**MEASURING SOCIAL INCLUSION IN CHILDREN WITH SEVERE DD: DEVELOPMENT OF THE GO4KIDDS SOCIAL INCLUSION CODING SCHEME**

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**Objectives:** Social inclusion and participation has many benefits for children with or without Developmental Disabilities (DD) (e.g., King et al., 2009). Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities are often integrated into “mainstream” settings with typically developing children, however, physical presence in a setting or program does not necessarily equate to actual participation, and children with DD may experience lower rates of social inclusion (e.g., Solish, Perry, & Minnes, 2010; Taheri, Perry, & Minnes, 2016). There is currently limited research on social inclusion of children with severe DD, especially in community settings (Shields, et al., 2014). This presentation will describe the development and implementation of a live observational coding scheme, which allows for the systematic examination of social inclusion experiences of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in potentially social situations at school and in the community.

**Method:** We developed the GO4KIDDS Social Inclusion Observational Coding Scheme in order to code *live* observations of children with Severe Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities at school and in the community. Twenty children (aged 6 – 18) were observed for 15 – 30 minutes at a time during unstructured school activities and in the community. Children’s opportunities for interactions and actual interactions with peers and adults were coded.

**Results:** Overall, levels of social interaction were low, despite the presence of others. Children had the opportunity to interact with peers for 86% of the observation intervals, however, the children with DD in the study were only involved in social interaction for a mean of 32% of the observation intervals. Children’s cognitive, adaptive and social skill levels were positively correlated with the amount of time children spent interacting with peers.

**Discussion/Conclusion:** This measure provides an objective indicator of the social inclusion experiences of children with severe Developmental Disabilities in social settings, and is able to be implemented reliably in natural settings with live observations where videotaping is not allowed or practicable. This study showed that despite the opportunity for interaction, typically little interaction occurred.

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