story with you.
- Remember, social stories will not be effective for everyone. When you initially develop a story, you will be able to gauge the story’s effectiveness based on the child’s verbal agreement and compliance. Readers, who enjoy stories, have stronger verbal skills and like to figure out events/negotiate, seem to be good candidates.
- Allow the child as many choices as possible while you work to create a story. “Would you like to sit at the table or under a tree?” “Do you want to use a pencil or a marker?” As you write the story, allow the individual to contribute choices you have offered (this or that), keeping in mind the integrity of the story. Initially, you should develop your story writing skills by creating stories prior to a situation and when you feel comfortable with that skill, then begin to develop stories in response to a crisis.
- Once the story has been completed, it is equally important for it to be reviewed on a daily basis and close, time-wise, to the event the story is meant to support. This practice is crucial to the story’s effectiveness and should be continued until the individual’s compliance is demonstrated without problems.
- How do you begin? Think of social stories as a story that describes a situation in terms of: 1) the relevant social cues and 2) a description of what the individual should do or not do in a situation. It should be clear and specific. The steps to follow include:
  - Target the specific situation you want to develop the story for. You must be familiar with the individual, so you can understand their perception of the situation and what motivates them to respond in an inappropriate way.
  - The story will contain three basic types of sentences.
    - Descriptive- these sentences clearly define where and when the situation occurs, who is involved, what they are doing and why. It is important to carefully describe what people do and why.
    - Perspective- these sentences describe the reactions and feelings of others in the situation
    - Directive- these sentences describe the specific responses the individual needs to make in the situation. It clearly tells the individual what is expected as a response. A directive sentence often begins with the words, (I will work on...,” “I will try...,” “I can try to.....” State these sentences in positive terms-describe desired responses instead of describing problem behaviors. It will be necessary to model the desired behaviors. “Following directions looks like....” Role playing is another very effective intervention
  - Write the story in first person/present tense, as though the individual is describing events as they take place.
  - You may want to add illustrations, especially for non-readers, so make them clear and simple; avoid detail.
  - The goal of the social story is not rote compliance, but to teach social understanding.

## Social Story: Winning and Losing

My name is \_\_\_\_ and I can play games and have contests at many places: in school, at home, at camp, at a party, or at a friend's house. When I play a game, I might win or I might lose. I don't like to lose. Most children don't like to lose. It is important to keep control even when I lose.

Control looks like no crying, no tantruming, and it sounds like, "That's okay, maybe I'll win next time!"

A good sport will say "Congratulations" to the winner.

If I can't keep my control in front of the winner, I need to walk away, get in control, and be "OK."

When I am a winner, I need to remember how it feels to lose and say "good try."

Sometimes I win. Sometimes I lose. Sometimes I get a prize, and sometimes I don't. I must remember that all of these things happen to everyone and it is OK.



## Social Story: Hands are for High-Fives!

I love to have fun and play with my friends at camp. Sometimes my friends can get a little too silly at camp. When I want them to stop being silly, I can move next to my counselor, Saharra. If I do this, my friends will stop being silly to me. I will not put my hands on my friends to get them to stop being silly; that is not safe.

Sometimes at camp, I want to show my friends that I like them. At **home**, I can hug and kiss my family to show them that I like them. My camp friends do not like it when I hug and kiss them. At **camp**, we show that we like someone by giving **high-fives**.



At camp, we keep our hands and feet to ourselves. We when we want to show them that we like them. These make sense.



high-five our friends are the rules and they

## Social Story: Trying New Things at Camp

We do lots of different activities at camp. I play games, activities, and crafts with friends in my bunk and in other bunks. I love camp and the good times I have.

Trying new things can be a little scary sometimes, but camp is a great, safe place to try them! I have lots of people to help me at camp, and many of my friends are trying these things for the first time, too!

I might not do it perfectly the first time, but I will learn a little bit more each time I go to a new activity, and I'll keep getting better! I might even find out that I'm really good at it!

The most important thing is to have fun at camp, and trying new activities is one way to do that!



## Social Story: Winning & Losing at Camp

It's important to be a good sport at camp. Sometimes good sports lose, sometimes they win. *Sometimes they're picked first, and sometimes they aren't.* Sometimes good sports get out, and sometimes they don't.

When a good sport loses, gets out, or isn't picked first, she says "That's okay, I'll try again next time." He/she says, "good job" to her friends. We don't play to win at camp, we play to have fun. We are still learning how to play, and we are all winners.





We are at camp to learn new things, make new friends, and play new games. Sometimes I'll win, sometimes I'll lose, but it's all okay as long as I'm having FUN!

### Social Story: Bees and Bugs Live Outside at Camp

My name is Michael and I go to camp outside. Sometimes I see bees and bugs. A bees' job is to take the nectar from flowers and make honey. Sometimes I hear them buzz around. Sometimes I get scared when I see a bee. Other children may get scared too, but we must keep control.








Control looks like: Standing still until the bee flies away-> the bee is only looking for flowers.

Control sounds like: "Shoo bee" or "Get away bee".





I will try to stay in control so I don't frighten the bee. This is what people do to stay safe around bees.

### Social Story: How to be a Good Camper

<p>Being a good camper at camp. Being a good camper is something that my family, my bunk mates, my counselors and my section head thinks is important. I think it's important too.</p>	
<p>One thing I can do to be a good camper is to follow the rules of camp. I cannot touch other people, take other people's things, or look at people in the bathroom. I need to help pass-up my table, get more food at meals, and follow directions. When my counselors ask me to do something, I need to do it RIGHT AWAY. If I do not do these things, my bunkmates will not want to be my friend. My counselors will be very upset.</p>	
<p>The second thing I can do to be a good camper is to be nice to all the other campers. Sometimes this is really hard. But it's really important to be nice to everyone in camp, especially in my age group. This means that I cannot shout, scream, hit, or call other campers bad names or words. If I do these things, people won't want to be my friend.</p>	

<p>If I'm feeling angry, sad, upset or any other feeling, I need to tell my counselors right away. It is important to talk about how I feel with staff members so that we can work to fix it as soon as possible. I need to say "I feel upset" so that the other staff members know that I'm feeling upset.</p>	
<p>I know that I can do these things and be a good camper. I am already having a great summer at camp, and doing these things this will make my summer even better!</p>	

### Social Story: How to Keep Friends

<p>Camp is a place where I have lots of friends. I met a lot of my friends in my age group. However, keeping friends is hard work. If I do not cultivate these friendships, people will stop being my friend.</p>	
<p>One thing I need to do to keep my friends is not shouting. If people around me are talking in a normal tone, I need to talk in a normal tone. If other people are shouting, I can be shouting too! But if I shout during quiet conversations, or during a serious time, people will stop being my friend.</p>	
<p>The second thing I need to do to keep my friends is not interrupt. When people are having a conversation, I need to listen to what they are saying. If a 2 or 3 people are talking quietly that means the conversation is private. I need to walk away and wait until they are done talking to talk to them. I cannot stand right next them; I must walk away. If I interrupt people during their conversations or do not listen to what my peers are saying, people will stop being my friend.</p>	
<p>The third thing I need to do is to say things ONCE. When I say things more than ONCE, people get angry and frustrated. They do not want to hear about the same topic more than ONCE. When I speak about the same topic multiple times, people get bored and annoyed. If they are bored and annoyed, people will stop being my friend.</p>	

I know that I can do these things and keep my friends. While these things are difficult, I am up to the challenge! I am already having a great summer at Camp, and doing these things this will make my summer even better!

### Social Story: I Try to Keep My Hands to Myself



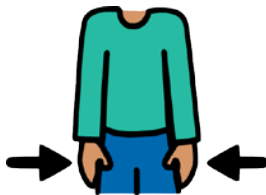
I go to Gateways on Sundays for Hebrew School. I am in Liz's classroom.



There are three different tables in Liz's classroom where people can work.

People like to have space around them when they work. That is why Liz has three tables for students and volunteers to spread out—everyone has the right amount of personal space to do their work.

I have enough space to do my work.



I will try to give other people space so they can do their work. I can try to give people space by keeping my hands to myself.



People feel uncomfortable if they are touched when they are working. Poking people, tapping people, or holding onto other people can make them feel uncomfortable.

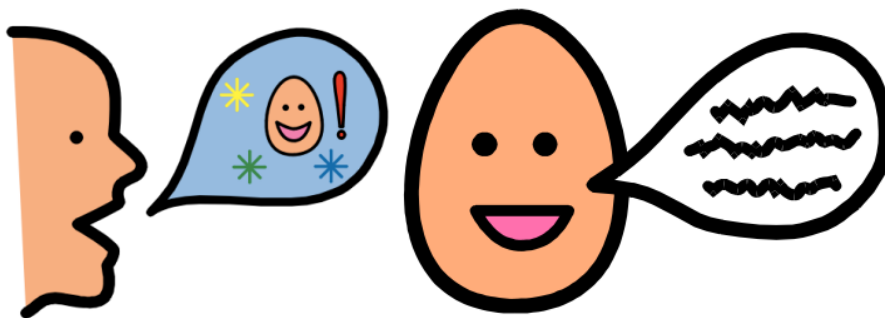
Touching people distracts them from their work and invades with their space.



I want my friends to feel comfortable. I will try to give them space by keeping my hands to myself.

If I want to touch my friends, I can ask them if they want to shake hands, bump fists, or give me a high five. This is a nice way to touch my friends.

### Social Story: Words That Help and Words That Hurt



Friends use helpful words when they talk to each other. Friends also give compliments and use words that help. Some words that help are:



Nice



Awesome



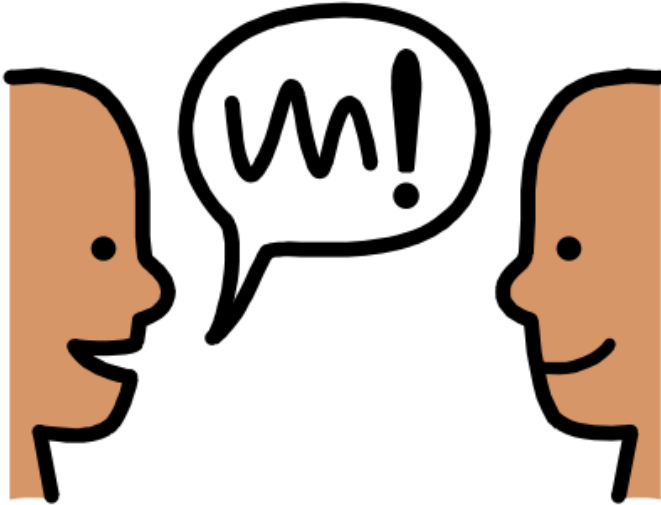
Great



Cool



Good



A friend can use words that help in a sentence and say, “That looks nice” or “that looks really cool.” This is a positive way to be a friend to someone at Gateways.

When a friend wants to say something positive he or she can say:



Good work!



That looks nice!



You're pretty smart!



Great effort!



Good job!

When a friend wants to give encouragement or support, he or she can say:



Keep trying!



You can do it!



You did that by yourself?  
I've never seen it done any better!



I didn't know you could do that!



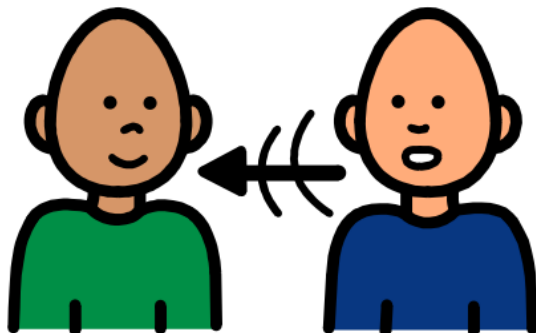
Let's try again



Sometimes people use words that aren't positive and these are called negative words. Negative words can hurt people's feelings. Sometimes when someone is angry or frustrated they might use negative words.



At Gateways if I use a negative word it will hurt someone's feelings.



If I hurt someone's feelings then I need to apologize.

To apologize I need to say "I am sorry." Another way to say I am sorry is to say, "I am sorry that I yuck-yucked your yum-yum." My volunteer Rebecca taught me this phrase. It means, I am sorry that I said something negative.

### My Lave Tov -- My Good Heart



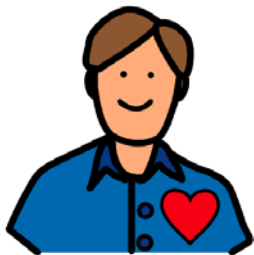
I go to Gateways for Hebrew school.

I really like Gateways and I have friends there.

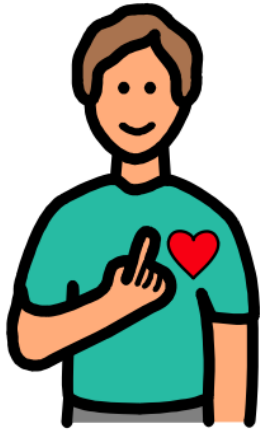


People are kind to one another at Gateways. Students and volunteers and teachers all try really hard to be kind to each other and to be friends with everyone.

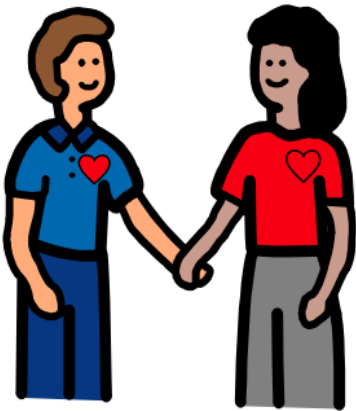
At Gateways, it is important to be kind and to be a good person.



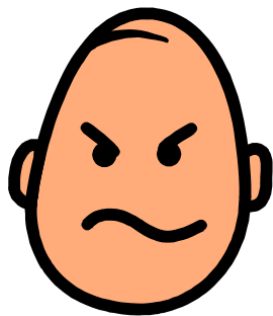
Being kind is a positive Jewish value and also means you are a good person. In Hebrew being kind means you are using your "lave tov"—your good heart.



When I go to Gateways I try to be kind to others and to be a good person.

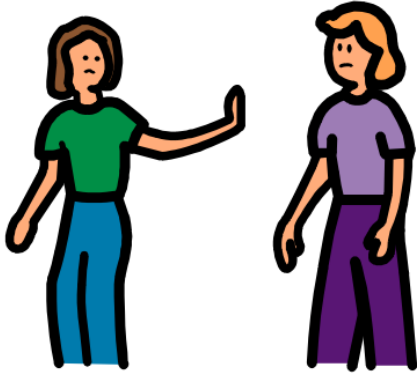


People like me because I am kind and because I use my good heart. I feel happy when I use my love tov—my good heart.

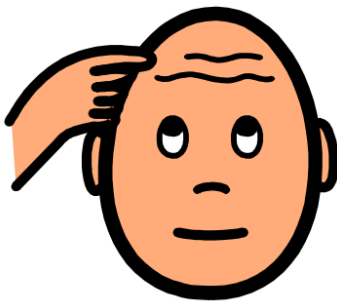


Sometimes when I am angry or frustrated I forget to use my love tov -my good heart- and I might say something unkind.

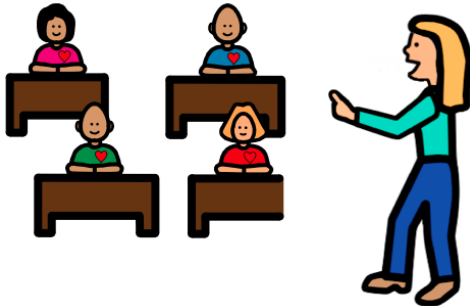




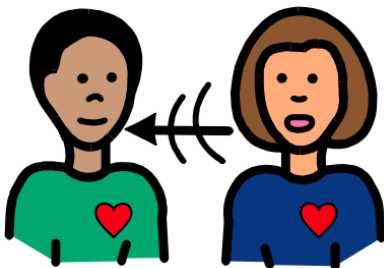
When I say unkind things my words hurt the people at Gateways, and they may not want to be my friend.



I have to be careful about the words I use.



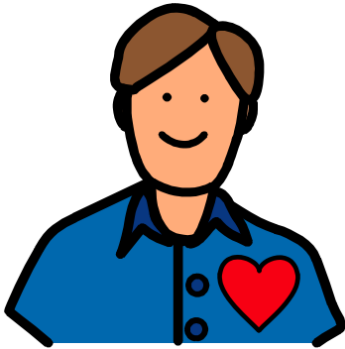
My volunteers and my teachers at Gateways will remind me to use only words that help people. The volunteers and teachers at Gateways want to help me to use my “lave tov”—my good heart—so that I will be a kind and nice person.



I will listen to my volunteers and teachers when they remind me to use my “lave tov”—my good heart.



When I use my “lave tov”—my good heart—it shows that I am a kind and nice person, and I will have friends.



I will always try to use my “lave tov”—my good heart.



### My body is Holy and Good—Worksheet

My body is holy and good.

I can use parts of my body to do many things that help me. And I can use parts of my body to help others. For example:

Eyes: I see with my eyes. I can see people in need and help them.

Legs/Feet: I use my legs and feet to walk and run. I can run or walk in a Walkathon to help a specific cause. I can walk to a hospital to visit the sick.

Ears: I use my ears to hear. I can listen to my parents, which helps me to honor them.

Make up your own examples:



My head can be used \_\_\_\_\_

With \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_ head, \_\_\_\_\_ I



My eyes can be used \_\_\_\_\_

With my eyes, I \_\_\_\_\_



My ears can be used \_\_\_\_\_

With my ears, I \_\_\_\_\_



My mouth can be used \_\_\_\_\_

With my mouth, I \_\_\_\_\_



My hands can be used \_\_\_\_\_

With my hands, I \_\_\_\_\_



My legs/feet can be used \_\_\_\_\_

With my legs/feet, I \_\_\_\_\_



My heart can be used \_\_\_\_\_

With my voice, I \_\_\_\_\_



My strength can be used \_\_\_\_\_

With my strength, I \_\_\_\_\_



My brains/intelligence can be used \_\_\_\_\_

With my brains/intelligence, I \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTER 11: SPEAKING TO THE BUNK ABOUT INCLUSION AND DISABILITIES (TIPS, CONVERSATIONS AND ACTIVITIES)

The question of whether to “tell” bunk members about the disabilities of one bunk member comes up quite frequently. In cases of a visible disability, it is obvious that there is something different about this camper. In some cases, discussions will feel natural and comfortable. If a camper uses a scooter, wheelchair or walking stick, it will be necessary to speak about keeping the bunk organized and obstacle free so no one gets hurt. It may be useful to have the inclusion coordinator speak with the family ahead of time to ask if and how they have had similar discussions in the past, in other settings. It is never acceptable to “out” a camper or to share something about the camper which may have been shared in confidence.

In programs which offer separate bunks for campers with disabilities, such bunk discussions may or may not be necessary. If a camper raises a question about another camper, it may be handled with a simple response: “some campers are good at X; some have difficulties doing Y” or “people all do different and unique things—Sammy spins in circles and it comforts him.”

When a camper with disabilities is fully part of a typical bunk AND his disabilities are more invisible, there can be tension or even resentment among bunkmates. There may be a sense that certain behaviors are getting in the way of bunk bonding, or that too much attention is being devoted to a particular camper. Sometimes a bunk meeting to address the situation can be beneficial. Night time, just as the campers are winding down and in their bed and the lights are off can be a good time for a bunk discussion. There are many wonderful “trigger stories” about similarities and differences and “specialness.” The discussion is not about “the person,” but the campers will usually “know” which person or people are being alluded to. We might underscore that each person is “made” differently and has different strengths and weaknesses. We might validate their feelings. We might ask for strategies from the group. Oftentimes, the person exhibiting the behavior is not aware of it. And, he or she badly wants to be accepted in the group. Peers delivering the message that the behavior is annoying can often go much further than a counselor or division head deliver the message. After all, he or she wants to be liked or accepted.

It is also possible to frame the discussion in terms of Jewish law and values. One camp offered materials below on framing discussions around some important Jewish values. These may be useful in facilitating bunk discussions.

There are times where the camper with the disability will feel empowered and relieved if he tells the group about his disability. He may disclose that he has Asperger’s, for example, and tell what that means and why he exhibits certain behaviors. On other occasions, it may make sense NOT to have the person with the disability as part of the group—it is best to discuss this first with supervisors and even the child’s parents since this is not “being inclusive” and should be reserved for unusual circumstances.

The approach suggested below assumes that the camper’s disabilities have been disclosed to the bunk:

### Tips for speaking to a group about a camper with disabilities

A proactive approach is always best. All of these options can be used *before* an actual problem arises as well as when tension does start to arise in the group.

One of the first options can be having the child herself speak to the group about her disabilities. This can be a good option if:

- The child is old enough and mature enough to do so
- She is comfortable and wants to address the group
- The parent of the child with a disability is also comfortable with this

The above is a good option to use if campers are expressing curiosity and asking questions and as a proactive approach to including the child in the group. Another way to use this option is to have each child take a turn at being “the star of the morning” and introducing themselves to the group and having the group ask them questions.

Another option is to take the child with a disability on an errand away from the group and have an adult-lead discussion with the group using the following guidelines:

- Set the tone by letting the group know that the purpose of discussion is to help everyone in the group with ways to include the camper with a disability and make him feel welcome in the group.
- Let the group know that you are happy to answer questions that help everyone meet this goal.
- Describe the camper’s abilities and challenges but try not to focus on labels or names of disabilities because that sometimes leads to preconceived notions based on other people they may know with the same disability. For example, a child might say “my neighbor has autism and he hit me once.”

Ask for input from the campers using guided questions such as:

- What are three things each of us can do to help (camper with disability) to feel included in the group?
- What do you think (camper with disability)’s favorite activity is? Why?
- What activity do you think is most challenging for (camper with disability)? How can we modify/adapt the activity to make it more fun for her?
- What is your favorite activity? Why?
- Which activity is most challenging for you?

This is an option that can be used when you see that there is tension in the group or if campers are getting annoyed with a camper’s behaviors related to the disability. This can also be used when the child isn’t able to answer questions himself or in a situation where it might not be comfortable for him to do so. If the camper is taken out of the group for a discussion, it is best if the inclusion counselor can stay with the group to help answer questions.

A third option is to do activities with the whole group (including the child with a disability) that highlight diversity, inclusion and acceptance. Some examples are:

**Diversity Bingo:** Create a BINGO board and put in the boxes statements such as:

- Someone who has blonde hair
- Someone who loves chocolate
- Someone who has been on an airplane
- Someone who has the same birthday as you

Through this activity, campers get a natural opportunity to interact with the camper with a disability and campers learn what they have in common with the child with a disability.

**Group Inclusion/Diversity Circle:** Have campers form a circle. As you call out different statements, have campers move to the center of the circle if the statement applies to them. Use statements such as:

- Has brown hair
- Has more than two siblings
- Is the oldest child in their family
- Likes to watch \_\_\_\_\_ TV show
- Loves art
- Loves sports
- Has been to the beach

Then lead a discussion with questions such as:

- How did it feel to be in the center of the circle?
- What did it feel like when people were looking at you?
- How did you feel about the people in the center of the circle with you? How about those on the outside of the circle?
- What are three things we can learn from this activity?

**Flower Activity:** Divide into groups if necessary (about 6-8 in a group). Draw a flower with a circle in the middle and as many petals as group members on the outside. Have the group fill in the center with something they ALL have in common. Then have each camper choose a petal to write something completely unique about him/herself. Lead a discussion on similarities and differences.

Group discussion: If the campers are old enough you can lead a full group discussion on first impressions with questions such as:

- Have you ever had the wrong first impression of someone?
- What did you learn about them to change your impression?
- Has anyone ever had the wrong first impression of you?
- What did you do to change their impression or perception of you?

The above activities can be great overall icebreakers and can also be used if tension starts to arise in the group.

### Tips for speaking 1:1 with a child who is having difficulty accepting/understanding a child with a disability in the group

- Start from a place of compassion, not punishment or judgment. Lack of knowledge and understanding of disabilities is usually the root of teasing or exclusive behavior.
  - Avoid asking “why” the child is teasing. The question “why” is too open ended and the child herself may not really know why.
  - Instead you can say, “Tell me three things that you think or feel when you are around (child with a disability)”. Let the child know she can be 100% honest about her feelings.
  - Then say “Tell me three things you think (child with a disability) feels when she is in the group.
  - Reassure the child that it is okay to notice differences and to talk about them.
  - Let the child know he can ask you questions and you will answer them as honestly as you can.
  - If they are annoyed with the behavior of the child with a disability, let him know that it is okay to be annoyed, just like he would get annoyed with any other friend or sibling but just like in those situations, he cannot treat the child disrespectfully.
  - The child may need tips on how to interact with the child with a disability.
  - It is better to focus on things they might have in common when giving tips rather than putting the child in any kind of “helping” role. While that may seem like a way to elicit compassion, it does not help the child understand how to relate on a peer level and it highlights the disability first, not the person first.
  - Ask the child about a time when he/she felt different or excluded and ask how someone helped him feel included.
  - Avoid saying, “We are all the same.” It is more important to give the message that we are all different and that is not only okay, it’s actually great! Explain that some differences are more visible than others.
  - The direction and tone of the conversation certainly depends on the age of the child. Children at different ages have different reasons for being hesitant around their peers with disabilities.
    - Young children (around ages 3-7) can be afraid that:
      - They may also “catch” a disability
      - That their peer is in pain
    - Older children (around ages 7-10) can be concerned that:
      - They might not be successful with interactions.





## CONVERSATION 2

Judaism Values: *Hanoach la-na'ar al pi darko*, educate each child based on their way (Proverbs 22:6). Fairness doesn't mean everyone gets the exact same thing from you; fairness means that everyone gets what he or she needs to reach the same achievement level. (We have been referring to that as the difference between equal treatment and equitable treatment, or equity.)

1. Sometimes we want things to be equal, at other times we understand that it is “more fair” for things to be different.

Thumbs up if you agree with each statement:

- Everyone should get the same number of items for free choice canteen.
- It is okay if everyone picks a different kind of snack for free choice canteen.
- As a parent, I should make sure all my kids get a good dinner.
- As a parent, it is okay if I give a sick child warm soup and tea even though the other kids are having pizza for dinner.
  - As an American, I should be able to shop in any store in my town.
  - Even if there are no other parking choices and I really need to shop, I still should not park in a handicapped parking space.
  - As a teacher, it is okay that I spend extra time with a student who is struggling to understand the lesson.
  - It is sometimes fair to treat different people differently. (if some disagree, remind them about the sick child, the struggling student)
  - Fairness really depends on the situation.

2. A disability can also depend on the environment and the tasks one is asked to perform

- Some school-based disabilities are not a problem at camp
- “Small” vs. “Big” problems depends upon the situation
- Heart surgeon – injures one part of one finger on one hand and is unable to perform her job
- Stephen Hawking – famous scientist known for his work regarding black holes, wrote several books, suffers from ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) and uses a wheelchair. Disabled?

3. What do you think would be the hardest disability to have at camp?

- Trouble making friends

4. As a Division Head or Inclusion Coordinator, I help counselors learn how to make sure everyone gets what they need to become more independent. This means that it is okay if they treat different kids in the bunk differently from each other, as long as the goal, and end result, is to get each camper what s/he needs to have a successful experience.

- Thumbs up when you can think of something you are very good at doing. (Share)
- Thumbs up when you can think of something you are not very good at doing. (Share)
- Thumbs up if I work with children and adults who struggle doing X, and I help each of them in different ways (one size fits all doesn't work)

5. How do we treat everyone at camp fairly by treating different people differently?

6. How can you help?

- Taking another look at someone who may seem to have a disability – what is the fair way to treat him/her, what are his/her needs?

### CONVERSATION 3

Judaism Values: *B'Tzelem Elokim* - all people are created in G-d's image (Go-d does not create junk) The difference between equity and equality.

1. We all have strengths and weaknesses

- Give thumbs up when you have thought of a task you feel you excel at. (we are not going to share)
- Give a thumbs up when you have thought of something about yourself that you like. (we are not going to share)
- Give a thumbs up when you have thought of something other people admire about you. (we are not going to share)

2. Define the difference between equity and equality, treatment that is different based on our various strengths

3. If we are all created in G-d's image how come we are all different? What does B'Tzelem Elokim mean to you?

- How do we judge others and choose to include or exclude them?
- If someone can't spell or does poorly on a math test, do we see them as not smart?
- Is someone isn't graceful, or has any type of physical disability (including speech/lang.), do we shy away from them?
- A challenge: Do you know everyone in this camp - name, strength?
- Find the strength in \_\_\_# of campers you don't know yet (in your bunks and/or in your division)

### CONVERSATION 4

Judaism values: Blessed are You, Lord our G-od, Ruler of the Universe, who makes people different (Mishnei Torah, Hilchot B'rachot)

- What does this look like outside the camp community; schools, shuls, etc.?
- What can you do to change things? (Be the change you want to see)
- Ask counselors to write down for themselves the best way they know to teach this value

### Celebrating Difference with Campers in an Inclusion Program

**Goal:** Begin a conversation about difference with all the campers. Get them thinking about their own differences and the differences of those around them and find ways to appreciate each other's strengths and support each other's weaknesses.

**Duration:** This curriculum was used over the course of three 1-hour sessions.

#### MONDAY

Group A:

- Tell the campers that today we will be talking about differences in our community
- Ask: Have you ever felt like you were different from those around you? How did that feel?
- Introduce the text study by telling the *chanichim* (campers) that we will be looking at how different Jewish texts approach the topic of difference
  - Text Study
    - Discuss:
      - Is it ever hard to get along with people who are different?
      - Why is it important to have differences within our community?
      - How do you think the inclusion program helps our camp community learn about and appreciate difference?

- How can we find ways to appreciate people's' strengths rather than focusing on their weaknesses?
  - [In the camp which submitted this resource, the annual song night is called "Leil Hofa'ah; the division's song is called "Ze Hasukaray;' each camp can adapt the activity to fit its own needs]. Introduce "Zo Hasukarya" song for Leil Hofa'ah and tell the campers that we will learn the song on Wednesday and next week we will perform it for the whole camp. Then read the translation.
    - Give out worksheet with the following questions:
      - What is one thing you are really good at?
      - What is one thing you would like to work on?
      - What is one thing you think you can learn from another inclusion camper?
      - What is one thing you think you have to teach to the other inclusion camper?
    - Have campers share some of their answers
  - End by telling the campers that our community is made up of so many wonderfully unique individuals that all help make the community special and kadosh (holy). They are a huge part of helping make our community holy by helping those around us to appreciate difference.

#### Group B:

- Read "The Boy Who Grew Flowers"
- Discuss:
  - What was different about Rink?
  - How did people treat Rink?
  - What does the story teach us about being different?
  - Have you ever felt different from your friends, either at school, at home, or at camp? What was that like?
  - Have you ever been treated differently?
- Introduce "Zo Hasukarya" song for Leil Hofa'ah and tell the campers that we will learn the song on Wednesday and next week we will perform it for the whole camp. Then read the translation.
- Ask: What is the message of the song?
- Give out worksheet with the following questions:
  - What is one thing you are really good at?
  - What is one thing you would like to work on?
  - What is one thing you think you can learn from another inclusion camper?
  - What is one thing you think you have to teach to the other inclusion camper?
  - Have campers share some of their answers
- End by telling the campers our community is made up of so many wonderfully unique individuals that all help make the community special and kadosh (holy). They are a huge part of helping make our community holy by helping those around us to appreciate difference.

#### Group C:

- Read "It's Okay to be Different"
- Ask: What is one thing that is special/unique/different about you?
- Tell campers that our community is made up of so many wonderfully unique individuals that all help make the community special and kadosh (holy). They are a huge part of helping make our community holy by helping those around us to appreciate difference.
- Introduce "Zo Hasukarya" song for Leil Hofa'ah and tell the campers that we will learn the song on Wednesday and next week we will perform it for the whole camp. Then read the translation
- Have the campers draw a picture of themselves highlighting two things that make them different – one physical and one about their personality.
- Share pictures
- Trampoline



Wednesday

Teach “Zo Hasukarya” Song

Thursday

- Review discussion from Tuesday
- Design quilt squares
- Record video of each camper talking about what makes them unique

Some people are tall.

Some people are short.

Some people have freckles on their faces,

And some people have long, long noses.

There are people who are big.

There are people who are small.

There are light people and dark people,

There are people in all different colors.

But, if someone is a good friend

And doesn't do you wrong,

It doesn't matter what they look like,

What's important is what's on the inside.

It's the candy and not the wrapper.

- What is one thing you are really good at?
- What is one thing you would like to work on?
- What is one thing you can learn from another inclusion camper?
- What is one thing you can teach the other inclusion camper?

# CHAPTER 12: GLOSSARY

## TYPES OF DISABILITIES

Every child is a unique individual and no two children with the same disability are alike. Disabilities display themselves very differently in each child.

Following is a short list of some of the disabilities that you might come across in your conversations with parents.

**Autism** is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. Autism impacts the normal development of the brain, the areas of social interaction and communication skills. Children and adults with autism typically have difficulties in verbal and non-verbal communication, social interactions, and leisure or play activities. The disorder makes it hard for them to communicate with others and relate to the outside world. In some cases, aggressive and/or self-injurious behavior may be present. Persons with autism may exhibit repeated body movements (hand flapping, rocking), unusual responses to people or attachments to objects and resistance to changes in routines. Individuals may also experience sensitivities in the five senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste.

**Asperger's syndrome** Characterized by impairments in social interactions and the presence of restricted interests and activities, with no clinically significant general delay in language, and testing in the range of average to above average intelligence.

**Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)** (commonly referred to as atypical autism) a diagnosis of PDD-NOS may be made when a child does not meet the criteria for a specific diagnosis, but there is a severe and pervasive impairment in specified behaviors.

**Bipolar disorder** (also known as manic-depression) is a serious but treatable medical illness. It is a disorder of the brain marked by extreme changes in mood, energy, and behavior. Symptoms may be present since infancy or early childhood, or may suddenly emerge in adolescence or adulthood. The more we learn about this disorder, the more prevalent it appears to be among children. Children usually have an ongoing, continuous mood disturbance that is a mix of mania and depression. This rapid and severe cycling between moods produces chronic irritability and few clear periods of wellness between episodes.

**Obsessive Compulsive Disorder** The brain gets stuck on a particular thought or urge and just can't let go. Worries, doubts and superstitious beliefs can become excessive such as hours of hand washing.

Normal worries, such as contamination fears, may increase during times of stress, such as when someone in the family is sick or dying. Only when symptoms persist, make no sense, cause much distress, or interfere with functioning do they need clinical attention. Obsessions are thoughts, images, or impulses that occur over and over again and feel out of your control. The person does not want to have these ideas, finds them disturbing and intrusive, and usually recognizes that they don't really make sense. People with OCD typically try to make their obsessions go away by performing compulsions. Compulsions are acts the person performs over and over again, often according to certain "rules." People with an obsession about contamination may wash constantly to the point that their hands become raw and inflamed.

**Tourette syndrome** is an inherited, neurological disorder characterized by repeated involuntary movements and uncontrollable vocal (phonic) sounds called tics. In a few cases, such tics can include inappropriate words and phrases. Eye blinking is a common tic. However, facial tics can also include nose twitching or grimaces. With time, other motor tics may appear such as head jerking, neck stretching, foot stamping, or body twisting and bending. A person may also utter strange and unacceptable sounds, words, or phrases. It is not uncommon for a person with TS to continuously clear his or her throat, cough, sniff, grunt, yelp, bark, or shout.

**Epilepsy** (Seizures) - Epilepsy is a neurological disorder in which a person has repeated seizures (convulsions) over time. Seizures are episodes of disturbed brain activity that cause changes in attention or behavior. Episodes can vary from brief and nearly undetectable to long periods of vigorous shaking

**Dyspraxia** is a disorder that affects motor skill development. People with **dyspraxia** have trouble planning and completing fine motor tasks. This can vary from simple motor tasks such as waving goodbye to more complex tasks like brushing teeth. Individuals with dyspraxia often have language problems, and sometimes a degree of difficulty with thought and perception.

**Cerebral Palsy** is a group of disorders that can involve brain and nervous system functions, such as movement, learning, hearing, seeing, and thinking. It is a life-long physical disability due to damage of the developing brain. In most cases brain injuries occur during pregnancy. Motor disability can range from minimal to profound, depending on the individual and can range from weakness in one hand, to an almost complete lack of voluntary movement requiring 24 hour care. Children with cerebral palsy are likely to also have other impairments in addition to their motor disability. Spastic hemiplegia, where one half of the body has difficulty with voluntary movement, is the most common presentation of cerebral palsy.

**Muscular Dystrophy** is a group of inherited disorders that involve muscle weakness and loss of muscle tissue, which get worse over time. There are many different kinds of muscular dystrophy. Symptoms of the most common variety begin in childhood, primarily in boys. Other types of muscular dystrophy don't surface until adulthood. Most people diagnosed with MD will eventually need to use a wheelchair.

**Down syndrome** is a chromosomal condition that is associated with intellectual disability, a characteristic facial appearance, and weak muscle tone (hypotonia) in infancy. All affected individuals experience cognitive delays, but the intellectual disability is usually mild to moderate. Individuals with Down syndrome often have distinct physical characteristics, unique health issues, and variability in cognitive development.

#### OTHER WORDS TO BE AWARE OF

**Assistive communication device or technology** refers to any device that helps a person to communicate with hearing loss or a voice, speech, or language disorder. Examples can be as simple as highlighters, color coding files or drawers, books on cd, calculators or a different paper color or background color on a computer screen. Complex or high-tech assistive technology devices include computers with print-recognition software that "reads" text aloud or speech recognition systems that turn oral language into written text.

**ADA compliant (American with Disabilities Act)** – this usually means is the camp equipped for campers in wheelchairs and is within the regulations set forth by the American with Disabilities Act.

**Camper to staff ratio** – meaning how many staff are assigned to a bunk of children

**Shadow** – a counselor assigned to a child with a disability

**Gluten free diet** excludes the protein **gluten**. **Gluten** is found in grains such as wheat, barley, rye and triticale (a cross between wheat and rye). A **gluten-free diet** is used to treat celiac disease. **Gluten** causes inflammation in the small intestines of people with celiac disease.

**Celiac disease** is a condition that damages the lining of the small intestine and prevents it from absorbing parts of food that are important for staying healthy.

## CHAPTER 13: BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/blog/the-canteen/2015/02/05/inclusionrespo/>

<http://www.thejewishweek.com/blogs/new-normal/tikvah-family-shabbaton-not-merely-accomodated-accepted-and-nurtured>

Open Hearts/Open Doors, JCC in Medford

Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi and Meagan Buren

National Ramah Tikvah Network

URJ Camps

Staff evaluation (Open Hearts/Open Doors, JCC in Medford)

Lisa Handelman of Capital Camps and the Jewish Federtion of Greater Washington

Ramapo for Children, NYC

Harbor Haven

Howard Blas

Lisa Tobin

URJ Camp Kutz, Samantha Dresser, Rachel Dubowe, Emma Jacszczak

Kathie Snow, [http://inclusionproject.org/nip\\_userfiles/file/People%20First%20In%20Brief.pdf](http://inclusionproject.org/nip_userfiles/file/People%20First%20In%20Brief.pdf)

<http://tcdd.texas.gov/resources/people-first-language/>

Eva Cowen, inclusion consultant

Leah Davies, M.Ed.

Dr. Bonnie Schwartz

Karen Kollins, Associate Director, URJ Camp George

Tali Cohen, Ramah Camping Movement

Gateways Boston

Foundation for Jewish Camp

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/blog/the-canteen/2015/02/05/inclusionrespo/>

<http://www.thejewishweek.com/blogs/new-normal/learning-be-independent>

<http://www.thejewishweek.com/blogs/new-normal/tikvah-family-shabbaton-not-merely-accomodated-accepted-and-nurtured>



[http://www.herzlcamp.org/explore\\_inclusion.html](http://www.herzlcamp.org/explore_inclusion.html)

[https://capitalcamps.org/new\\_cc\\_org/life-at-camp/atzmaim-special-needs/?t=new](https://capitalcamps.org/new_cc_org/life-at-camp/atzmaim-special-needs/?t=new)

<http://www.groton-ct.gov/depts/parksrec/commission.asp>