



FOUNDATION FOR JEWISH CAMP INCLUSION TRAINING PROGRAM



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Welcome to the Foundation for Jewish Camp Inclusion Training Program, designed to teach staff about inclusive practices that benefit *every* camper.

The Foundation for Jewish Camp Inclusion Training Program is divided into **eight core chapters** to meet the training needs of both overnight and day camps. Recognizing that while there are similarities between these two environments and aspects that are specific to each, there is also a supplement for day camps and a supplement for residential camps.

Whether you complete all of these chapters during staff week, or intersperse them throughout your camp season, we are confident that your staff will develop important skills for working with every camper.

Each chapter follows the same format:

Big Ideas: These are listed so that you, the trainer, can familiarize yourself with the overall theme of the session.

Materials: Here you will find a list of everything you will need during the chapter, including which handouts need to be copied in advance.

Accessibility Considerations: It is likely that some of the participating staff members will have disabilities themselves, whether or not you are aware of them. It is always important to think about the barriers that might exist so that you can make modifications in advance of the session. If you find that no one requires the modifications, it is still important to model advance thinking about accessibility considerations.

Activities: This is where you will find the “core” of each chapter and how to implement it. You will find various types of activities throughout the Foundation for Jewish Camp Inclusion Training Program.

Everything you need for the Foundation for Jewish Camp Inclusion Training Program is contained in these pages. Of course, the tone you set and the relationships you build amongst your staff are entirely up to you!

Wishing you a successful and inclusive summer!

FAQ's

WHO SHOULD FACILITATE THIS INCLUSION TRAINING PROGRAM?

The program should be facilitated by someone who is already on your staff. They do not need to have any kind of special training (but should familiarize themselves with the program in advance). Though no prior knowledge is required, we do suggest that the facilitator be someone who has already graduated from college.

SHOULD WE HAVE JUST ONE DEDICATED STAFF MEMBER TO RUN THE TRAINING PROGRAM?

This is up to you! Some camps may feel that developing a connection with one facilitator is important for the participants, while others may want to showcase different facilitators at different times.

HOW MANY STAFF MEMBERS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE TRAINING AT ONE TIME?

If working with a very large group, there are plenty of opportunities within the training program to break up into smaller working groups and pairs. However, in order to encourage conversation and help everyone feel as comfortable as possible sharing, we suggest that the program be used with 20-30 staff members at a time.

HOW LONG WILL EACH CHAPTER TAKE TO IMPLEMENT?

On average, each chapter is designed to be about 30 minutes. You may want to allocate a bit more time at the beginning as you get to know how much time the participating staff members would like to spend on the activities and conversations. Note: chapters that include case studies will likely be closer to 45 minutes; chapters with art projects or creating materials may also require more time.

WHEN SHOULD WE BE DOING THIS TRAINING?

This will also vary by camp. The program was written with the intention of completing most of it before campers arrive, particularly in overnight camps where there is a week of staff training. However, we recognize that not every camp has that much time to devote to professional development. Day camps might consider using the program during staff lunch and learns, or other time set aside for meetings. Camps may decide to save certain chapters for when they are most relevant, like using the "Planning Accessible Field Trips" chapter when it is time to actually plan a field trip.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO CAMP INCLUSION

BIG IDEAS

- Camp works great for many kids. Let's make it work for everyone.
- Part of successful inclusion is learning new strategies; part is learning a new mind-set.

OBJECTIVES

- Staff will reflect on what an inclusion mind-set looks like.
- Staff will understand the difference between true inclusion and “doing a mitzvah.”
- Staff will think about inclusion in the context of camp.
- Staff will identify opportunities to make camp work well for more people.

MATERIALS

- Chart paper/butcher block paper and markers
- A couple of copies of the reading (do not need one for everyone)
- Screen and computer to project a video (if using the video)

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Some of the staff you are training may have disabilities.
- Be careful about “we” and “they.” Don't use “we” or “you and I” to mean “people without disabilities” or “people who haven't experienced struggling with these things.”
- Keep in mind that staff members may be thinking about personal experiences when they consider accessibility (and that some of these might be painful or private).
- If you are using the reading, print a couple of copies for staff members who might prefer to see the words rather than just listen. Let the whole group know that copies are available.
- If you are using the video, turn on captions.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Listen or Watch:** Choose either the reading below, “I'm Not Your Mitzvah Project” by Pamela Schuller, or go to YouTube and search for Stella Young's TedTalks, “I'm Not Your Inspiration, Thank You Very Much.”
2. **Discuss:** Either as a whole group, in small groups, or in pairs (whatever you feel would work best for your staff), have participants talk about the following questions:
 - a. What is your initial reaction to this reading/video?
 - b. What are some examples you have seen of someone being treated as a “mitzvah project” or an “inspiration?”

- c. Can you think of a time in your own life that you felt like your participation or ideas weren't truly valued? (Maybe while playing a sport, or in a particular class in school, etc.)
 - d. At camp, we try to have everyone's best interests in mind, but do you think either of these things ever happen at camp, even unintentionally?
- 3. Brainstorm:** At camp, how can we make sure people feel like they're being treated equally? List their answers on the chart/butcher block paper.
- 4. Reflect:** As the facilitator, reflect on the list they just created.
- a. Let them know that these are exactly the kinds of things we are going to think about as we go through this training program.
 - b. Tell them they are already starting to think about a different kind of "mind-set" around inclusion, and they are going to continue to explore that.
 - c. They are also going to have a lot of opportunities to think about and learn new strategies for helping the camp environment work for all campers.
 - d. Emphasize that both mind-set and strategies are important for *everyone* - campers with and without disabilities, bunk counselors, specialists, etc. Creating a truly inclusive camp culture is not just about "inclusion counselors" or counselors who work most directly with campers with disabilities - it's about the whole camp community.

Excerpts from “I’m Not Your Mitzvah Project” by Pamela Schuller (Used with permission)

Originally published on 2/11/16 on JTA.org (Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

I have Tourette syndrome, a neurological disorder characterized by involuntary movements and noises called “tics.” My Tourette’s is relatively mild at this point, but I went through a turbulent adolescence when Tourette’s was the most defining thing about me. Between the constant movements and the loud, uncontrollable noises, it was incredibly disruptive.

Sometimes I hear people talking about how much of a “mitzvah” they are doing by opening their doors to people with special needs in their community. Maybe they allowed a child with autism in their youth group or religious school, or hosted an “inclusion” service.

But here is the thing: It is not a mitzvah to let me in the door. It’s not. Opening your door to those with disabilities is not enough. Because there is a critical difference between tolerance and full inclusion. If we are practicing full inclusion, our communities should be celebrating each person and what they *bring* to the community, not just what they *demand* of it.

Many times throughout my life, I have felt like I was the mitzvah project of the week, like the community didn’t really want me there, but knew including me was what they were supposed to do. I always felt like we were one step away from my face being on the community bulletin with a story reading something like “We did it! We included somebody with special needs! Be proud everyone. Be real proud.” OK, maybe that’s a bit of an exaggeration. But feeling like my presence was another’s mitzvah made me feel even more like an outsider.

Let’s think about how we talk about inclusion – and make sure we are never “othering” anybody, be they people with disabilities or their families. Getting in the practice of “yes and-ing” as much as possible is a great way to start. That is, saying that yes, we want you and your family to be part of this community, and we want to partner with you to make sure that not only are your needs met, but that this is a place where you are cherished and can fully participate. It’s creating partnerships of synagogue leadership, teachers, and families, and sometimes stepping outside our comfort zone to try something new.

Because when we have a community that appreciates each person and what that person brings to the table, the entire community benefits. A fully inclusive community is celebrating the unique qualities that everyone brings to that table, creating a safer and stronger community — one of trust where people can be uniquely themselves.

Pamela Rae Schuller is a New York City-based inclusion advocate and stand-up comedian, probably because she sees the world from a different point of view: one where eye level is 4-foot-7 and barking without provocation is a completely normal and entertaining part of her day. Learn more about Pamela’s work at StandUpInclusion.com.

CHAPTER 2

MAKING ROOM FOR DIFFERENCE

BIG IDEAS

- Camp needs to be a place where everyone is expected and planned for.
- Making room for differences is not just a matter of finding the right kinds of support.
- With so much of camp being about building relationships among and between campers and staff members, it's important to remember that **every** camper is someone who needs to be considered in that equation.
- Sometimes we have to dig a little deeper to understand what might really be going on with a camper.
- Making room for differences makes space for more people to be part of the group.

MATERIALS

- Printed copies of case studies (HANDOUT 1)
- Printed copies of perspectives (HANDOUT 2)

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Make sure that the handouts are in an accessible format for each staff member. Does anyone need larger print? An electronic copy?
- Some staff members may have difficulty with reading or writing, so be conscious when pairing people up and allow for flexibility if one of those staff members feels a different pairing would work better for them.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Pairs:** Divide staff members into pairs.
2. **Distribute:** Provide one case study (HANDOUT 1, either Case Study 1, 2, or 3) to each pair.
3. **Discuss:** Each pair will read their case study amongst themselves and discuss the questions that are listed.
4. **Groups:** Each pair that received Case Study 1 will come together as a group. Each pair that received Case Study 2 will come together as another group. Each pair that received Case Study 3 will join together as a third group. (If working with a very large group of staff, you can also divide up these larger groups and have multiple groups with Case Study 1, 2 and 3.)
4. **Distribute:** Next, give each group the corresponding perspective handout (HANDOUT 2, either for Case Study 1, 2, or 3). Ask them to read the child's perspective, answer the questions, and then discuss the next session about "what could have happened" using the follow-up questions as a guide.

HANDOUT 1 - CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 1: GIRLS' BUNK

SCENARIO

You're a counselor in an 11-year-old girls' bunk. Some of your campers have been lobbying for a spa day, so you decide to get out your nail polish collection and make a nail salon as a bunk activity. Most of your campers are enthusiastically painting each other's nails, but Sarah is off to the side looking uncomfortable. Miriam and Rachel go over to her, take her hand, and say, "Come on, you'll look so pretty! We should totally give you a makeover." Sarah jerks her hand away and says, "Don't touch me!"

QUESTIONS:

- What does Sarah think the problem is?
- What do Miriam and Rachel think the problem is?
- What do you think the problem is?
- How do you think Sarah feels right now?

HANDOUT 2 - PERSPECTIVES

CASE STUDY 1: SARAH'S PERSPECTIVE

It seems like people are constantly telling me that I'm doing everything wrong. When I try to participate in class, I'm told that I'm being disruptive. When I don't, I'm told that I'm not applying myself. I find a lot of textures painful, so I don't wear makeup, and I mostly wear plain cotton shirts and skirts. This doesn't bother me, but it seems to bother other kids and adults.

When I try to talk to other girls, they mostly ignore me or make fun of my slow speech. Occasionally, they pull me aside and attempt to braid my hair, give me a makeover, or give me advice on how to dress better. That's pretty much the only time they're interested in interacting with me.

Adults think that this is friendly. When I say that I don't like it, my teachers and therapists say that I need to give the other kids a chance if I want to have friends, and that I should show the world my beautiful smile more.

I thought that maybe camp was going to be different. For the past few days, things have been going pretty well. No one has been mean, I raced a couple of girls during swimming, and the arts and crafts counselor seems really nice. I'm excited about the project I'm working on.

But then my bunk counselor announced that my group is doing a nail salon night, and I have the sinking feeling that this is all going to start up again. I try to hang back and go unnoticed, hoping that this will blow over. But then two girls grab me, I try to say no, and now everyone is looking at me.

QUESTIONS:

- Does anything about Sarah's perspective surprise you here? If so, what?
- What would you want to do next?
- How can you make sure that Sarah feels respected?

WHAT COULD HAPPEN NEXT:

You're a counselor in an 11-year-old girls' bunk. Some of your campers have been lobbying for a spa day, so you decide to get out your nail polish collection and make a nail salon as a bunk activity. Most of your campers are enthusiastically painting each other's nails, but Sarah is off to the side looking uncomfortable. Miriam and Rachel go over to her, take her hand, and say, "Come on, you'll look so pretty! We should totally give you a makeover." Sarah jerks her hand away and says, "Don't touch me!"

You remind Miriam and Rachel of the "don't grab, just ask" rule. They apologize for trying to put nail polish on Sarah without her permission. You ask Sarah if she would like to have her nails painted. She says no. You ask her if she would like to paint a rock instead. She thinks that sounds fun, and goes out and gets a handful of pebbles to paint. A couple other girls decide to do that too. Now the bunk has pet rocks.

QUESTIONS:

- What do you think about this approach to solving the problem?
- Does this seem like something you could do with your campers? Why or why not?
- What else could you do?
- How can we make sure that being different doesn't mean getting hurt or feeling unwelcome?

HANDOUT 1 - CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 2: BOYS' BUNK

SCENARIO

You're a counselor in a bunk of 14-year-old boys. You need an afternoon activity, and you decide to have the campers play Ultimate Frisbee. You notice that one of your campers, David, seems to be having a lot of trouble. He never quite seems to catch the Frisbee, and when he throws it, it doesn't go very far. Every other boy scores at least one point, but David doesn't score any.

Afterwards, you notice that he's sitting on the sidelines looking sad. You say to him, "Everyone's a winner at camp! We always just have FUN!" David replies, "I guess," and walks away.

QUESTIONS:

- What does David think the problem is?
- What do you think the problem is?
- How do you think David feels right now?

HANDOUT 2 - PERSPECTIVES

CASE STUDY 2: DAVID'S PERSPECTIVE

At camp, all of the boys' activities seem to be things that I'm bad at. Even after years of trying to learn, I still can't really throw or catch accurately. All the other boys seem to want to do is play sports. Even when others don't make a big deal of it, I'm tired of losing all the time. I try not to show it, but now apparently a counselor has noticed and they're trying to tell me that I actually shouldn't mind. I brush him off hoping he'll at least leave me alone for a while.

QUESTIONS:

- Does anything about David's perspective surprise you here? If so, what?
- What would you want to do next?
- How can you make sure that David feels respected and included?

WHAT COULD HAPPEN NEXT:

You're a counselor in a bunk of 14-year-old boys. You need an afternoon activity, and you decide to have the campers play Ultimate Frisbee. You notice that one of your campers, David, seems to be having a lot of trouble. He never quite seems to catch the Frisbee, and when he throws it, it doesn't go very far. Every other boy scores at least one point, but David doesn't score any.

Afterwards, you notice that he's sitting on the sidelines looking sad. You didn't plan it this way, but you realize that you've had all your campers play Ultimate Frisbee just about every day for the past two weeks. You realize that this is kind of unfair to David. You tell him, "I think we've had enough Ultimate for a while. What do you think we should do tomorrow?" David says, "I don't know, whatever." You ask, "Cards, D&D, or something else?" David says that D&D sounds ok. Later that night you make some character sheets and tell David what the plan is for the next day.

QUESTIONS:

- What do you think about this approach to solving the problem?
- Does this seem like something you could do with your campers? Why or why not?
- What else could you do?
- How can we make sure that being different doesn't mean getting hurt or feeling unwelcome?

HANDOUT 1 - CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 3: SUDDEN SCHEDULE CHANGE

SCENARIO:

Your campers have been told that they're going to be having a text study afternoon. When they arrive at the *beit midrash*/study room, you suddenly yell, "Surprise! It's Maccabiah/Yom Sport/Color War!!!" and tell everyone to go back to the bunk to change into clothing with their color on it.

Taylor storms off and sits on their bed facing the wall. You tell them, "You're on the blue team!" but they don't respond. "Come on, you have to change!" They say, "Okay, FINE" with an angry look on their face, puts on their blue shirt, and sits on the side of the bunk as far away from everyone else as they can get.

QUESTIONS:

- What does Taylor think the problem is?
- What do you think the problem is?
- How do you think this camper feels right now?
- Does your answer change depending on the age and gender of the camper?

HANDOUT 2 - PERSPECTIVES

CASE STUDY 3: TAYLOR'S PERSPECTIVE

I like camp okay, but not all the time. I like the quieter indoor activities more than the loud, high-energy things that most of the other kids seem to prefer. I can more or less do most of them, but it's exhausting and I don't really enjoy them. Today, my counselor told my group that we're going to do a text study at the end of the day. I'm pretty happy about getting to do something I like for once as the evening activity.

But when I get there, my counselors tell us that it's Maccabiah/Color War/Yom Sport — my absolute least favorite day of camp. Now, instead of doing a quiet activity I like, I'm suddenly going to be doing a loud activity that I hate. I also feel like the counselors are making fun of me for liking text study and not liking loud things. I don't like being tricked or feeling like counselors think it's funny to trick me. But if I say what's bothering me, everyone will laugh.

I get back to the bunk and lay down on my bed, trying to collect myself. I hear my counselor telling me that I'm on the blue team, and I know that I need to change, but I just can't make myself do it. I'm exhausted from a long day, and I was not prepared to deal with this. They get in my face again, so I say, "Okay, FINE," and go change. I have trouble with my hands at this time of day, and it takes me a long time to change into sports clothes and put on my sneakers. I feel really self-conscious conspicuous and uncomfortable. I'm too tired for this, and I don't want to start cussing people out, so I go off to the side of the room to try to get some space and collect myself.

QUESTIONS:

- Does anything about Taylor's perspective surprise you here? If so, what?
- What would you want to do next?
- How can you make sure that Taylor feels respected?

WHAT COULD HAPPEN NEXT:

Your campers have been told that they're going to have a text study afternoon. When they arrive at the beit midrash/study room, you suddenly yell, "Surprise! It's Maccabiah/Yom Sport/Color War!!!," and tell everyone to go back to the bunk to change into clothing with their color on it.

Taylor storms off and sits on their bed facing the wall. You tell them, "You're on the blue team!" but they don't respond. "Come on, you have to change!" They say, "Okay, FINE" with an angry look on their face, puts on their blue shirt, and sits on the side of the bunk as far away from everyone else as they can get.

You see that Taylor looks like they need some space. Without getting too close, you ask them if they'd like to sit on the porch. They still look really mad, but they go out and sit on the porch. You sit on the opposite end, and the other counselors take the other kids to the field.

You sit reading a book. Eventually, Taylor says, "This sucks." You reply, "What's going on?"

"Color war. The whole thing."

"I guess that's a lot to have to deal with all at once."

"You guys lied to me."

"It's supposed to be a fun surprise, but I guess it wasn't very fun for you. I'm sorry about that."

"This isn't fun."

"Do you want to see the real schedule for tomorrow?"

"I guess."

You show Taylor the schedule. They're still not happy about it being Maccabiah/Yom Sport/Color War, but they do feel a bit better knowing what to expect.

Later, at the staff meeting, you bring up the issue of needing a better plan for how to support kids who really don't like the loud intense sports competition day. You decide to open the library all day so that kids have the option of going there for down time.

QUESTIONS:

- What do you think about this approach to solving the problem?
- Does this seem like something you could do with your campers? Why or why not?
- What else could you do?
- How can we make sure that being different doesn't mean getting hurt or feeling unwelcome?

CHAPTER 3

MAKING ROOM FOR CHOICES: DAILY ACTIVITIES

BIG IDEAS

- Making room for choices on a daily basis makes camp work better for more people.
- Plan the range of offered choices with the range of needs of kids in mind.
- Don't make too many assumptions about what kids will choose — they may surprise you!
- Allowing choices means that there are more ways to be part of the group.

MATERIALS

- Paper and pens

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Some staff members may have difficulty with reading or writing, so be conscious when pairing people up and allow for flexibility if one of those staff members feels a different pairing would work better for them.
- Continue to be particularly careful about your use of “we,” and “you and I.” Speak with the assumption that there are people with disabilities in the room and that they are part of the group.
- Keep in mind that staff members may be thinking about personal experiences when they consider accessibility (and that some of these might be painful or private).

ACTIVITIES

1. **This or That?** Utilizing “This or That,” staff members will place themselves somewhere on the continuum depending on to what extent they like to do one activity over the other. The facilitator will say the statements below, one at a time, choosing the ones that are most appropriate for your camp (i.e. if you don't have classes, you wouldn't use that one). After each “this or that” choice you give, and once people have had time to move to their chosen positions, ask for a couple of volunteers to say something about why they chose what they did. Then move on to the next “this or that” question.

- Yahudut/chinuch or sports?
- Knitting kippot or painting challah covers?
- A trivia contest or a group discussion?
- Swimming laps or playing pool games?
- Teaching Israeli politics or teaching Israeli culture?
- Going to a museum or going to a theme park?
- Singing *Adon Olam* to a popular tune or singing it to a traditional tune?

- Loud camp *t'filot* (prayers) or individual quieter *t'filot* (prayers)?
- Reading or writing?
- Karate or basketball?
- Eating in the dining room or eating outside at the BBQ?

2. Conversation Pairs: After the last “This or That” question, ask each person to find a partner who had an opposite (or close to opposite) response from their own. Once they are in a pair, have them discuss the following questions:

- a. Why did you choose the option you did? (Each person in the pair should answer.)
- b. How well do you think camp works for kids who feel the same way you do? What about for kids who feel the opposite way?

CHAPTER 4

MAKING ROOM FOR CHOICES: SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

BIG IDEAS

- Making room for choices when special activities arise makes those activities work better for more people.
- Plan the range of offered choices with the range of needs of kids in mind.
- Don't make too many assumptions about what kids will choose — they may surprise you!
- Allowing choices for camp-wide and special activities means that there are more ways to be part of the camp experience.

MATERIALS

- Paper and pens

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Some staff members may have difficulty with reading or writing, so be conscious when pairing people up and allow for flexibility if one of those staff members feels a different pairing would work better for them.
- Continue to be particularly careful about your use of “we,” and “you and I.” Speak with the assumption that there are people with disabilities in the room and that they are part of the group.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Whole Group:** The facilitator walks the group through an example of a situation where choices matter.

You're planning Yom Superhero/Superhero Theme Day, in which the campers need to help protect Superhero City, and you'd like to do an escape room mission, but then you remember that one of your campers freaks out when they feel trapped. You're wondering if some other kids might be uncomfortable with this too, but you also know that some kids love escape rooms and would have a really good time.

What do you do?

You remember that Superhero City needs defenses too. So there are two missions your superheroes can choose: They can go to the escape room lair to retrieve the artifact from the villain, or they can work on building up the city defenses. Afterwards, they eat lunch together, under the protection of the defenses combined with the artifact.

Or: But wait! You've just received word that the villain has stolen all the signs from local businesses, and all the street signs! Superhero City is thrown into chaos because no one knows what's what! We need some people to recreate the street signs and businesses.

Campers can choose to work on recreating Superhero City, or they can choose to go rescue the shield generator batteries from the villain's escape room lair in order to prevent this from happening again. Once they're done doing that, they come back together and eat lunch, protected by the shields.

2. Small Group Brainstorming: Where can you offer choices? Divide into smaller groups that make sense according to the structure of your camp (bunk staff, specialist staff, etc.). As facilitator, talk about the idea that there are times as a staff member that they can offer campers different choices so as to best meet everyone's needs. Provide them with the following examples to get them started thinking about this:

Bunk counselors often choose and plan bunk activities. How could you give campers more choices?

If you're teaching swimming, could you offer campers a choice between swimming laps and playing pool games?

If there's a big noisy activity, can you create an alternative for kids who don't like that? (Could some kids come outside on the porch and read?)

Now, ask the staff members (in their small groups) to think about what they have discretion over in camp. Where can they offer choices? What choices could they offer to make sure camp works for all their campers? What other special and whole camp activities come up during the course of a summer, and how can they incorporate choices into those?

Distribute paper and pens so they can write down their ideas and save them for when they start to plan activities!

CHAPTER 5

COMMUNICATING WITH CAMPERS: PART 1

BIG IDEAS

- Everyone wants to be heard and understood and the more we recognize that, the more proactive we can be in making it a reality.
- If you work on your communication skills, it pays off. Communication builds relationships, and the success of camp is based on relationships.
- People who can't speak or can't speak normally often understand language normally. People who CAN speak in ways that appear typical sometimes don't understand language normally.
- It's your job to listen to all of your campers and to communicate in a way that all of your campers can understand.

MATERIALS

- Screen and computer to project a video (optional)
- Handouts #3 and #4 (one copy of each per group)
- Pencils and blank paper (2 pencils and 1 blank paper per group)

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- When showing videos, turn on captions.
- Some staff members may have difficulty with reading or writing, so be conscious when pairing people up and allow for flexibility if one of those staff members feels a different pairing would work better for them.
- Continue to be particularly careful about your use of “we,” and “you and I.” Speak with the assumption that there are people with disabilities in the room and that they are part of the group.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Video:** If you have the capability to use YouTube to introduce this session, search for “AAC Board Speechless” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJ2CXdkP-Q>) - 1 minute, 5 seconds. If not, convey the “big ideas” (above) to the participants and begin with activity #2.

2. **Camp Communication Script:** “Or Something Else?” Divide participants into groups of three. Distribute HANDOUT #3: Social Skills: Noticing When Repetition is Communication. In each group, one person will read the part of the camper, one person will read the part of the counselor, and one person will be the narrator and read the paragraphs in between the camper/counselor scripts.

3. **Activity:** Effective communication is a two-way street that involves listening to what someone is telling you and telling someone something in a way they can understand.

Distribute HANDOUT 4. Divide the participants into three groups by providing each person with the number 1, 2, or 3. Divide into groups of three people. Each group should consist of someone with the number 1, someone with the number 2, and someone with the number 3. Each group receives the following instructions:

- a. Only person #3 may see the picture.
 - b. Person #3 will write out directions for recreating the image they see.
 - c. Person #2 will read those directions without using his/her hands, without gesturing, etc.
 - d. Person #1 will draw what he/she hears and try to recreate the image that person #3 is looking at.
4. **Share:** Each group of three will share their final picture and see who came the closest to the original image. What were some strategies that worked well for each group? What didn't work so well? What can this tell you about people who communicate in different ways? How can you think differently about the ways in which your campers may communicate?

HANDOUT #3

SOCIAL SKILLS: NOTICING WHEN REPETITION IS COMMUNICATION Originally Written by Rabbi Ruti Regan for the blog, "Real Social Skills" Adapted for FJC Training Curriculum

So, there's this dynamic:

Camper: The door is open!

Counselor: I know that. It's hot in here.

Camper: The door is open!

Counselor: I already explained to you that it's hot in here!

Camper: The door is open!

Counselor: Why do you have to repeat things all the time?!

Often when this happens, what's really going on is that the camper is trying to communicate something, and they're not being understood. The counselor thinks that they are understanding and responding, and that the camper is just repeating the same thing over and over either for no reason or because they are being stubborn and inflexible and obnoxious and pushy. In fact, what's really happening is that the camper is not being understood, and they are communicating using the words they have.

There's often a social expectation that if people aren't being understood, they should change their words and explain things differently - but sometimes our campers can't do this without our help. Sometimes they might need support, either because they have a communication disability, because they're a kid having a hard time, or both. (This is particularly common for campers on the autism spectrum.) So, if a camper keeps repeating themselves, assume that they're trying to tell you something, and try to figure out what they're trying to tell you. If you're the one with more words, and you want the communication to happen in words, then you have to provide words that make communication possible. For example:

Counselor: Do you want the door to be closed, or are you saying something else?

Camper: Something else

Counselor: Do you want to show me something outside, or something else?

Camper: Something else

Counselor: Are you worried about something that might happen, or something else?

Camper: Worried

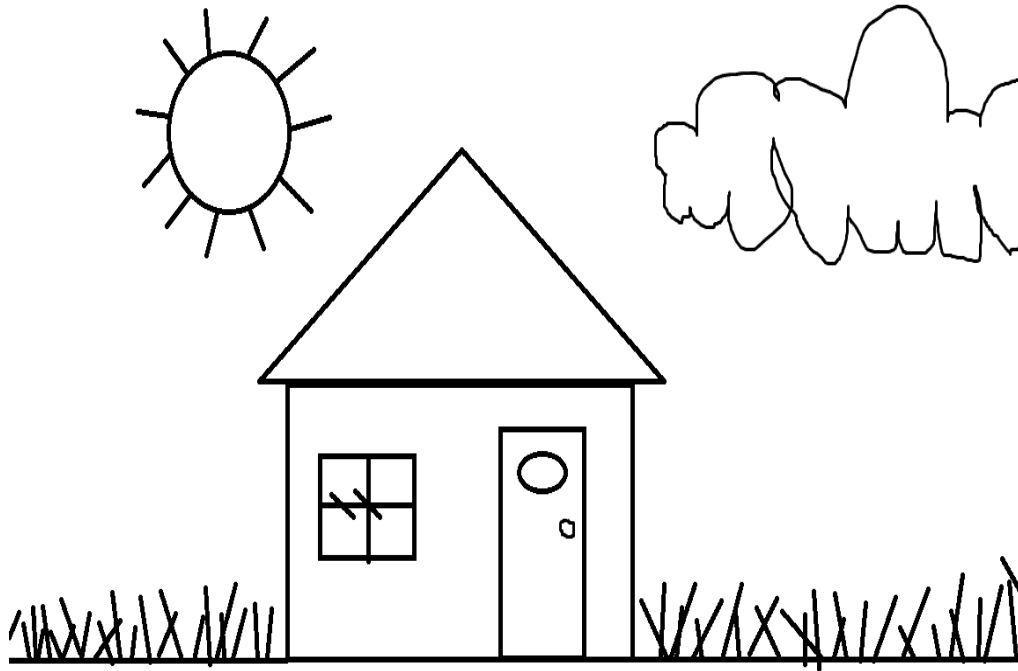
Counselor: Are you worried that something will come in, or that something will go out?

Camper: Bugs

Counselor: The screen door is closed, so air can get in but bugs can't. Is that okay, or is there still a problem?

Camper: Okay.

HANDOUT #4



CHAPTER 6

COMMUNICATING WITH CAMPERS: PART 2

BIG IDEAS

- Everyone wants to be heard and understood - the more we recognize that, the more proactive we can be in making it a reality.
- If you work on your communication skills, it pays off. Communication builds relationships, and the success of camp is based on relationships.
- People who can't speak or can't speak normally often understand language normally. People who CAN speak in ways that appear typical sometimes don't understand language normally.
- It's your job to listen to all of your campers and to communicate in a way that all of your campers can understand.

MATERIALS

- Screen and computer to project a video
- Chart paper/Butcher Block paper and markers
- Handout #5 and Handout #6 (one per person or bunk/cabin)

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- When showing videos, turn on captions.
- Some staff members may have difficulty with reading or writing, so be conscious when pairing people up and allow for flexibility if one of those staff members feels a different pairing would work better for them.
- Continue to be particularly careful about your use of “we”, and “you and I.” Speak with the assumption that there are people with disabilities in the room and that they are part of the group.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Video: YouTube:** Sh*t People Say to Non-Verbal Peeps (3 minutes, 44 seconds)

Note: If you do not have access to screening a video, consider asking small groups of staff members to watch on someone's phone. If that is also not a viable option, consider leading a discussion on things they have seen people say (either in person or on TV), when someone has a significant physical disability. You can use the list below for examples, and ask people why those things are not appropriate.

2. **Discussion:** Brainstorm as a group on “What did people do wrong in this video?” Write the answers on chart paper.

POINTS TO HIT ON DURING THIS DISCUSSION:

- They didn't talk directly to the person
- It's really weird to say, "I love you" to a complete stranger
- Talked to people like puppies or babies
- Talking about someone's communication instead of listening to what they're saying
- Acting like their disability is weird and like nonverbal forms of communication are "telepathy"
- Asking invasive, personal questions
- Touching someone's communication device without permission
- Assuming people don't understand just because they can't talk
- Not waiting for an answer
- Predicting and not waiting for an answer
- "God will heal you," nonconsensual prayer
- Assuming that all disabled people know each other
- Taking atypical replies as an insult
- Asking the support person instead of the person
- Not giving someone a chance to communicate
- "Isn't he such a good boy?! Such a good communicator!" praising someone for communicating then not actually listening to them
- Assuming people don't have a job
- Not minding your own business

3. **Whole Group:** Based on the two activities from the previous session, ask the group of counselors to consider the main components of communication. In advance, write three different categories on a large piece of paper:

- a. **Listening** to what someone is telling you.
- b. **Explaining** something in a way that someone else can understand.
- c. **Troubleshooting** when communication breaks down.

What do you need to understand in order for "listening" and "explaining" to happen effectively? What are the different components involved in each? Brainstorm each of these, and then have counselors think about how they can trouble-shoot when communication breaks down. At the end of this session, give out HANDOUT 5 and HANDOUT 6. Handout 5 is intended to be a reminder/cheat sheet for counselors to refer back to. Handout 6 can be displayed in their cabins, or they can use the handout as a guide to create a communication poster with their campers.

HANDOUT 5

COMMUNICATION REPAIR STRATEGIES

Ask, “Did you mean ___ or are you saying something else?”

Try using different words.

“Is there something you can point to?”

Ask what letter the word starts with.

Try a different language.

Try writing or typing instead of speaking.

Ask someone else to help translate.

This-or-that questions.

Ask them to repeat themselves.

Try again later.

Say: “Sorry for not understanding.”

Ask if it’s fact or fiction.

Try using a different example.

Try talking faster or slower.

Try saying, “I’m trying to tell you something.”

HANDOUT 6

Listening to what someone is telling you

- What are they trying to tell you?
- How do you know?
- How can you check?
- How else can you listen?

Explaining something in a way that they can understand

- Does the person you're talking to understand what you're telling them?
- How do you know?
- How can you check?
- How else can you tell them?

Troubleshooting when communication breaks down

- Do you understand them?
- Do they understand you?
- Is everyone listening?
- Is everyone speaking?
- What can you do to listen?
- What can you do to tell them more clearly?

CHAPTER 7

ACCESSIBLE FIELD TRIPS

BIG IDEAS

- If it doesn't work for someone, then it doesn't work.
- Everything that we consider for accessibility at camp must be considered when we leave camp - sometimes even more so.
- Basic and higher level needs must be met for every camper in order for a field trip to be considered a success.

MATERIALS

- Paper and pens
- Chart paper/Butcher Block paper and markers
- Handout #7

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Continue to be particularly careful about your use of "we," and "you and I." Speak with the assumption that there are people with disabilities in the room and that they are part of the group.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Discussion:** There are various categories of things that people need in order for a field trip to be successful. Some of the things we need access to include:

- Bathrooms
- Safety
- Food
- Content
- Activities
- Breaks
- Not being in pain
- Feeling respected
- Medications
- Understanding the rules
- Access to help
- Physical Stamina
- Fun
- Meaning/Content

In advance of this session, the facilitator can write the above list on chart paper to have it ready for counselors to review, and/or this can start out as a brainstorm where counselors think about the various components and the facilitator fills in anything they

may have missed. On separate sheets of chart paper, list a few of these categories that the counselors will explore in more detail, while also providing a couple of examples.

For example:

Bathrooms -

- Wheelchair accessible bathrooms?
- Gender neutral bathrooms?
- Reminders to use the bathroom?

Food -

- Allergies?
- Special diets?
- Feeding tube supplies?

2. **Brainstorming Pairs:** After the facilitator goes through the list of access needs, as well as a few of the examples above, counselors will divide into pairs. Each pair will choose one access need to focus on (or the facilitator can assign them to make sure different ones are covered), and brainstorm a list of things they need to consider when planning a field trip.

3. **Whole Group:** Come back together as a whole group and have each pair share what access need they talked about, and what ideas they brainstormed. The facilitator will write all of these ideas on the chart paper. (Note: at the end of this session, counselors will receive a checklist of things to think about when planning field trips, and they can add their own ideas as well.)

HANDOUT #7

FIELD TRIP ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

Check your trip site's web page! Museums, zoos, parks, etc. often have useful resources.

- What's the URL for your trip site's accessibility information?
- Are there barriers that might be a problem for some of your campers or staff?
 - If so, what's the plan for addressing them?
- Does the site have accessibility resources that may be useful to some campers or staff?
 - If so, how will you make sure those resources are made available?
- Are there accessibility questions that need to be asked of the site?
 - If so, who will ask the questions, and who will they ask?
- Are there accessibility resources/arrangements that need to be reserved in advance?
 - If so, who will make the reservation/arrangements?
- Have all access questions been answered?
- Have all advance access arrangements been made?
- Who can you contact at the site if you encounter access barriers on trip day?
- Are there other site-specific considerations?

Bathrooms: When you have to go, you have to go! Do any of your campers or staff need:

- Wheelchair accessible bathrooms?
- Gender neutral bathrooms?
- Immediate access to a bathroom on short notice?
- Reminders to use the bathroom?
- Help finding the bathroom?
- Assistance using the bathroom?
- Diapers or a changing table?
- Extra privacy so that no one finds out they use diapers?
- Something else?

Food: Everyone needs food. Do any of your campers or staff have/need:

- Allergies?
- Sensitivities?
- Special diets?
- Feeding tube supplies?
- Assistance with eating?
- Help remembering to eat?
- Something else?

Safety: We all need to be safe. Does anyone you're responsible for need:

- To avoid contact sports?
- Assistance protecting medical or adaptive equipment?
- Closer supervision?
- Help understanding the rules?
- If you're using a buddy system, how will you avoid pairing bullies with their victims?
- A plan for avoiding food or non-food allergens? (Eg: do we need to tell the venue not to use balloons or latex gloves?)
- Are there staff members who need pregnancy-related accommodations?
- What other safety issues might arise?

Breaks:

- Where can kids and staff go if they need a break?
- Do they need permission to go there? If so, who do they need it from?
- Who will watch out for kids who might need a break?

Help:

- How will kids and staff who need help be able to get it?
- Who can help them solve access problems?
- Have they been told?
- What else might participants need in order to be able to get help?

Sensory needs:

- How will the trip work for campers/staff who find loud/crowded spaces painful/overwhelming?
- Plan for helping campers bring sensory toys/tools?
- Plan for making ear defenders available (i.e. noise-canceling headphones)?
- Will the planned activities work for campers and staff with sensory aversions?
- What else might be needed to meet sensory needs?

Participation and alternative participation:

- Does the activity require reading? If so, is there a plan for alternative formats (e.g.: large print, braille, audio, electronic) for campers and staff who need them?
- How will campers and staff with mobility disabilities participate?
- How will campers and staff with fine motor impairments participate?
- How will campers and staff who find loud/crowded spaces overwhelming participate?
- What will happen if a camper finds that they can't do the activity or that the activity makes them intolerably uncomfortable? How will they be supported?
- What else might be a barrier to participation?
- What can you do to eliminate barriers or create alternatives?

Other issues: Every camp is different, and we probably didn't think of everything. What other accessibility issues do you think might come up?

CHAPTER 8

FINDING PROBLEMS YOU CAN SOLVE

(Note: this is intended to be the last session of the curriculum, after any day/overnight camp supplements have been covered.)

BIG IDEAS

- Even with the best intentions, inclusion won't happen unless it is built into your planning.
- A staff member does not need to be an "inclusion counselor" or directly supporting a child with disabilities in order to be part of inclusion planning.
- Allowing different staff members to take on different roles in planning will go a long way in supporting inclusion efforts.
- Counselors and other staff members can use their expertise in programming to create really great programs that are also inclusive.
- Camp is naturally fast-paced and we can't always anticipate what everyone's needs will be - but learning about the possibilities will help us think about accessibility "on our feet."

MATERIALS

- Pre-written list on chart or butcher block paper
- Blank chart or butcher block paper and markers
- Paper and pencils
- Envelopes (optional)
- Art supplies (optional)
- Ice cream, toppings, bowls, spoons, scoopers, etc.

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Continue to be particularly careful about your use of "we," and "you and I." Speak with the assumption that there are people with disabilities in the room and that they are part of the group.
- Make sure to get ice cream that all of your staff members can eat.
- Is anyone allergic to anything?
- Is anyone vegan or lactose intolerant?
- Amy's Sorbet and So Delicious coconut milk-based ice cream are good vegan options if available.
- Have a scoop or spoon for each flavor to avoid cross contamination of allergens.
- Staff with impaired motor skills may need help scooping ice cream.

ACTIVITIES

1. Identifying Problems: The facilitator will explain to the staff that there are two important things to keep in mind:

- a. Troubleshooting for inclusion/access is everyone's job.
- b. It's good to have some people who are **particularly** focused on it.

In advance of this session, the facilitator should write a list of common problems that come up at camp:

CAMPER...

- Won't eat the food
- Forgot something in their bunk
- Is miserable and overloaded and won't participate in the loud singing
- Doesn't want to answer personal questions
- Talks a lot during a group discussion
- Can't do the craft / hates what they're creating
- Doesn't understand the instructions
- Is clingy
- Never gets to do anything they like because the things they like are unpopular and you do group activities based on majority preferences

2. Small Groups: Divide staff members into small groups and have them choose (or choose for them) one thing from the list above (or they can come up with their own). Let them know that while sometimes these *feel* like unsolvable problems, there are ways to be trouble-shooters in order to find solutions. Thinking about all of the things they have learned throughout this training program, ask them to write down 2-3 ideas of how to solve their "unsolvable" problem.

3. Whole Group: Ask each small group to present their "unsolvable problem" and the solutions they came up with. Help the staff members recognize that they have a lot of expertise, and can help each other problem-solve throughout the summer.

4. Closure: What is one thing you would want a staff member to know if they did not participate in this training? What is one tip, piece of advice, strategy or theory you would want them to understand? The facilitator can make a list of all of these ideas and save it to present at a full staff meeting.

OPTION: Ask staff members to write a letter to themselves and seal it in an envelope to be delivered to them at a specific point during the summer. They should write about what they hope to remember about their camps, and remind themselves about any strategies or ways of doing things they were hoping to implement. (If this whole program took place during staff week, deliver towards the end of the second or third week of camp. If it is not completed until later in the summer, consider delivering the letters about a week after completion.)

OPTION: Hold this final session in the arts and crafts building, and have staff members create something for their bunk - a quote about inclusion, a reminder of how to treat everyone, a decoration that represents equity and inclusion, a poem, etc.

- 5. Ice-Cream Party:** Together, you will celebrate the success and accomplishments of this group as they complete the Foundation for Jewish Camp Inclusion Training Program.

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Foundation for Jewish Camp thanks Matan for their ongoing partnership as we advance and grow the field of inclusion in Jewish summer camps. Together we hope this curriculum will be a key resource in training all staff members to work with an inclusive philosophy and mindset when creating the extraordinary camp communities that exist around North America the country.



One in five. That's the number of people with disabilities in the United States today. Matan enables Jewish professionals, communities and families to create and sustain inclusive settings in educational, communal and spiritual aspects of Jewish life.