

# TRACKS: A Peer-Mediated Evidence-Based Social Skills Program Focusing on Inclusion

Meet Friends. Have Fun. Belong.

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# Agenda

- 1. Ice Breaker
- 2. How did TRACKS Begin?
- 3. What is TRACKS and Why is it Important?
- 4. Module Summary
- 5. Training Options and Implementation
- 6. Conclusion

**All training is free until August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019!!!!**





# Ice Breaker



1. Who spends more time socializing with friends?

- a. Men
- b. Women

2. In a study, researchers found that interacting with friends (that were arranged and paid) had the same effect as:

- a. Counselling
- b. Antidepressants
- c. Vacation



# Ice Breaker



3. In another study, those who had the most friends over a 9-year period cut their risk of death by more than:

- a. 15%
- b. 30%
- c. 60%
- d. 90%

4. Dr. Dean Ornish, a pioneer in reversing heart disease, notes that no other factor in medicine has a greater effect on how often we get sick:

- a. Genetics
- b. Diet
- c. Exercise
- d. Love



# Ice Breaker



5. If you have a “best friend at work”, you are how many times more likely to feel engaged in your job?

- a. 2 x
- b. 4 x
- c. 7x
- d. 10x

6. Children today spend an average of \_\_\_\_ each day in front of the computer and TV but less than \_\_\_\_\_ a day in unstructured outdoor play with friends:

- a. 1 hour; 30 min
- b. 2 hours; 20 min
- c. 6 hours; 4 min



# Ice Breaker



7. According to a study from University of Windsor, what % of children with disabilities have no friends?

- a. 15%
- b. 26%
- c. 53%
- d. 82%

8. In the same study, what percent of children with disabilities DO NOT participate in extracurricular activities?

- a. 14%
- b. 32%
- c. 50%
- d. 78%



# Ice Breaker



9. In 2010 in Canadian schools, what percent of students were bullied?

- a. 5%
- b. 13%
- c. 22%
- d. 34%

10. What % of children with Aspergers had been bullied in the last year?

- a. 23%
- b. 52%
- c. 65%
- d. 75%

# How did TRACKS begin?

- Stay, Play and Talk
- Peer Pals
- Camps on TRACKS
- **Partners:**
  - The Camps on TRACKS collaboration was created out of need for integrated opportunities for children with disabilities to attend summer camps with their peers without disabilities.
  - This project is a collaboration across four different disciplines: therapeutic recreation, recreation administration, adult education, and applied behaviour analysis.



Thames Valley  
Children's Centre



FANSHAWE



London  
CANADA



# Acknowledgements

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# Modules: Implementing TRACKS

**Module 1.** Introduction to TRACKS

**Module 2.** Camper/Child Awareness

**Module 3.** Teaching TRACKS

**Module 4.** Establishing a Reward System

**Module 5.** Prompting Through Peers



# *CAMPS ON* **TRACKS**

**WHAT IS TRACKS AND WHY IS IT  
IMPORTANT?**

# What is TRACKS?

- TRACKS increases social opportunities and teaches children to be better friends. It makes camp, recreation programs, and school an **inclusive** place where **ALL kids** have **fun** and **belong!**
- Uses evidence-based peer-mediated approaches
- TRACKS is named for the skills that are taught to peers in a child-friendly acronym.
- Teach the adults to then teach the peers!

# What is TRACKS?

- The program provides children with proven strategies to use when interacting with children with social challenges and/or disabilities.
- Adult leaders prompt through peers, and decrease their proximity to the camper or child to foster relationships



# Who is TRACKS for?

- **EVERYONE! All Children participating in a program**
- The initial intent was to focus on children with disabilities and social challenges.
- It can be helpful for every kid participating in the program.
  - For example: Shy children, children having a bad day, ESL Children.
- It helps **ALL** children learn social skills and meet new friends while building a sense of community

# How does TRACKS work?

## Teach Typically-Developing Peers:

- About disabilities
- How to interact with peers with disabilities, social challenges, etc.

## Where and When Should it be used?

- Used in **ALL** environments when kids are socializing
- Should be used at all times of the day in all locations



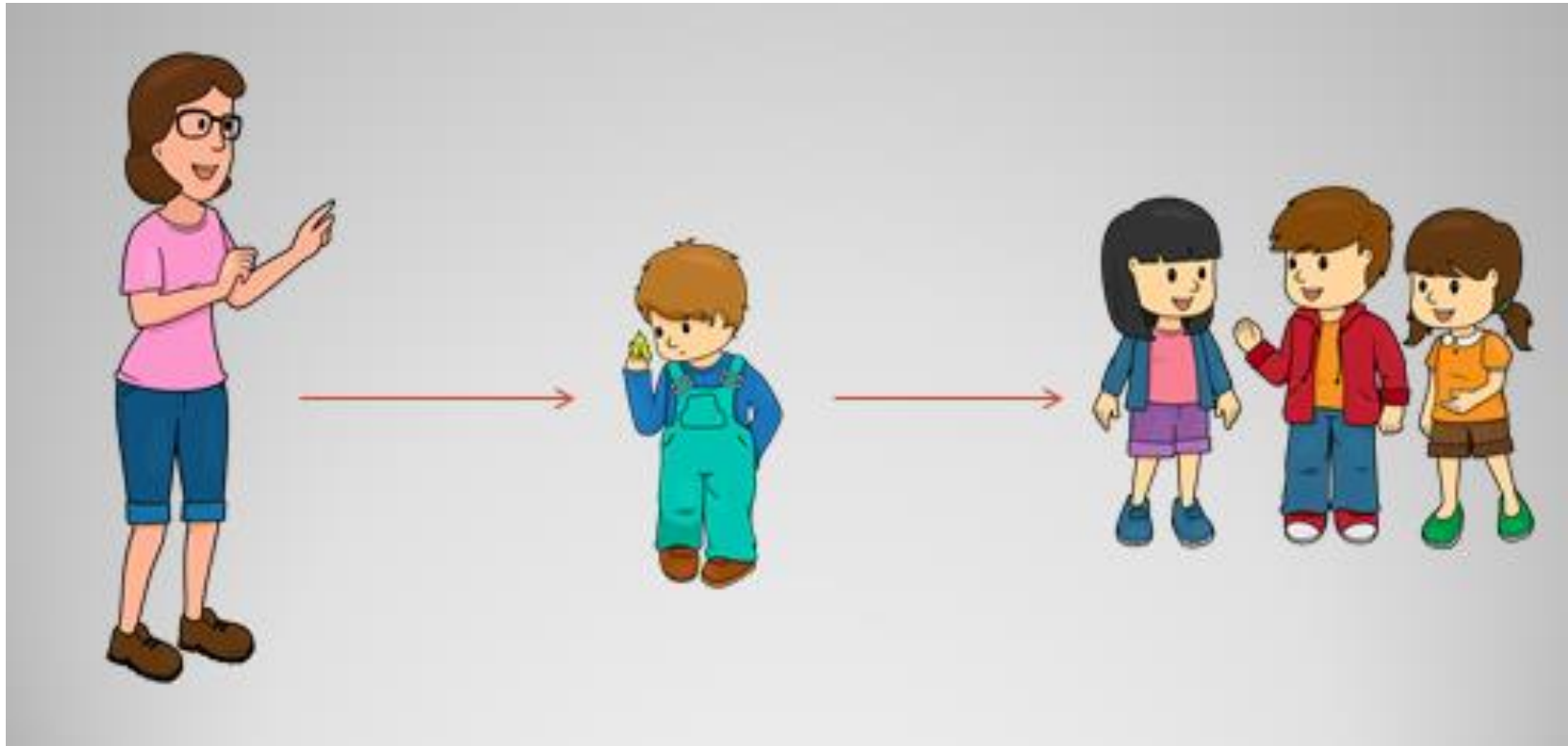
# Benefits of TRACKS

- Enhances social interactions for ALL children
- Educates peers on how to interact with children with social challenges
- Increases disability awareness
- Enhances problem-solving skills
- Increases physical activity through inclusion
- Many Success Stories!

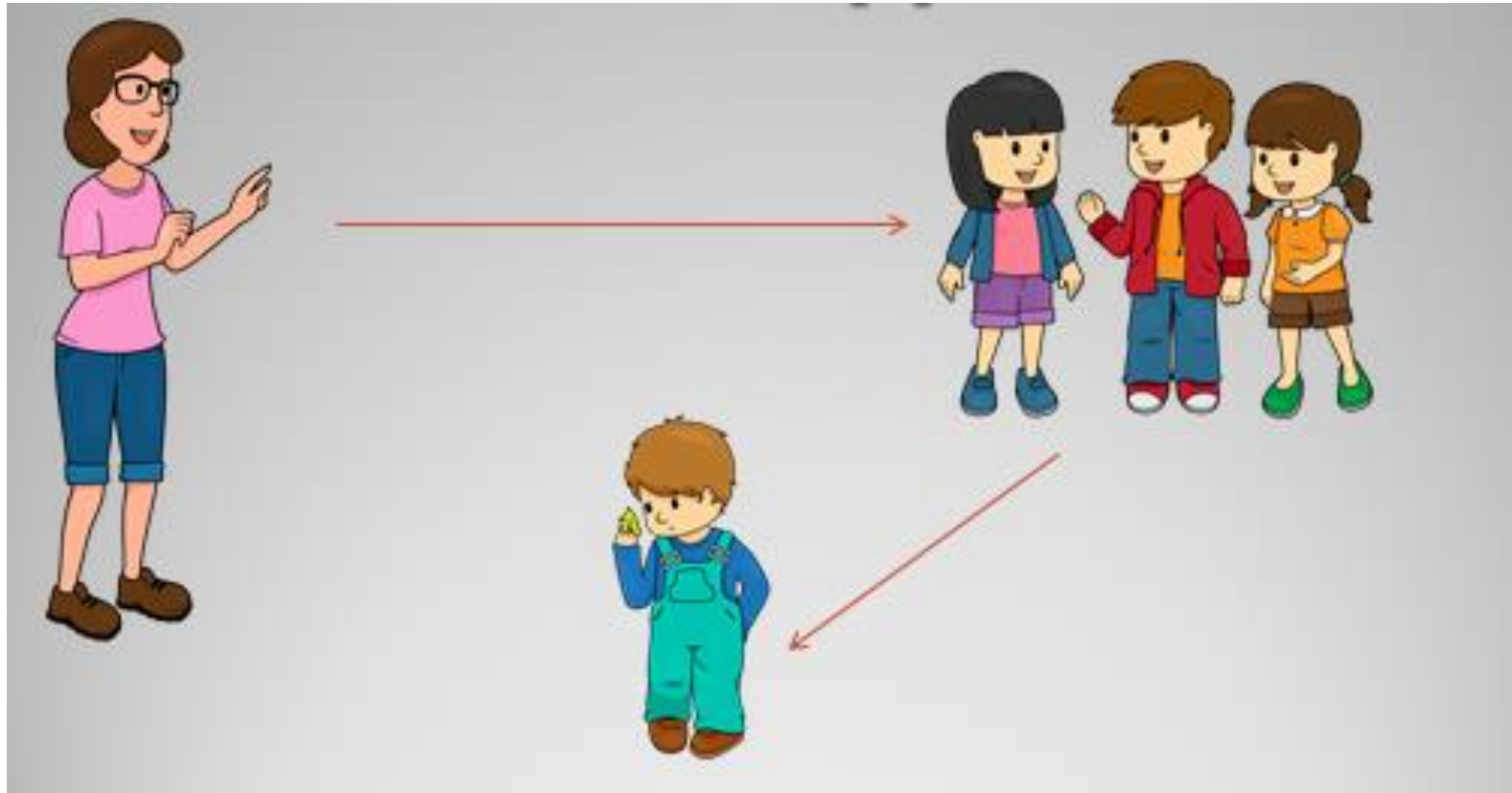




# Adult-Mediated Approach



# Peer-Mediated Approach

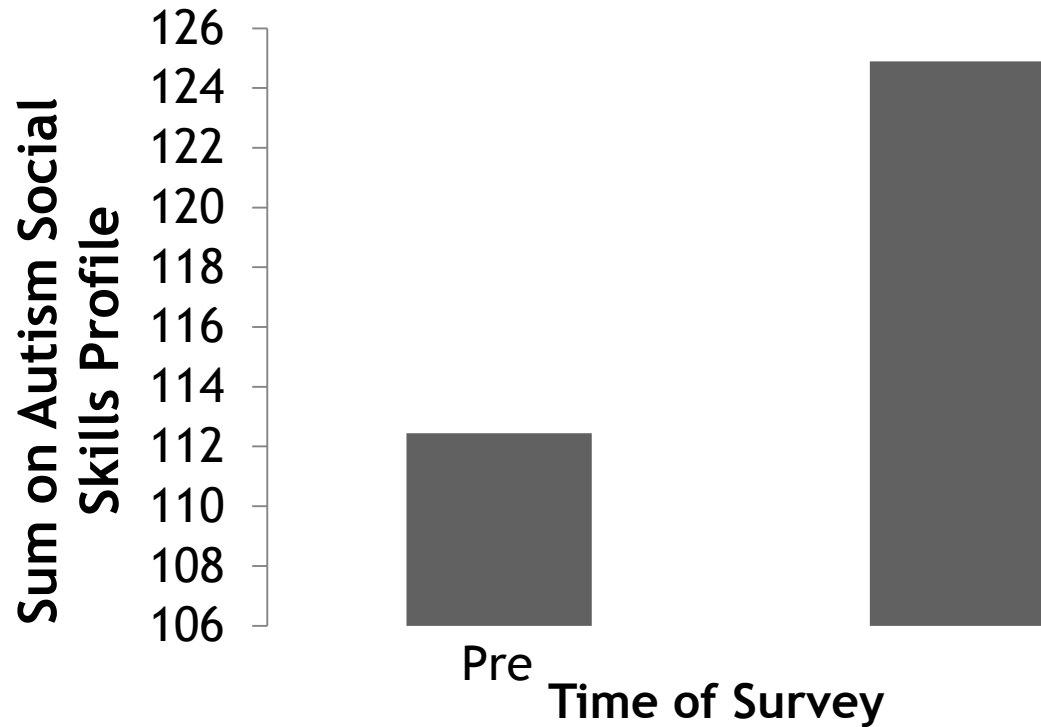


# Research on TRACKS

- 9 campers across 2 camps
- Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- 1 trained observer
  - Monday: Baseline  
(Data on social skills and interactions)
  - Tuesday-Friday: Intervention  
(TRACKS program)

# Results

## Autism Social Skills Profile

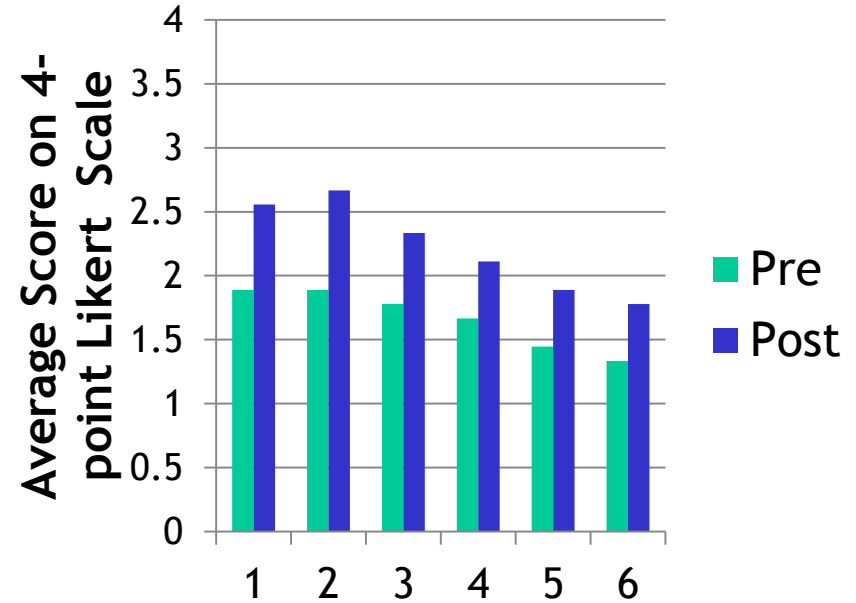


\* Significant Difference  
Z=0.38, p<0.05

# Results

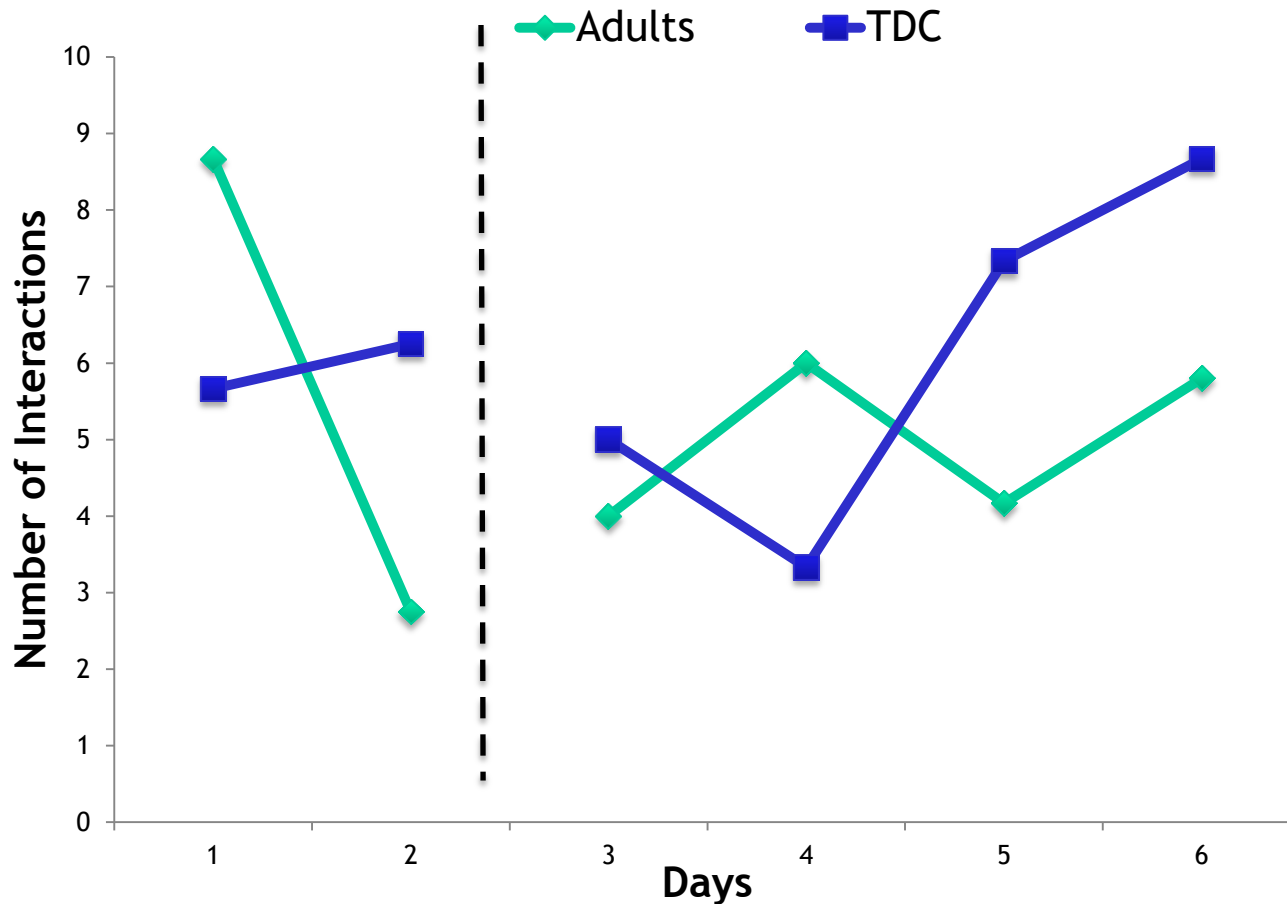
## Autism Social Skills Profile: Significant Questions

1. Joins in Activities with Peers
2. Engages in one-on-one social interactions with peers
3. Maintains the “give-and-take” of conversations
4. Expresses sympathy for others
5. Initiates greetings with others
6. Introduces self to others

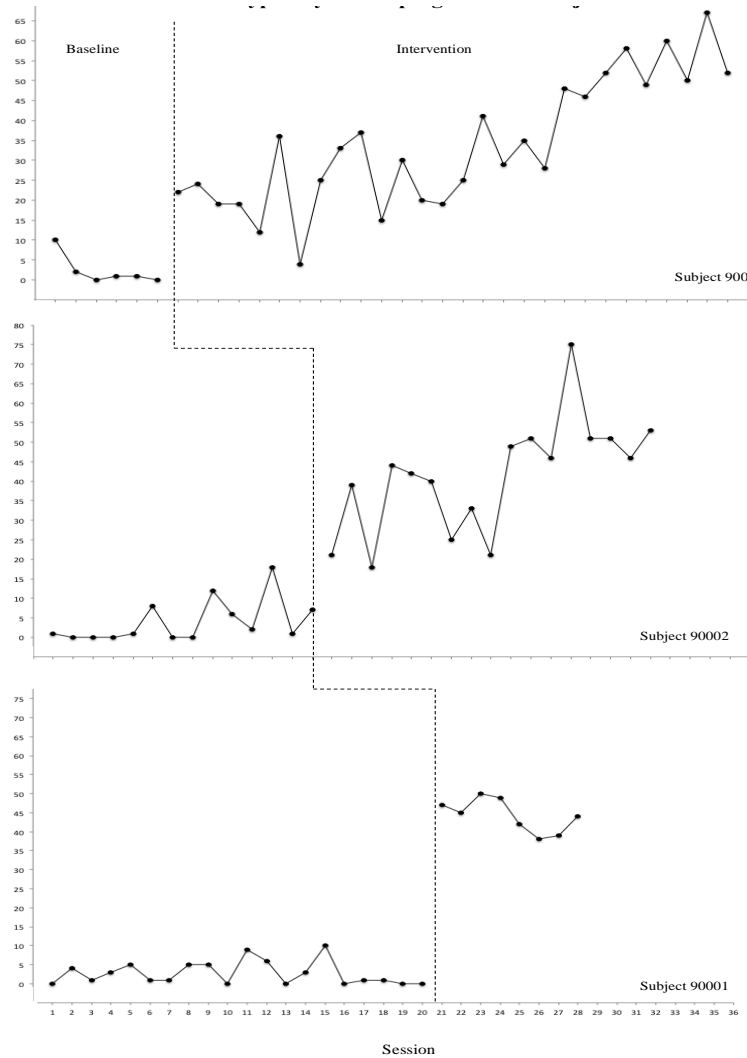


\* Significant differences at  $p < 0.05$

# Initiations – Adults vs. Peers



# School Study - Peer Prompting



# Module 2. Camper/Child Awareness

- Starts with the knowledge that each and every one of us is unique.
- Bringing awareness about similarities and differences to camp/schools/recreation helps children learn about the strengths and needs of their peers.
- Establish TRACKS as a philosophy “being a good friend” and inclusion/belonging





# Module 2. Camper/Child Awareness

- **Diversity Introduction**
  - 6 Games about similarities and differences
- **Simulated Activities**
  - Games that demonstrate some challenges people with disabilities may face to create empathy NOT Sympathy
- **Debriefing**
  - The Importance of Debriefing
  - Debriefing Questions for Each Activity
- Activities to help increase inclusion among the children in your camp or program
- This activities spark conversations about inclusion, and being a good friend!
- Include all individuals
- Access community resources!

# Module 3. Teaching TRACKS

- Once everyone has an increased awareness to help others who may be different – it is essential to teach peers HOW to interact.
- Provides peers with practical how-to skills to interact with campers with disabilities and other social challenges. They learn the acronym for TRACKS and how to perform each one



# Module 3. Teaching TRACKS

- Go into depth into each of the TRACKS acronyms
- The TRACKS Acronym is key to the program
- It needs to be explained and reinforced in every setting, no matter what skill is occurring
- Utilize strong peers or those who have gone TRACKS before



# Module 3. Teaching TRACKS

## TRACKS Acronym

### **T**ry Again (Persistence)

Teaching peers to try again when they initiate a social interaction with others

### **R**ight Thing (Correcting)

Teaching peers to encourage others to do the right thing and/or make the right choice.

### **A**ssist (Prompting)

Teaching peers to help campers to use new skills.

### **C**ongratulate (Reinforcement)

Teaching peers to praise one another when they have done a good job.

### **K**eep Trying (Persistence)

Teaching peers to continue to try when first attempts are unsuccessful.

### **S**how (Modeling)

Teaching peers how to demonstrate what it looks like to do the right thing.

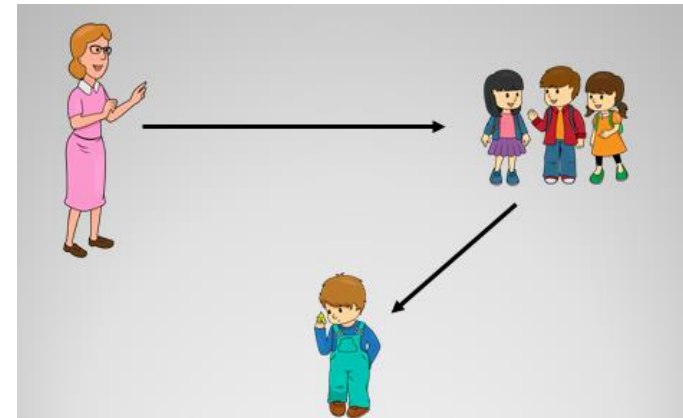
# Module 4. Establishing a Reward System

- Discuss what the requirements for a good reward system are
- Important as they allow the child to understand how and when they apply these skills in everyday interactions
- Can change these each week for variety and/or tailor them to each group
- Over time, need less rewards
- Should reward both staff and the peers/children
- Should be:
  - Consistent, Immediate, Specific, and Group Based



# Module 5. Prompting Through Peers

- Adult Leaders prompt peers to use TRACKS skills to teach the child social skills in the activity occurring.
- Prompting through peers allows children to apply the newly learned TRACKS skills in everyday settings with new friends
- PTP could involve a small nudge to a peer to go over to the camper, or it could involve more specific training of the words to use, and how to interact.
- Removes adult as a barrier
- Fade prompts over time
- More discrete and natural
- In this module you are changing your behavior



# Training Options and Implementation



**CAMPS ON  
TRACKS**

# Training Options

- All training is **FREE** until **August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019** – Thanks to the Ontario Trillium Foundation 😊
  - After August there will be small fee depending on which training is selected
- Online Training
- In Person Training
- Train-the-Trainer
- Future – Paid Train the Trainers





# Training Options

## Individual Online Training

- Both Camps and Schools
- Takes approximately 60-90 minutes with practice questions, case studies, videos, and real life examples throughout
- Automated TRACKS Certificate at the end with your name once final quiz is completed
- Go to the 'Login' button located at the top right corner of the website and sign up for the online training module
- Complete at your own pace

# Training Options

## In Person Trainings

- Camp/Recreation/Sport/School
- Customize your in person training.
- We can come and train your camp staff, recreation staff, sport staff, teachers, etc!
- We can customize this training to any length if you do not want the full Train the Trainer
- Camp Specific/Front Line Presentation
  - 1-1.5 hours
- Can range from 1 hour to 2.5 hours in length depending on the size of the group, and the amount of activities we participate in.
- Receive access to the school and camp resources

# Training Options

## Train-The-Trainer Training

- Most extensive training that goes into depth on the TRACKS program
- Approximately 3.5-4.5 hours depending on size of the group
- Receive a TRACKS Trainer Certificate which allows you to train others on TRACKS
- You can train your own program or camps front line staff!
- Get access to extra resources and presentations

Host a train the trainer and get a free TRACKS kit!

# Training Benefits

- With the in-person trainings you will gain access to:
  - Bitly Links
  - Examples of Letters to Parents
  - All of the Activity Scripts
  - How to Make your Own Box
  - Resources for Implementation
  - Reward Examples
  - Community Resources
  - Many documents per unit for more information
  - Certificate that can be added to your resume

# Implementation

- Choose the Training that is most appropriate for you
  - **Camps** – Many camps have their upper positions, coordinators, and inclusion staff take the train the trainer, and then provide a shorter presentation to front line staff or require them to complete the online training
- Best to implement the program at the start of the program or camp but can implement it anytime
- Has been implemented in small towns to large cities

# Implementation – City of London Example

- In all of City of London's camps (28 camps)
- Were doing well at accommodating physical disabilities, but needed to improve inclusion and create friendships among campers
- Tried at 1 location
- Campers were making friends, and these friendships were continuing outside of their camp day



# Implementation – City of London

## Example

- TRACKS was written into the job description and staff are required to take the online training and bring the certificate before the first day of work
- Trained all inclusion staff with the full train the trainer training and frontline counsellors were given a shorter presentation
- Every site has a TRACKS kit and inclusion resources

# Implementation – City of London

## Example

- Very well received. Staff loved the extra training and resources they had to overall improve behaviours at camp
- Behaviours were being dealt with before reaching counsellor level.
- Counsellors had more time to deal with program planning and “their job” and less time on managing camper interactions/behaviours





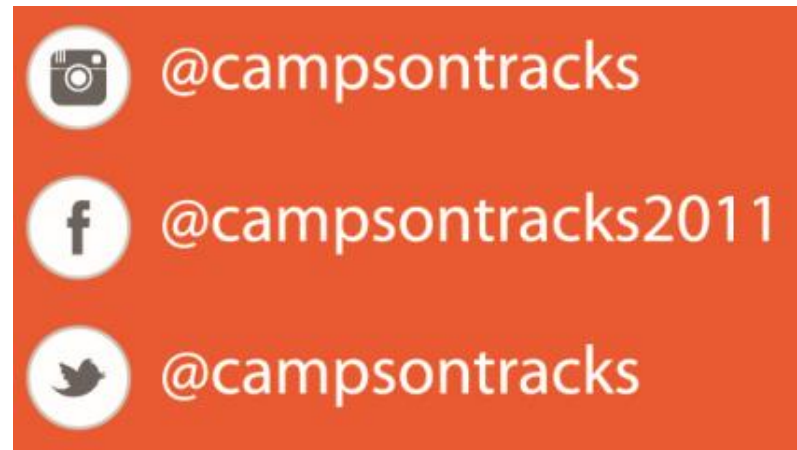
# Conclusion

- This program is easily modified to suit your camp or recreation program
- Different role for staff
  - Will be more work at the beginning but will be less work for staff in a short period of time
- **TRACKS is for ALL children!**



# Next Steps?

- Take the FREE online training
- Encourage your staff to take the online training
- Become a Trainer and sign up for a Train the Trainer!
- Spread the word!
- Like and follow our social media sites



# THANK YOU!

## Any Questions?

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