

Background

- Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Developmental Disabilities (DD) are at higher risk of being socially excluded (Solish, Perry, & Minnes, 2010)
- They are often placed in mainstream or integrated settings
- Children in integrated or mixed settings have higher ratings of social inclusion than those in segregated settings (Carvalho, Bebko, Perry, & Minnes, 2014)
- Even in integrated settings though they are physically present, they are not always included in activities and are ignored by their peers (Cooney et al., 2006)
- There has been little research surrounding the social inclusion of children with Severe DD

This poster presents findings from a case study of one child with ASD and DD in order to gain a better understanding of his social inclusion across school and community settings.

Case Study

- "Jack"
- 8-year-old boy with ASD and an Intellectual Disability (ID)
- School: attends public school in an integrated classroom
- Community activity: **day camp**
- Nonverbal IQ Age Equivalent Score 58 months (4 years 10 months)



Method

- This case study comes from the Social Inclusion Project of the Great Outcomes for Kids Impacted by Severe Developmental Disabilities (GO4KIDDS) Canadian team project
- The Social Inclusion Project involved:
 - 27 Children with DD aged 6 to 17
 - Multiple methods were used for data collection
- Jack's **parents, teachers, and community leaders** were interviewed regarding his social inclusion in each setting
- Jack's social interactions at **school and camp** were **observed live** by research assistants using a structured interval coding scheme (Bebko, Perry, Minnes, 2009)

Results PARENTS

Great Staff [in both settings has helped him participate with other children].

Outside of the day camp he just goes to family events.

His [lack of] understanding of questions and instructions [has made it difficult for him to participate at both school and at Day Camp].

[He's] very friendly [which has helped him participate at school and Day Camp].

Is Jack integrated/included at school?

Very negative or difficult: 1 2 3 4 5 (5) Very positive or successful

Is Jack integrated/included at day camp?

Very negative or difficult: 1 2 3 4 5 (5) Very positive or successful

Discussion

- The live observations of Jack demonstrated **virtually no interactions with his peers**.
- Interviews revealed variability in the perception of Jack's social inclusion across settings and reporters.
- While ratings regarding other children approaching and interacting with Jack may have been positive, several comments had a more negative slant.
- Community leaders described Jack as having more difficulties being socially included with the other children than parents and teachers.

Themes:

- Child characteristics**
 - Friendly
 - Difficulty understanding rules, instructions
 - Invading other children's personal space
- Family support**
 - "His family's amazing"
 - "His mom follows through"
- Lack of knowledge/preparation**
 - "I had no preparation...He tested me at first"
- Limitations/Future Research:**
 - School and community staff may want to present situation as more positive than it is.
 - Examine specific differences between settings to determine what accounts for differences in interaction and staff perceptions.
 - Compare observation data to typically developing peers.
 - Gather information and data from peers.

Results SCHOOL

Indoor Free Play: 35% Not Interacting, 65% Interacting with Adults

Recess: 0% Not Interacting, 100% Interacting

Computer Lab: 4% Not Interacting, 96% Interacting with Peers

Everyone falls in love with him.

His family's amazing. His mom follows through...

Sometimes when he approaches children and gets into their personal space they get annoyed.

At first it was very difficult. He tests people.

Do other children approach and interact with Jack?

Very negative interactions: 1 2 3 4 (4) 5 Very positive interactions

* Two responders

Results COMMUNITY

Day Camp: 10% Not Interacting, 90% Interacting with Peers

It's sometimes frustrating... kids will tell him to 'bug off' because he's always bugging them.

Some kids will approach him to 'take care' of him, but not to play.

He doesn't understand the rules unless we alter the games.

He doesn't like to participate in activities, but we try to get him involved.

Do other children approach and interact with Jack?

Very negative interactions: 1 2 (2) 3 4 5 Very positive interactions

* Two responders

Acknowledgments

Thank you to all of the families, teachers, school staff, community staff, and research assistants who participated in and assisted with this study. Data for this study were collected as part of the CIHR Team: GO4KIDDS: Great Outcomes for Kids Impacted by Severe Developmental Disabilities, Nominated Principal Investigator: Adrienne Perry, York University. (www.go4kidds.ca)

Note: Please see companion poster at this conference: **The Social Inclusion of a Girl with Severe Developmental Disability: A Case Study** (Weiss, Shine, Perry, Bebko, & Minnes)