THE SUMMER GET-TOGETHER

AN EVALUATION OF AN

INTEGRATED ALTERNATIVE

PROGRAMME IN EDUCATION

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(continued)

Introduction

The Summer Get-Together was a full-time summer programme offering educational and recreational activities for children between the ages of 5 and 12 years of age. It was run by student-teachers in the Faculty of Education at York University and was located on the University campus.

The most unique aspect of this programme, and the one with the greatest implications for present educational practices, was that the programme is an example of a fully integrated programme. Children with a variety of handicaps learned and played with non-handicapped children.

The philosophy of integration or mainstreaming upon which the Summer Get-Together is based, constrasts with policies supporting special education for children whose abilities fall outside of the normal range of abilities.

The following report is based on an evaluation of the Summer Get-Together. The evaluation process lasted throughout the entire duration of the programme. The purpose of this report is to summarize the data collected, identify strengths and weaknesses of the programme and make recommendations for improvements.

The report is divided into four major sections to reflect four perspectives used in examining the Summer Get-Together: the programme itself, the teachers, the parents, and the students.

The Programme

History

The earliest predecessor of the Summer Get-Together was a
tutoring service for handicapped and learning disabled students.
The tutoring service was supervised by Marsha Forest, a professor
in the Faculty of Education, and the tutors were Faculty of
Education students taking one of her courses. During the fall
of 1980; three of the tutors, Donna Bracewell, Kathy Milligan
and Sue Shearer brought their 6 students together for Saturday
outings. Within a month the group had grown to 20 children by
word of mouth, and included both handicapped and non-handicapped
students. The students and their teachers were given the use
of a classroom by the director of Special Education in the Faculty
of Education at York, and the Saturday Get-Together came into being.

Marsha Forest and the staff wanted to demonstrate that it is
possible to integrate children of differing ages, abilities and
background, and that all children can benefit from such a programme.
Judy Snow, another of the programme's founders, influenced the
direction of the programme with her philosophy and insight on the
role of handicapped people in our society.

By February of 1981 parents started to push for a summer pro-
gramme. An application was made to the federal government for
funding under their Summer Youth Employment Programme. The National
Institute on Mental Retardation agreed to be the Sponsor. The
application was successful and the Summer Get-Together ran for 8
weeks during July and August of 1981.

Programme Goals

The goals of the Summer Get-Together were discussed during a two-day retreat session for the staff, held two weeks before the programme commenced. The following list of goals generated by the staff reflect three basic areas of concern: the children's academic growth, their social skills, and staff development.

Academic Goals.

1. Improve the children's written and oral use of language and change their attitude towards reading.

2. Improve their problem solving ability by encouraging them to think through a problem and use logical thought processes.

3. Improve their ability to concentrate.

4. Encourage them to gain independent work research skills.

5. Ensure that the children have a conceptual understanding of what they are doing in math.

6. Help the students to gain a positive attitude to learning in general.

7. Emphasize learning through experience.

Social Skills.

1. Improve the students' group skills so that they can articulate ideas and listen to other people's ideas.

2. Improve the quality of interaction.

3. Encourage the students to work cooperatively and reduce competition.

4. Decrease social isolation and increase awareness of others.

5. Help the students to recognize and appreciate individual differences.

6. Encourage peer teaching.

7. Promote independence in living skills.

8. Allow the students to have input into and some control of the programme.

9. Help the students to show compassion and sensitivity towards others.

10. Make them "nicer people".

Staff Goals

1. Promote good, open communication between staff.

2. Give everyone a voice in how the programme is run.

3. Promote growth as educators.

4. Encourage shared responsibility and initiative.

5. Share techniques and specialized knowledge.

6. Make use of available community and university resources for professional development and the children's benefit.

7. Develop educational leaders in the special education field who have philosophical values congruent with this programme.

8. Educate the public and parents.

9. Prepare materials to educate people.

10. Establish a model programme to demonstrate what's possible.

11. Demonstrate the values of honesty, cooperation, trust, caring and quality.

12. Establish a viable model that can be transferred into the public school system.

13. Challenge existing educational programming by setting an example.

14. Create a learning community of parents, teachers, children and animals.

<u>Programme Structure</u>

<u>Daily Schedule</u>

The Summer Get-Together started at approximately 9:30 a.m. and ran till 3:30 in the afternoon. Many students arrived earlier, however, due to their parents' work schedules or simply because the children wanted to spend more time at the programme. From the time they arrived until approximately 10:00 a.m. the students had free time to play games or work on individual projects. The staff occasionally used this time to work one on one with students.

Academic activities usually followed free time. Older children would receive lessons in science, history, geography or problem-solving, or continue work on a project (such as write up a science experiment, or look up information in the library). Younger children participated in language experience sessions ("reading group" as it was commonly called) or simple experiments (e.g., "Where will the shadow fall?", "Which object will float?"). During language experience sessions for pre-readers the children constructed and dictated sen-

tences to the teacher which revolved around a theme or shared experience (such as a field trip or story read). The children were then encouraged to pick out words and read the sentences that the group ·constructed. The purpose of this exercise was to create an association between the spoken and written word and make the reading material personally relevant and interesting for the children. In line with this technique, the children also created their personal "word bank" where they suggested their favourite words that they wanted written down. The word bank was then read through and added to daily.

The general meeting took place roughly between 11:00 to 11:40 a.m. All students were required to sit in the circle and listen to each other as discussion developed on the topic of the day. Problems, opinions, issues, current events or future plans were discussed. Voting sometimes took place to resolve an issue or determine preferences. Visitors were also introduced at this point and spoke to the students during the general meeting.

After the general meeting was wrapped up, the lunch group for the week started lunch preparation while the rest of the children were encouraged to spend the time reading. Lunch usually took place between 12 noon and 12:45 p.m. Everyone (including staff and guests) sat together in a circle and the lunch group, assisted by staff members, passed around the food. No one was permitted to start eating until everyone was served. (Unfortunately, the logistics of serving up to 30 people meant that hot food had cooled down by the time it could be eaten.)

The time after lunch was spent in cleaning up and doing jobs assigned on a rotating basis (feeding animals, vacuuming, watering plants, etc.). In July, the time after lunch was often spent "Moving to music", with a part-time staff member leading the children in exercises combining music, rhythm, movement and role playing. In August, the students went outside to play sports or games.

After this activity, the children went to the pool or gym. Small group activities took place if pool time was unavailable. In July, the students often had a music lesson for their last activity of the day (3:00 to 3:30 p.m.). In August, they formed a circle and solved "brain teasers" or played a game as a group.

Although this was a typical day's schedule, it was very flexible, and was often rearranged to accommodate pool or gym times, special events or guest presenters. Also, the distinction among academic subjects and between academic and recreational activities is perhaps not as clear cut as described above. The teachers made use of the concept of "confluent education" as taught to them by their supervisor. Confluent education refers to a method where skill areas are built in through subject areas and the educational value of all experiences are tapped, whether they happen to be recreational, creative or social activities. For example, a field trip to the art gallery developed into an art lesson and a lesson on native Canadians; learning the words of a song was a reading lesson in disguise, and discussion would be halted for a moment to discuss the meaning of a new word.

Time spent in activities

In order to get some idea of the amount of time children were spending in various activities during a "typical" day at the Summer Get-Together, a small sample of children were observed for two full days. One observation day was in July, and the other in August to allow for some broad comparisons between the programme structure in July versus August. A "typical" day in this case refers to a day where there were no field trips to another location, where the usual range of activities occurred, and no regular activites (as described in the section on the "Daily Schedule") were pre-empted by a special event or activity.

Six children were observed on July 20th with the help of two volunteers from a summer course in special education. Two of the six children were handicapped and four were non-handicapped (an approximate representation of the ratio of handicapped to non-handicapped children). Otherwise, the students were randomly chosen.

As the researcher was working alone on August 20 only 2 children (one handicapped and one non-handicapped) could be observed. Notes were taken on the location of the activity, description, time begun and time finished, and the degree of involvement of each child.

For the purpose of analysis, the activities were grouped according to 10 exclusive categories (see Table 1). An additional category "Total outdoors" indicates the approximate time spent outdoors.

The results show that the largest amount of time on July 20th

Table 1

Time Spent in Activities: Comparison of Two "Typical"
Days in July and August

Activity	Average Time (in minutes)		Range	
	July	August	July (n=6)	August (n=2)
Free time & games	52.0[a]	30.5	35-80	15-46
Discussion	19.0	57.0	15-23	52-62
Academic lesson	20.0	0	0-40	0
Reading/ writing/ storytelling	30.0	23.5	15-40	7-40
Physical exercise	70.8[a]	143.5	25-80	128-159
Music/artistic expression	35.0	0	25-85	0
Practical skills	25.8	20.5	5-40	10-31
Lunch	40.0	35.0	0	0
Subtotal	311.8	310.0		
Getting organized, forming circle	---	51	---	48-54
Total	311.8[b] 5 hrs. 11 min.[b]	361.0 6 hrs. 1 min.		
Total outdoors	(20 min. est.)	98.5		

Note: A full day ran from 9:30 to 3:30 which equals 6 hours.
n refers to number of students observed.

[a]These times are overestimates since they include time getting organized.

[b]The total for July is lower since "time getting organized" was not recorded for July.

was spent on (in order of duration): physical exercise, free time, academic lessons (older children only), lunch and music. The largest amount of time on August 20th was spent in physical exercise, discussion, getting organized (no estimate available for July), lunch and free time.

The major differences are in the amount of time spent in physical exercise and discussion, which was greater on the August day; and the amount of time spent in music, free time and academic lessons which was greater for the July day. The differences in physical exercise, music and academic lessons most probably reflect the difference in emphasis on these activities in July and August. In August the balance shifted towards recreation and away from academic activities. Also there were no August staff members with expertise in music to keep that activity at the same level as in July. Differences in discussion and free time are possibly chance differences, since there were no intentional changes in policy in these areas. Note that time time spent on reading, practical skills and lunch was similar for the two days.

One other important difference is the far greater amount of time spent outdoors on the August day (98 min) versus the July day (approximately 20 minutes during a walk to the pool). Again, this reflects the greater emphasis on recreation in August. Approximately 50 minutes were spent in academic activities on July 20th versus 23 on August 20th; and 157 minutes were spent in recreation on the July day versus 173 on the August day.

There were no major differences between the handicapped and the non-handicapped children in the amount of time they spent on the various activities. Any differences between individual students that occurred were related to age rather than presence of a handicap. For example, on the July day, the older children had a formal academic lesson in geography, while the younger children were involved in making a cake (developing practical and measurement skills) and then writing a story about it (language experience).

Administrative structure

Marsha Forest served as director and staff supervisor of the Summer Get-Together. Donna Bracewell served as head teacher during July, a position necessary to ensure the smooth running of the programme on a day to day basis. After Donna's departure at the end of July, Jim McLeod took on the responsibilities of head teacher in August. Donna had kept in close contact with Marsha during July, and in August it was found to be necessary to keep up this close link, this time between Marsha and Jim in order to maintain a smooth flow of communication.

Financial administration was handled by the head teacher in July and one of the teachers took over these duties in August. The staff received help in this area from NIMR, the programme's sponsor. Peter Dill, senior programme assistant at NIMR, served as the liaison between the staff and NIMR, and he has worked with Marsha on future plans for the programme. The researcher's role was that of a non-teaching staff member and in-house evaluator for the programme.

Generally, the Summer Get-Together had an informal structure which was suitable for the size and scope of the programme. Plans for future expansion of the programme, however (e.g., full time operation), have already shown the necessity for greater accountability and a more formal structure, including the addition of an advisory board.

Special Events and Guests

Table 2 lists field trips and guest speakers during July and August. There was slightly less than one full day field trip per week in July and there was, on average, one full day field trip per week in August. There were over twice as many guest speakers in July. In addition to the guest speakers and presenters listed in Table 2 , numerous people came in both July and August to observe the Summer Get-Together including: the director of NIMR and his assistant, a newspaper columnist (resulting in a highly positive article on the programme in a major newspaper), a representative from the March of Dimes, the Director of Special Education at York, a psychologist from the Faculty of Education, the programme's Project Officer from the Ministry of Employment and Immigration, and a large number of education students.

Rating of Programme Features

Based on the list of goals (outlined in a previous section), and several other aspects of the Summer Get-Together, a list of 28 programme features was drawn up. This list was included in the final evaluation questionnaire given to the staff. The results

Table 2

List of

Special Events and Guests

Feature	July	August
Field trips (full day)	- Harbour front - Sailing & Treasure Hunt in Hamilton Harbour	- Harbour front - Scarborough Wheel Chair Games - Metro Toronto Zoo - Art Gallery of Ontario
Field trips (half day)	- Pioneer Village (younger)/ Science Centre (older) - Scarborough Bluffs (younger)/ Kleinburg Art Museum (older)	
Special Days		- Films and Puppet Show - Camera making & Photography
Number of days on field trips or special days	3	6
Guest speakers & Presenters	- musician (saxophone player) - fine arts student: wall murals - 2 education students: presentation on Native Canadians - education student: Yo-yo instruction - education student: magic show - field trip guide: sailing instructor for Hamilton field trip - representative of B.O.O.S.T.	- photographer: making cameras and taking pictures - representative from People First - education student: how to write and edit a story.

Table 3

Programme Ratings by Teachers: Items Ranked by
Number of Rating Points

Rank	Rating[a] Points	Item
Classification: Strong feature		
1	20	Teacher training
	20	Use of university resources
	20	Location in university
	20	Compassion and sensitivity shown by students
2	19	Guidance and supervision
	19	Amount of exposure to reading and writing
	19	Cooperation shown by students
	19	Student input and autonomy
3	18	Creative expression
	18	Sharing of techniques and specialized knowledge
	18	Staff communication
	18	Evaluation
4	17.5	Students' ability to listen
5	17	Long range planning
	17	Independence shown by students
Classification: Room for improvement		
6	16	Academic content
	16	Shared responsiblity and initiative
	16	Financial administration
7	15	Use of community resources
8	14	Physical activity
	14	Staff meetings
	14	Day to day planning
9	13	Public education
	13	Location in community
Classification: Problem area		
10	11	Parent education
	10	Use of parent resources
	8	Room facilities

Note: N=5.

[a]Total possible points=20, representing "excellent" rating by all raters.

uity in the academic programme. Perhaps mapping out a weekly strategy based on programme goals and then narrowing down towards day-to-day plans would allow for more continuity in academic lessons and for the development of a more challenging programme for older students.

Use of community resources is an area that should receive more attention in future programmes. Certainly the students benefitted from their trips out into the community but there was not an organized effort to bring ordinary people from the community (such as senior citizens) into the programme. With three exceptions, the guest speakers represented special interest groups or were education students.

Finally, the last three items ranked are classified as "problem areas" that should be given priority in future plans. Two out of three concern parent involvement which was generally lacking (see section on "Parent Input and Participation").

The lowest rated item concerned room facilities which were inadequate for the number of students in the programme. The room has poor ventilation, has no windows and the students spent too much time in it, especially in July. The classroom is used during the school year as the "Pre-school for Hearing Impaired Children" and as a result the furnishings are inappropriate for the older children. Either a more spacious room should be found or the number of children using it at one time should be restricted with two rooms made available for the programme's use at all times. Children were usually out in the corridor during small group activities. This was a noisy

and very uncomfortable situation and was not conducive to learning. Space is a serious problem when university classes are being held but if top priority is given to finding a more suitable room location, these efforts should have some chance of success.

Impact of PASS Evaluation

The PASS evaluation of the Summer Get-Together was sponsored by NIMR and took place July 29th and 30th with verbal feedback given on the last day of the July programme. Verbal feedback consisted of an hour long discussion session where the major findings and recommendations were presented to the staff and supervisor. The session was tape recorded and therefore a recording exists of the areas covered at this session. (Unfortunately, only the first half of the session was preserved on tape, but this includes most of the information presented by the PASS team leader.)

Approximately two weeks after this session a questionnaire was given to the August staff and the programme supervisor in order to assess the impact of the PASS evaluation. The questions asked for the staff's recall of the points that were made with the object of using recall as a means of measuring the impact of the feedback. If the staff could remember most of the points made it would indicate that the feedback left a lasting impression. The respondents were also asked to give their opinions and examples of how the PASS evaluation affected the August programme.

Analysis of the tape recording, supplemented by consultation with the team leader, indicates that approximately 24 separate points

or comments were made.

Results.

The number of points or comments remembered ranged from 5 to 14 with an average of 11 (approximately 46%). The tone of the 24 comments made can be classified into 3 types: "praise" (7 comments), "observation/suggestion" (4), or "problem and recommended change" (13) (Table 4). There was generally no difference in the percentage of items recalled between the three types of comments. That is, the staff were just as likely to recall criticism as praise.

The comments recalled by all 5 people were (1) the example of a special relationship that developed between an older boy and a younger handicapped boy as a result of the programme, and (2) the problem that the content doesn't match the special needs of the handicapped children. Four out of five respondents remembered the following comments: (1) that the programme wasn't suitable for one of the older boys; (2) that more outside activites are desirable in the summer; and (3) that there were too many devalued children in the programme (thus diluting its strength as an integrated programme). There were only three points that no one recalled.

Generally, it can be said that the PASS evaluation did have an effect on the August programme in at least 9 out of 14 problem areas (Table 5). The evaluation also brought a number of issues into consciousness for the staff. One of the major and most lasting influences it had was to increase the staff's awareness of their roles as advocates and the potential of the programme to affect the lives

Table 4

Respondents' Recall of Comments

Made by PASS Team According to

Type of Comments.

Type of Comment	# of Comments/ Category	Average # of Comments Recalled
Praise (+)	7	3.2
Observation/ Suggestion (OS)	4	2.0
Problem/ Recommendation (-r)	13	6.0

Note. $\underline{N}$ = 5.

Table 5

Effect of PASS Evaluation on August Programme: Comments

Recalled by Staff and Supervisor, and Evidence of Programme Changes

Comments Made by PASS Team	Type of Comment	# of Respond- ents Who Recalled Point	Changes Made in August?	Evidence
1. Overall support for pro- gramme.	+	2		
2. Content positive	+	2		
3. Process positive	+	1		
4. Example of 2 boy's special relationship	+	5		
5. This relationship and others should be supported.	OS	3		
6. Positive interaction between children.	+	3		
7. Integration.	+	2		
8. Children exposed to wide range of experiences in programme.	+	0		
9. "Wounding" of handicapped boy by society.	0	3		
10. Content of programme doesn't match greatest needs of children (e.g., therapy needed for physically handicapped boy)	-r	5	No	No systematic effort to develop individualized programmes based on student needs.
11. Bring in parent input	-r	1	Some	Parents of 2 handicapped boys contacted and invited to observe child in programme.
12. Older, (12-yr.-old) boy does not fit programme	-r	1	Yes	Oldest non-handicapped child in August was 9 yrs.; oldest child 11 yrs. old (handicapped).

Table 5 (cont.)

Comments Made by PASS Team	Type of Comment	# of Respondents Who Recalled Point	Changes Made in August	Evidence
13. Example of younger child who could fit programme with changes.	-r	1	Yes	More crafts, recreation in August.
14. More outside activities.	-r	4	Yes	Usually 1 hour outside per day.
15. More physical activities.	-r	2	Yes	Time outside often spent playing sports.
16. Less academics, more recreation: "day camp model".	-r	0	Yes	Conscious effort by staff to change programme's emphasis.
17. Careful selection of students who would benefit from programme.	-r	3	Some	One emotionally disturbed child not accepted into programme as needs would not have been properly met.
18. Group too large.	-r	2	No	A greater number enrolled in August.
19. Too many devalued children.	-r	4	No	7 handicapped children attending regularly vs. 6 in July.
20. Too much emphasis on handicaps.	-r	2	Yes	No handicapped guests specifically invited to speak; less emphasis in group discussion.
21. A large amount of energy is needed to keep a programme innovative.	0	2	--	---
22. Help handicapped child use public transit or alternative to Wheel Trans.	OS	2	Yes	Arrangements made for another parent to pick up student.
23. Stigma of attending academic programme in summer for children.	-r	1	Some	Less emphasis on academics in August.
24. Stigma of attending programme in a University for children.	-r	0	No	Programme continued at University.

of the children who are at risk. The teachers and their supervisor
pursued their advocacy roles more vigorously both in August and
after the programme ended. During August, constant efforts were
needed to overcome transportation problems for two physically
handicapped boys. The parents had to be encouraged to work with
the staff to overcome these problems and not take the path of
least resistance - withdrawing their children from the programme.
After the Summer Get-Together ended, parents with "labelled" children
(i.e., labelled as learning disabled by their schools) were contacted
and action was taken to improve the children's situation if they
were having problems. This has involved arranging for tutors,
visiting the school, talking to the teacher and principal, or in
extreme cases, arranging a transfer to a new school.

In their responses to the questionnaire, the teachers and their
supervisor described a number of ways in which the PASS feedback
affected their behaviour and attitudes in August. (The numbers in
parentheses indicate the total number of respondents who made com-
ments of that type.)

> "I have become somewhat less concerned about missing
> academic work in favour of outdoor free time." (4)

> "I felt more reassured about what we were doing and
> more confident about (the) programme." (2)

> (Greater) "sensitivity to the real needs of the 'labelled'
> children." (2)

> Three teachers mentioned their efforts to encourage con-
> tacts between handicapped children and the rest of the
> group.

> "I think we have all let the handicapped kids become
> more independent with skills, such as eating, sitting
> in the circle, and moving from one spot to another." (2)
>
> "I've been more conscientious about actively getting
> the kids involved and noticing when they're not." (1)
>
> "I'm aware of encouraging kids to improve their life
> skills to affect their life on a scale larger than the
> programme." (1)

Although the PASS evaluation did have considerable influence in shifting the programme towards a greater emphasis on recreation instead of academics, at least one other factor was probably involved. Personnel changes in August resulted in two out of four staff members having expertise and interest in physical education and recreation. This facilitated the shift towards recreation and outdoor physical activities.

It is recommended that the issues raised by the PASS evaluation be directly discussed with new staff in the Saturday programme so that positive changes made are not lost but are carefully and consciously built into the philosophy of the Saturday programme and all future "Get-Togethers".

The Teachers

Background and Goals

There were a total of 6 teachers involved in the Summer Get-Together. One worked full-time in July, another full-time in August, one was a part-time staff member in July and the remaining three worked full-time all summer. Four out of the six teachers had been involved in the Saturday programme on a regular basis.

The teachers ranged in age from 21 to 24 years. All were registered in the Faculty of Education and have specialized in Special Education. Three out of six teachers are majoring in English, one is in Native Studies, one in Physical Education and another in Math and Psychology. Therefore, the only areas not represented in the major subjects of the staff were science, history and geography. In addition, staff members specialized in certain subject areas within the programme and they were usually responsible for most of the teaching in their areas. Geography, problem solving, music and dance, arts and crafts, and language experience were specialty areas.

Involvement in the Saturday Get-Together was the major means by which the staff members came to be involved in the Summer programme. Staff members were also asked personally by Marsha or one of the other staff members to become involved.

Career Goals

Career goals for staff members encompassed a variety of activities within the field of education, such as teaching primary grades, teaching in a native community, teaching in an integrated programme,

or working as a consultant in special education (2). One teacher
was interested in the field of mental retardation and would be inter-
ested in working for organizations such as L'arche, Frontier Alberta
or CUSO. Another would like to use drama and movement to help
disturbed children.

Five years from now, four staff members see themselves as teachers,
another is interested in teacher training for Native teachers and
another aspires to either an administrative position or "Broadway".

Teacher Training

There were two very valuable experiences that the teachers gained
from this programme that they would not have been able to experience
in their regular practicum settings. The first was an opportunity to
teach in a setting where they were not directly supervised and where
they were required to take on full responsibility for all aspects
of running a classroom. Their responsibilities included: arranging
daily schedules, planning the curriculum, administering the programme,
coping with behaviour problems, dealing with a medical problem, and
communicating with parents. The supervisor was standing by, and
often gave advice, feedback and discussed policy but she was not
directly involved in the day-to-day running of the programme. The
second valuable experience the teachers had was to see an integrated
educational programme in action and have confidence that it can work.
They now have the first-hand experience and knowledge of how to
manage an integrated programme. This is probably a rare skill
considering the fact that there are few truly integrated educational

programmes in Canada.

The teachers also had the benefit of watching their supervisor model teaching skills and techniques during her daily music lesson in July. These skills and techniques included: confluent education, values education, lesson preparation and pacing, posing questions and getting students interested in the material.

Another philosophy passed on by the supervisor, and very much a part of the teachers' attitudes, is an aversion to labelling of children. They feel that it starts a downward spiral of reduced expectations and poor performance with the result that the label becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. When the topic of discussion among the staff made it necessary to distinguish between handicapped and non-handicapped children, the staff used terms such as "labelled" and "non-labelled" and they were wary of using the term "normal". (In discussions with people outside of the programme, the term "so-called 'normal'" was sometimes used.) They were careful not to equate the child's disability with the child's identity. For example, the term "deaf child" is frowned upon; a more acceptable description would be "child with a hearing impairment". This issue also surfaced when a very positive newspaper article about the Summer Get-Together was published. The immediate reaction of at least one staff member was not happiness over the good publicity, but rather dismay over the description of a couple of the handicapped children. She felt that the descriptions underestimated the children's abilities and was upset that the children were portrayed as "pathetic" figures in

reflect on the degree to which many of the goals were met. (See also "Teacher Evaluation of the Programme".)

The teachers were asked to rate each item on a five-point scale ranging from "Excellent" to "Very Poor". The list of 28 features has been ranked in order according to the ratings they were given (Table 3). Each rating was converted into points to allow for comparisons and ranking of items. (That is, a rating of "excellent" counted for 4 points, "good" 3 points, "satisfactory" 2 points, etc.) The greatest number of points that could be obtained was 20, corresponding to "excellent" ratings by all 5 teachers.

To assist in planning and improving future programmes, the ratings were classified into 3 broad categories by the researcher (see Table 3). Items listed in the "strong feature" category are areas where the present approach should be continued. These include items such as teacher training, amount of exposure to reading and writing and independence shown by the students. The 9 items ranked towards the middle describe areas where there is room for improvement. For example, in the area of "shared responsibility and initiative" more structure and role definition is needed regarding areas of responsibility and who is responsible for each, instead of (a) leaving everything to one teacher, or (b) leaving responsibilities and who does them poorly defined. The leadership issue in August took some time to be settled resulting in some confusion for the supervisor. In the area of day-to-day planning an informal, flexible approach was used, but it was almost too informal to allow for contin-

the interests of journalistic copy.

In a final evaluation questionnaire the teachers were asked to describe the skills and benefits they gained as a result of their participation in the programme. Table 6 outlines the specific skills that the teachers felt that they gained.

In addition to the skills listed in Table 6 , there were several other benefits that the teachers experienced. Four of them said that they gained confidence in their own abilities. Another mentioned work experience, and another felt that he gained the ability to express his own values to the children. One other teacher felt reassured that a special cooperative atmosphere is possible in the classroom.

Teacher Evaluation of the Programme

There were several issues important from a teacher's perspective that the staff were asked to address in the final evaluation questionnaire. They include the issue of job-related stress, their evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the programme, and whether or not there were any differences in the way they worked with handicapped and non-handicapped students.

The teachers reported that they did not experience any great amount of stress associated with teaching in this integrated programme. Four teachers said this job was less stressful than other teaching experiences they have had, and one said it was about the same. Some of the reasons why they did not consider this job stressful were that they were not being graded, and they found the job satisfying since they were involved in something they believed in. Another important factor that was mentioned is that in practicum settings there may be pressure to do things that one may not agree with, but the student

Table 6

<u>Skills Gained by Teachers</u>

1. Administrative & Organizational Skills:

     - Planning trips
     - Dealing with problems involving parents
     - Developing leadership skills
     - Planning for the needs of a wide variety of children
     - Adapting a programme to meet those needs

2. Teaching Skills:

     - Pacing of lessons
     - How to generate a group discussion
     - Development of questioning techniques
     - How to teach language experience programmes
     - Working with small groups

3. Communication Skills:

     - Communication with parents
     - Cooperation with other teachers
     - Experience with team teaching

teacher has little choice in the matter since the classroom teacher's wishes take precedence.

In response to the question "What aspects of the programme did you find to be stressful?", one teacher said "nothing" and each of the others recounted different things that they found to be stressful. They were:

> "When we didn't count kids properly and as a result we weren't sure if they were all there."

> "Trying to meet the needs of each individual child was stressful but exciting."

> "The area I found most difficult to deal with is the labels and reports accompanying so many of these students. I found myself often becoming frustrated and angry when a bright, capable child came to us who had been completely dead-ended by the system."

> "Anticipating how the day was going to go. Once I got there, I got involved and didn't have time to feel stress."

> "Going on trips via the T.T.C."

The teacher's workload did not appear to be a serious problem. In comparing the workload to other teaching experiences they have had, three teachers found it to be about the same, and two found it heavier. In response to the question "How many hours per week (on average) did you work in addition to your normal teaching hours?", the answers ranged from 1 to 20 hours with an average of about 9 hours. All five teachers would be willing to do this job full time.

The following features are the strengths of the programme , according to the teachers:

1. community atmosphere (3)
2. the group meeting (2)

3. high expectations for each child

4. positive social interaction gained by the students

5. committed staff

6. the lunch programme

7. the strong reading and language arts programme

8. the trips, guests and having university facilities

9. the way children are encouraged to be sensitive to needs of others and respect each other

10. the allowance for individuality for both teachers and students while imposing expectations and structure to ensure work was done.

The weaknesses of the programme are the inadequate room facilities (mentioned by 3 people), the problem that it didn't meet the needs of the older kids (2), and that it didn't run long enough (2). Other problems mentioned were that there were too many teachers for the number of students, and that the programme lacked music in August.

The teachers were also asked to specify what they thought to be the most serious problem for the programme. Two teachers felt that transportation access for a few students was a serious problem. Another indicated that the ratio of handicapped to non-handicapped children was too high. One teacher stated that it is far more difficult to influence older children's negative behaviour, prejudices and negative attitudes towards learning that have built up from longer exposure to the regular school system. Another teacher felt that the programme is not yet widely accepted as a credible teaching programme and that it will take time for it to gain public acceptance.

The teachers were asked if they tended to spend more time with handicapped or non-handicapped students. Generally, all 5 teachers

felt that they spent equal time with both, except for the fact that
it takes more time and energy to communicate with a hearing-impaired
child. In explaining why they spent equal time with both groups,
the teachers said that academically each were given equal attention,
and if some of the physically handicapped children needed more help
getting around or eating, it didn't take extra time for the teachers
because the other children helped out. One teacher said that she
worked with small groups of young children which had a mixture of
handicapped and non-handicapped students but that they were all
functioning at similar levels. Another teacher commented that any
extra attention that was given to students with specific needs, did
not result in other students' needs going unmet.

The staff was also questioned as to whether they found it nec-
essary to deal differently with non-handicapped and handicapped
children, and if so, in what ways? Two teachers said yes, two gave
a qualified yes and one said no. The differences in dealing with
handicapped and non-handicapped children are revealed in these
comments:

> "When explaining something to a child whose hearing is
> impaired, different tactics are required (focusing at-
> tention manually, mime). Others needed things explained
> to them in a fair amount of detail before they were able
> to cooperate."

> "Perhaps a more concentrated effort had to be made to
> deal with the problems of the labelled children."

> "Only as far as their handicaps prevented certain tasks
> (walking, eating, etc.) did I deal differently with the
> handicapped kids."

Another teacher felt that a more forceful and demanding yet supportive approach was needed for labelled children who have suffered from low expectations. She said that these children have low confidence and have learned escape mechanisms to avoid attempting a task.

The teachers made a number of suggestions to improve the programme. Two teachers mentioned that they would like the programme to be held on a full time basis, and two people would like to draw on more community resources and encourage more parent involvement. One person made a practical suggestion for teacher "relief": "Sometime each day the teachers should have a scheduled opportunity to have a break. For instance, teachers could rotate during lunch hours, etc." Lunch hour can be a fairly hectic time as indicated by the comment "Find a better way to make and set up lunches." The same teacher would like to see "larger chunks of time spent on specific topics." The suggestion is that 1 to 1 1/2 hours a day for a whole week should be spent on science, history or geography, for example. One other suggestion is that the programme should have fewer students; around 15-20 would be more manageable.

Evaluation of Students

Student Assessments

As a means of determining whether or not children were developing in their academic and social skills, the teachers were asked to fill in two assessment forms for each student, one at the beginning and one when the student left the programme. Each student was assessed by one teacher. The assessments consisted of written descriptions of

the child's skills, abilities and attitudes in 9 academic and social areas. The descriptions were coded according to whether or not, in the teacher's opinion, the child had improved in each category. Any cases where it was unclear from the descriptions whether any progress was made were checked with the teacher.

There were 5 classifications used in coding the assessments. "Greatly improved" means that very considerable improvement was shown by the students. "Improved" indicates that there was noticeable improvement in this area. "Strong" means that the student's skills were already well developed in this area when he/she entered the programme, and that the student continues to be strong in this area. It was usually difficult to detect any changes in these cases. "No change" indicates that no change was apparent in this skill area. "Problem" refers to the fact that the child had serious difficulties with this skill when he/she entered the programme and it was still a problem when the child left.

The results, summarized in Table 7 , show that the strongest aspect of the academic content is reading. Seventeen children (51%) showed improvement in this area. Math was the weakest area of the programme with only 15% of student showing improvement and 20 out of 33 students not evaluated in this area. It appears that arithmetic skills (number concepts, counting) were not emphasized for the younger children. Although problem solving was a stated part of the curriculum for both younger and older children, this area was left blank or was stated as "not applicable" on the assessment form

Table 7

Assessment of students' skills by teachers

Skills	Greatly Improved	Improved	Strong	No Change	Problem	Not Evaluated	Not Applicable
Academic							
Reading	5	12	9	6	1	0	0
Language Arts	0	8	3	2	2	1	17
Math	0	5	3	4	1	20	0
Problem solving	0	8	3	2	0	2	18
Social							
Cooperation with adults	1	11	9	10	2	0	0
Cooperation with children	1	12	11	6	3	0	0
Social Inter-action	9	10	8	3	3	0	0
Confidence	3	13	10	2	5	0	0
Independence	3	13	10	4	3	0	0

Note. Problem solving and language arts scored as "not applicable" for students under 7 years. N = 33.

for many of the younger children. Language art skills were considered
to be not applicable for the younger children since most are pre-
readers or have not yet developed writing skills.

In contrast to the mixed results regarding academic skills,
many children made great gains in their social skills. The program's
success in improving the quality of interaction among children is
evident here. The results also suggest that the self-esteem of
students increased since 11 students gained in both confidence and
independence.

In terms of the 8 handicapped students, 3 students improved in
either 4 or all 5 social skill areas. Two students made improvements
in 2 to 3 areas (social interaction, cooperation and independence),
and one girl was already strong in 2 out of 5 areas but made no gains
in the other 3 areas. Two handicapped students still had serious
problems in social skills by the end of the programme.

The student assessments were the only means by which students'
academic progress was monitored. As the teachers did not give a high
priority to record keeping, little use was made of a system of student
files set up for that purpose. Record keeping by teachers must be
given attention in a future programme as the teachers are the only
ones sufficiently familiar with the children and the curriculum to
effectively record students day-to-day progress. Therefore, a system
will have to be developed which will facilitate the record-keeping
function within a future programme with a much higher pupil-teacher
ratio and thus even greater time demands on the teachers than the

Summer Get-Together.

The teachers are opposed to the use of standardized psychological tests to measure intellectual functioning as these tests have resulted in harmful labelling and improper placement for some of the children. But they have also questioned the value of an education by objectives approach where students' progress toward individual goals is monitored (e.g., Individualized Education Programmes known as I.E.P.'s). The problem then arises as to how to objectively determine that students are making academic progress and, in particular, whether they are progressing at a rate equal to or greater than their peers in a regular educational programme (or a special education class in the case of handicapped children). The programme needs a method of demonstrating academic progress that is not in conflict with the programme's philosophy, yet is sufficient proof for parents and school boards to support the programme and other educators to take it seriously. A great deal of thought and planning will have to be directed to this problem.

The Parents

Input and Participation

The Summer Get-Together had a lot of parent support but not a great deal of parent input. The methods of communicating with parents involved the weekly newsletter, field trip permission forms, parent-teacher meetings, parent surveys, chatting with parents when they dropped off or picked up the children, or occasional telephone calls. The weekly newsletter was written by the students and described many of the week's activities. Parents would occasionally ask questions and get into conversations with staff members at the beginning or end of the day, particularly the parents of handicapped children who took a keen interest in their children's progress. A few parents dropped off desserts to be shared at lunch time. Parents occasionally helped out as chauffeurs or on field trips, but, for the most part, they were not directly involved in the programme. In August, two sets of parents were given special invitations to visit and observe their handicapped children as an encouragement to keep their children in the programme.

A total of 16 parents attended the two parent-teacher meetings, representing 18 out of 34 students. At these meetings the teachers spoke of the philosophy and activities of the Summer Get-Together and the reading programme was explained in detail. Parents were given photocopies of a book on reading and instructions on how they could carry through with the reading programme at home.

Parents were given a questionnaire within the first four days of

each session to determine the special needs of their children and what they would like to see for their child in the programme. The parents' comments were discussed with the teachers and copies of relevant pages were put in the students' files for the teachers' use. The parents' comments had a minor impact on what was emphasized for individual children but the results were not systematically used to plan individual programmes for the children.

The parents did not have a say in the running of the programme either in an informal or formal advisory capacity. With the exception of parents who had children in the Saturday programme, communication usually occurred through structured parent-teacher roles and formal channels (letters to parents, parent-teacher meetings). Contact with parents started to undergo change in August, however, due to greater emphasis on advocacy and the teachers' efforts to keep in touch with parents after the Summer Get-Together ended.

Innovative use of parents resources and increased consultation with parents are two areas that could be developed within the programme. Specific requests, accompanied by an explanation of how they can help, may encourage more parent participation (e.g., "We need someone to help out with a science experiment next week" or "We need a teacher's assistant for the reading programme.") It would not be possible for working parents to help out on a weekday, but these parents may be willing to sit on an advisory board or participate in general meetings after working hours. (The term "parent-teacher meeting" should be dropped from the programme's vocabulary since it sets up

role expectations and restrictions for both parents and teachers.)

The Get-Together programmes should strive to reach one of the stated goals of the Summer Get-Together: to build a special community of committed people working together for the benefit of the children.

Parent Evaluation of Programme

These results are based on 15 questionnaires returned out of 25 sent out (a 60% return rate). This includes 6 from the July session and 9 returned at the end of August. A total of 19 children are represented in the responses.

The first question asked parents to indicate their overall level of satisfaction with the Summer Get-Together, using a 5-point scale ranging from "very satisfied" to "very unsatisfied". On the whole, parents were very satisfied with the programme. Eleven out of 15 chose the highest rating of "very satisfied" while the other four indicated that they were satisfied" (Table 8).

The second question used the same format but dealt with the quality of teaching in the programme. This aspect was not rated quite as highly. Eight parents were "very satisfied", 5 were satisfied", one was "neutral", and another was "dissatisfied" (Table 8). The dissatisfied parent had a child in the August programme. She was not happy with the lack of emphasis on academic subjects and felt that her child did not make any academic gains.

Parents were far more satisfied with the Summer Get-Together than with their children's regular school. Less than 50% were

Table 8

Comparison of

Parent Satisfaction with Summer Get-Together

and Their Child's Regular School

Rating	Overall Satisfaction				Quality of Teaching			
	Reg. School		S.G.T.		Reg. School		S.G.T.	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Very Satisfied	14.3	(3)	73.3	(11)	19.0	(4)	53.3	(8)
Satisfied	33.3	(7)	26.7	(4)	28.6	(6)	33.3	(5)
Neutral	14.3	(3)			9.5	(2)	6.7	(1)
Unsatisfied	21.4	(4.5)[a]			23.8	(5)	6.7	(1)
Very Unsatisfied	16.7	(3.5)[a]			14.3	(3)		
other					4.8	(1)		
Total	100.0	(21)	100.0	(15)	100.0	(21)	100.0	(15)

[a]One parent indicated that their opinion fell between "unsatisfied" and "very unsatisfied".

"satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their child's school compared to 100% of parents who gave those ratings to the Summer Get-Together. Less than 50% were satisfied with the quality of teaching versus 87% satisfied with the quality of teaching at the Summer Get-Together (Table 8).

The parents were asked to specify the academic benefits, social benefits and any other benefits their child received as a result of attending the Summer Get-Together. Although a few parents were reluctant to comment on the academic progress of their children, parents are generally in a good position to notice changes in their children and they are sensitive to these changes. In terms of academic gains, the breakdown was: 8 children were reported to have gained academically; 4 made no gains; and 3 parents couldn't say whether or not their child made academic gains.

One very important benefit mentioned by 6 parents was that their children showed improvement in their verbal skills; they were better at expressing themselves. Four of these 6 parents had handicapped children in the programme. Therefore, the programme had a significant impact on students' communication skills and this is one of the strengths of the programme. It may be possible to seek ways to make this aspect even more effective now that its importance is known. Two parents mentioned that their children improved or became more interested in reading. Another 2 parents indicated that contributing to the newsletter was beneficial for their children.

In terms of social benefits: 11 children were said to have

benefitted socially; 2 did not; and 2 parents didn't know. A common response (4 parents) was that the children learned to mix with a wide variety of children both in ages and abilities and the parents felt that this was especially beneficial. Another 4 parents saw evidence that their child had a greater acceptance of and was able to relate better to handicapped people. One parent's comment illustrates this point well.

> When my son talks about a handicapped person now he does not mention their handicap; instead he refers to them by their name. In the past he was always drawn to the person's handicap, and had a morbid curiousity about that.

Therefore, one way an integrated programme helps is in desensitizing young people to handicaps, which allows them to see past the handicap to the individual.

There were a number of other ways that the children benefitted from the Summer Get-Together. Four parents observed that their children became more confident or more independent (this figure includes 2 handicapped and 2 nonhandicapped children). Another 4 parents indicated that their children improved in their swimming abilities and gained confidence in the water. Five parents said that their children got a great deal of enjoyment from the trips.

A very important question concerns whether or not parents noticed any differences in their child's behaviour at home that they attributed to the programme. Nine out of 15 parents noticed improvements in their child's behaviour. This figure includes the parents of 5 handicapped students whose behaviour problems improved

as a result of the programme. For example:

1. Two mentally handicapped students improved in their ability to listen and respond to directions.

2. One of these students also became more involved in family discussions.

3. A child with cerebral palsy now talks more at home.

4. One handicapped child has better control over his frustration. (Another parent has mentioned in a telephone conversation that this is also the case with her child.)

5. A child who was dependent on her older sister is now a bit more independent.

In terms of the non-handicapped children:

6. One is much more confident.

7. Another is more helpful and cooperative at home.

8. A brother and sister are now taking better care of a new pet than they did an earlier pet.

Fourteen out of 19 children are happy or excited when they came home from the Summer Get-Together. Seven children are talkative about their day, and 5 children are pretty tired when they get home.

One of the most important purposes of an evaluation questionnaire is to get ideas for improving the programme and 9 out of 15 parents had one or more suggestions to make. Several suggestions revolved around the issue of providing more information to parents (4 parents). One of these parents would like a list of activities every day so that she can try to strengthen her handicapped daughter's recall of the day's events. The weekly newsletter was not helpful in this particular case. Another parent requested a progress report on her child and another would have appreciated more information on academic

activities. It appears that the parents are asking for more detailed information on an individual basis, in addition to the information provided in the newsletter. One other parent was distressed to learn on the second last day of her son's stay in the programme that he was having difficulty with social adjustment. She recommended that parents be contacted at the first sign of trouble.

Other suggestions concerned the problem of using a small, confined classroom, when the children should be getting more physical exercise outside. Another parent felt that the group should be split into 2 age groups. Two parents requested that the programme be held for a longer period: one wished that her child had attended for 2 months instead of 1 and another would like the programme to last all year 'round. One parent described the advantages of setting up a communal garden to be tended by the students: its educational value and the produce could be eaten for lunch or marketed.

Some supplementary questions that deal with future plans for the programme were added to the August questionnaire. Seven out of 9 parents responded that they would consider or would be willing to send their children to a full time education programme modelled on the Summer Get-Together. (This includes 3 parents of non-handicapped children.) Four people gave an unconditional yes, with the other 3 stating yes under certain conditions (must be closer or provide transportation, need more information, if academic level intensified).

Opinion was divided on where the programme should be located, with responses reflecting both institutional and geographic concerns.

Four out of 7 parents felt that York University was too far out of
the way and they would like a closer or more central location; 3
felt that York University was suitable; 2 suggested a sepatate
school and 2 suggested a private school. Only one person recommended
a public school.

Socio-demographic Statistics

Parent occupations were coded according to a 7-point occupational
rating scale developed by King and Ziegler (1975). Both father and
mother's occupations are included in this analysis, and the results are
summarized in Table 9 . There are representations in all occupational
categories (except for "unemployed"), with a large number of people
(31%) in category 6 (manager, teacher, business owner, systems analyst)
and in the clerical and supervisory category (25%). There was only one
person in the top level professional category. Therefore, most of
the children came from middle and working class families.

Ten out of 18 families speak English only in the home, and the
others speak English and an East Indian dialect (3); English and
Italian (2); English and French (2); or Turkish (1).

The majority of families have 2 children, with an average of
2.37 children per family. The Canadian average is 1.6 children per
family.

Table 9

Coding of Parent Occupations

(from King & Ziegler, 1975).

Code	Description & Examples	# of Fathers	# of Mothers
7	Professional (lawyer, physician, scientist), executive, owner of large business	1	0
6	Manager, gov't official, owner of medium sized business, librarian, nurse, teacher	6	4
5	Clerical worker (secretary, salesclerk), foreman, supervisor, technical worker	3	5
4	Skilled worker: mechanic, policeman, chef, carpenter	2	0
3	Worker such as factory machine operator, bus driver, hospital aide	3	1
2	Worker such as farm helper, construction workers, domestic, waitress	0	3
1	Unemployed, or on welfare	0	0
H	Homemaker	0	4
	Total:	15	17

The Students

Description of Students

There were 36 students enrolled in the Summer Get-Together for a minimum of 2 weeks. They ranged in age from 5 to 12 years. The average age of the children was 7.5 years. The average age of the 8 handicapped children was 6.6 years and of the non-handicapped children 7.7 years. There was an equal balance between boys and girls in the programme (18 boys and 18 girls).

Three teenages helped out as teacher's aides. Two of the teacher's aides were handicapped and most of their experiences in the past had been in the role of service recipients. The Summer Get-Together gave them the opportunity to help others and develop a sense of responsibility. They helped with lunches, assisted the physically handicapped students to get around, and one girl wrote articles for the newsletter.

The other teacher's aide, a 14-year-old, heard about the programme from her mother who was taking a summer course from Marsha Forest. This girl visited the programme, started coming in every day, and was eventually hired as a teacher's aide. She became very involved with the children and gained in experience and confidence.

The handicapped children referred to in this report include 3 children with Down's Syndrome, 2 with profound hearing impairments, 2 boys with cerebral palsy, and 1 child diagnosed as aphasic (a language disability). In addition, there were several children who have a history of academic or social problems and have been labelled

by their schools as having disabilities, perceptual problems or as being emotionally disturbed. The total number of labelled or handicapped children is 14 (39%).

There were some special needs of the handicapped children that went beyond the common needs of all the children. For the hearing impaired children these included: the ability to communicate and understand what is happening, and the need to fully participate and feel part of the group. The children with cerebral palsy needed to improve their speech and communication skills, physical therapy, and reduce their dependency on others. The children with Down's Syndrome also needed to participate fully in the group, and the two younger ones needed to develop their fine motor coordination. The child with aphasia had problems interacting with other children and his problems with language made it difficult for him to learn to read. These children required individually-tailored programmes to address these needs. Unfortunately there was not enough in the way of carefully developed individual programmes based on over-riding needs. Exposure to the programme activities was not enough to meet many of the needs of the handicapped children.

The individual programmes that were set up did help the children meet some of their specific needs. The programmes included:

a) The word banks which helped the pre-readers

b) A one-on-one reading programme for a boy with reading problems

c) A behaviour modification programme which succeeded in eliminating aggressive behaviour on the part of the boy

with aphasia thus allowing him to get along better with

the other children

d) A special effort to keep a physically handicapped boy

awake during the general meeting.

Student Autonomy and Independence

One of the strengths of the programme was its emphasis on student

autonomy and independence. This developed from the philosophy of

its founders and teachers who felt that students do not have enough

autonomy in their regular classroom and that they develop too great

a dependency on the teacher. They wanted students to gain respon-

sibility and learn to direct their own lives instead of depending

on adults to tell them what to do.

A number of programme features were designed to give students

input and autonomy within the programme. The daily general meeting

provided a forum for students to express their opinions. At one

such meeting the students were asked what the liked and disliked

about the Summer Get-Together and their suggestions were sought

as to how to improve the lunch programme. Students exercised their

voting rights on a number of occasions; they chose the name of the

programme, for example. They sometimes resorted to a vote to resolve

problems that had arisen and to encourage adherence to rules of

the programme which the children drew up themselves. Unfortunately,

a plan to allow students to be chairmen during discussions had to

be discontinued since it hindered the pace and flow of discussions.

The children helped with lunch preparation and they also planned

the menus. Each child was responsible, on a rotating basis, for certain jobs around the classroom. It was also made very clear that they were responsible for cleaning up after themselves and putting all toys away.

The students usedtheir talents, imagination and the help of a fine arts students to decorate the classroom with wall murals. Older students were encouraged to do library research using the resources at the university, such as the Education Centre and the main library. Two older students were asked to speak about the programme to a university class.

Students were discouraged from the habit of asking permission to go to the washroom or get a drink of water. They were encouraged to work out disputes for themselves, with minimal intervention from the teachers, and they were not rewarded for "tattling" on other students.

A balance was struck between two much and too little independence. Everyone was expected to abide by certain rules based on showing respect for other people. For example, everyone was expected to sit in the circle and listen to each other speak, and no one was to begin eating until everyone was served. Early on in the programme, the staff noticed that the older children were not spending their free time productively and that they were not getting involved in activities. They introduced more structure into this time period for older children by making suggestions, setting up games or getting them to work on their projects or the newsletter. Older

students were also encouraged to take on leadership roles as editor of the newsletter.

The staff was very much aware of the need for some children to be more assertive. Their feeling was that children should not be taught to blindly follow orders given by adults, but to understand why they are doing something and use their judgement. In descriptive assessments of 2 children in the area of "cooperation with adults", the children were described as "improved", not because they were more cooperative but because they had less of a tendency towards unquestioning compliance.

Social Interaction

An important issue to be examined in a programme integrating handicapped and non-handicapped children, concerns the extent to which integration occurs in situations not structured by the teacher. That is, when the children have a free choice are the handicapped children accepted by the other children? Do the two groups of children play together or do they tend to play in segregated groups? Data was collected to help answer these questions using two methods: sociometric interviews and systematic observation during free time.

Sociometric Interviews

Twenty-three children in the July session were privately inter-viewed to determine their preferred choices for companions among the other students. Two children could not be interviewed: one refused and then was away during the remaining days of the July session, and the other did not have enough language to be interviewed.

There were a total of 13 questions listed on the interview
schedule ranging from "Who would you like as your partner on a
field trip?" and "Who would you like to play a game with?"; to
"Name 4 students that you would like to have in a group with you."
Two questions had equivalent versions for younger and older
children (e.g., for younger children: "Who would you like to read
you a story?" Older children: "Who would you like to a read a
story to?").

The students were instructed to choose from among children
attending the Summer Get-Together. If they chose a teacher the
question was rephrased as "Which student would you like to do this
activity with?"

The average number of children chosen by each student was 6.5.
The top ranked student was chosen 41 times by 16 different students.
The lowest ranked child (who happened to be non-handicapped) was
chosen once. The 5 handicapped children were chosen an average of 5.8
times by an average of 4.6 different students. A comparison group
of 7 non-handicapped children in the same age range (5 to 7 years)
were chosen 9.1 times on average by an average of 4.57 different
students. Therefore, the main difference is in the number of repeat
choices between the handicapped and non-handicapped students. Whereas
the handicapped students were usually chosen only once or twice by
the same students, special friendships among the non-handicapped
children meant that they were often chosen several times by the same
person.

The qualitative analysis of the data using a sociogram (a diagram of the choices made) shows that there were 3 tightly-knit groups of children that tended to make mutual choices within their own group. These three groups consisted of older boys (5), older girls (4), and a mixed group of younger children (6). The most popular boy had links with both the girls group and the younger group of children as well as a special link with one of the handicapped children. The most popular girl had links with the younger children.

Two of the handicapped children had special links with the older boys group and another handicapped boy had links with the younger group. The other two handicapped children, both with Down's Syndrome, were fairly isolated. It is also interesting that of the 3 major groups, the group of older girls had the weakest ties with the handicapped children. Taking 3 factors into account (number of people who choose them, number of mutual choices, and number of times chosen) the handicapped children were ranked 12th, 13th, 16th, 19.5, and 24th out of 25 students.

For the most part the sociometric data shows that the handicapped children are not necessarily the least popular students in the class; they appear to fit in the low to moderate ranges of popularity. The non-handicapped students would be willing to do certain activities with the handicapped students (such as read to them, teach them something). Three out of 5 handicapped students do have significant ties with the major social groups of children. However, those handicapped children who do not have any special relationships with other child-

ren (friendship, family) tend to remain on the periphery of the social group.

Systematic Observation

The purpose of this exercise was to observe and record the actual behaviour of children in an unstructured situation. Information was obtained on the extent of social interaction among children, whether they tended to play in integrated or segregated groups and whether the staff tended to spend more time with handicapped or non-handicapped children during free time.

The children were observed on 4 separate days in August during free time (between 9:30 and 10:00 am). The observations cover a total of 151 minutes and yielded a total of 314 observations on 19 students. The number of observations per child ranged from 6 to 24 with an average of 16.5. (The number of observations varied depending on time of arrival and attendance.)

The observational technique used is referred to as scan sampling or point sampling (Sears, 1963). The observer looks at each person just long enough to decide how to categorize their behaviour according to a simple coding system and record the information. The observer then moves on to the next person according to a pre-established order. Using this method it is possible to obtain a large volume of data on a large group of people with a reasonable degree of speed and accuracy. The researcher took approximately 4 minutes to complete one cycle of all 19 students and a reliability check of the coding showed 87% agreement on the most important code of "type of social play/

activity". The other information recorded was the number of handicapped and non-handicapped children in the immediate play group or close by, and also whether any staff members were involved with the child.

Type of social play was coded according to a 5 category system adapted from Parten (1932). Parten's 6 category coding system for social play has been used in recent research on autistic children by Wintre and Webster (1974,1980). The 5 category system described below was used for coding all activities going on during free time, not just play. (For example, a student working alone on a project would be coded as involved in "solitary" play or activity.) The 5 categories of social play/activities are as follows:

1. Unoccupied. The child is not playing but is occupied with his/her own body or clothing, or watching anything of momentary interest. Includes aimless wandering.

2. Onlooker. The child observes a group of children playing but does not enter into the play activity.

3. Solitary play or activity. The child plays alone and independently with toys that are different from those used by children within speaking distance. He/she pursues his or her own activity without reference to the other children.

4. Parallel play or activity. The child plays independently amongst other children. The child does not try to influence the activity of children near him/her. Plays beside rather than with other children. (May be using similar toys.)

5. Cooperative play/activity. The child plays and interacts with other children and the play situation is organized toward some goal, dramatization or game. ("Cooperative" refers to evidence of interaction, not the quality of the interaction.)

The results with regard to the type of social activity are

presented in Table 10. For the purpose of analysis the class was divided into 4 groups based on age and presence of handicap: younger students who are handicapped (6) and non-handicapped (6), and older students who are handicapped (1), and non-handicapped (6).

The groups most similar to each other are the handicapped and non-handicapped young children (age 7 and younger). The older non-handicapped children spend most of their time (85%) in Co-operative play and are seldom alone or unoccupied. The older handicapped child falls between the younger and older children in her pattern of social activities. A moderate positive correlation exists between age and the percentage of time spent in cooperative play (r = .55).

The young handicapped children were more often "unoccupied" than any of the other groups (11.6% vs. 1% for the other students). This was due to a number of instances of "aimless wandering" exhibited by 2 of the handicapped students. The handicapped and non-handicapped younger students spent similar amounts of time as "onlookers" (9.5% and 13.7%, respectively), and involved in parallel play (18.9% and 15.5%). These behaviours are far less frequent among older children, with the exception of the older handicapped child who spent almost one-fifth of her time as an onlooker.

The handicapped younger children were twice as likely to be involved in solitary play in comparison to the younger non-handicapped children (25.3% vs. 12.5%).

All groups of students spent the largest proportion of their

Table 10

Social participation during free time: Comparison of handi-
capped and non-handicapped students play activities.

Type of Play

Students	Unoccupied % #	On-looker % #	Solitary % #	Parallel % #	Cooperative % #	Total % #
Younger						
Handicapped (n = 6)	11.6 (11)	9.5 (9)	23.3 (24)	18.9 (18)	34.7 (33)	100 (95)
Non-handicapped (n = 6)	1.1 (1)	13.7 (13)	12.5 (13)	15.8 (15)	55.8 (53)	100 (95)
Older						
Handicapped (n = 1)	0.0 (0)	18.2 (2)	18.2 (2)	0.0 (0)	63.6 (7)	(11)
Non-handicapped (n = 6)	0.9 (1)	6.2 (7)	4.8 (5)	3.5 (4)	85.0 (96)	100 (113)
Total	4.1 (13)	9.9 (31)	14.0 (44)	11.8 (37)	60.2 (189)	(314)

time in cooperative play. The older, non-handicapped children were most often found playing card games together. The younger handicapped children spent the least amount of time in cooperative play (34.7%) while the younger non-handicapped children spent about half their time in cooperative play (55.8%).

These results show that one problem for the handicapped students has to do with the greater amount of time they spend unoccupied or playing by themselves. If their "unoccupied" time could be channelled into cooperative play situations, this would help to bring the pattern of their activities closer to that of their peers, and would allow them more opportunities for social interaction.

The data in Table 11 concerning integrated and segregated play groups shows that younger students (both handicapped and non-handicapped) are far more likely to be involved in an integrated play group than older children. Both groups of younger children spent roughly half of their time in integrated activities, whereas older children only spent one quarter of their free time in integrated groups. This is partly because there were fewer handicapped children over the age of 7 and thus fewer opportunities for integrated play by the older students. Also, these students had a set routine of card playing amongst themselves, and this reduced their contact with students outside of their group (including the older handicapped student). The steps that could be taken to improve the situation would involve (1) recruiting more handicapped students in the 8-11 year age range; and (2) encouraging older students to get involved in a variety

Table 11

Time spent in integrated versus
segregated play activities during
free time; handicapped and non-handicapped
students.

Students	Social Grouping					
	Alone or with staff only		Involved in integrated play group		Involved in segregated play group	
	%	#	%	#	%	#
Younger						
Handicapped (n = 6)	40.0	(38)	45.3	(43)	14.7	(14)
Non-handicapped (n = 6)	14.7	(14)	55.8	(53)	29.5	(28)
Older						
Handicapped (n = 1)	45.5	(5)	27.2	(3)	27.2	(3)
Non-handicapped (n = 6)	8.8	(10)	28.3	(32)	62.8	(71)
Total	21.3	(67)	41.7	(131)	36.9	(116)

of activities during free time.

The data shows that handicapped students (both younger and older) spent over 40% of their time alone or with staff only. This problem can be rectified by placing greater emphasis on free time activities which encourages students to play together, yet do not require the teacher to remain directly involved in the activity. There are actually several examples of these play situations occuring in the Summer Get-Together.

The younger students spent a great deal of time on the climber and this created opportunities for integrated play. Playing with the animals was another activity that brought together children of different ages and abilities. Other facilities that helped were the variety of popular games available and a basin for water play. These provided attractive play opportunities that naturally brought groups of students together.

Overall, the students spent 41% of their free time in integrated play. Although there is room for improvement, this does indicate that the children are responding to the programme's aims of integration and that the non-handicapped children are socially involved with the handicapped children. Any problems that do exist in the area of social integration can be rectified by strengthening and emphasizing existing features and values of the programme. Also, a greater effort will have to be made to assist those handicapped children who tend to remain isolated to become more socially involved with the

other children.

Participation in Discussions

Data on student participation in the daily general meeting was collected for 6 days in July and 3 days in August. The number of times each child spoke during discussions was recorded as an indicator of the extent of their participation and their degree of involvement in the discussion. A strong positive relationship was found between age and participation in discussions (r = .75). This means that the younger children (below 8 years) participated far less frequently in the discussions in comparison to the older children.

The average participation rate was 3.71 times per discussion. The student ranked highest in terms of participation rate during July (an 11-year-old), spoke an average of 10.7 times per discussion. This student has a perceptual disability which hinders his academic performance, but the discussions gave him the opportunity to display his insight and considerable verbal skills.

A 5-year-old hearing impaired child had the lowest participation rate. She did not speak in any of the July sessions observed and only once during the 3 August sessions. Seven children spoke an average of once or less during discussions; 4 of these were handicapped children. On the other hand, 2 of the handicapped children were very much a part of the August discussions and they ranked 3rd and 11th out of 22 students in terms of their participation rate.

The main problem with the general meeting appears to be that many of the younger children have trouble keeping up with or interested

in the topic of discussion. They often became very "fidgety" and had to be constantly reminded to move back into the circle and listen to the speaker. These are signs of boredom and do not necessarily indicate a discipline problem. When these same young children were observed in a small group reading lesson, they were very responsive and involved. Once 6-year-old girl spoke 21 times in this reading session and only twice during the general meetings observed. The young children appear to benefit more from a smaller group where they have a chance to contribute and gain a better understanding of what is being discussed.

Once recommendation then, is that the group composition at the general meeting should be flexible. For example, the meeting should be broken up into 2 smaller groups according to age level as required. The two groups can still deal with the same topic but on different levels; this should result in fewer interruptions for the older children and more opportunities for the younger ones to contribute. The children can be consulted as to which format they prefer. The class can still maintain a sense of community during lunchtime, and should remain as one group for guest speakers and special topics where discussion by the whole class is preferable.

Student Evaluation of the Programme

The students had their opportunity to formally evaluate the programme in much the same way as their parents and teachers did. The students' opinions of the Summer Get-Together were obtained in individual interviews using a structured interview schedule with 20

open-ended and multiple choice questions.

It was important to find out how satisfied the children were with the Summer Get-Together, which were the salient features of the programme from their point of view, and what they felt they learned from this programme. Their responses can tell us a great deal about what makes learning a pleasant experience for children.

A total of 31 children were interviewed. Five students could not be interviewed; 3 due to illness or absence, and 2 because their language skills were not sufficiently developed to allow them to respond to the questions. Two other handicapped children (one hearing impaired, one with cerebral palsy) were able to respond to some of the questions, and the rest of the handicapped children (including two with Down's Syndrome) had little or no difficulty with the questions.

The students were asked why they came to the Summer Get-Together. Many came at their parents' suggestion (9) or because their parents work (5). Three children came to meet or be with friends, and 4 came to learn something (read, write, numbers, etc.). Two children came because they liked the Saturday programme.

Fourteen of the children had attended the Saturday programme. Of these, 8 liked the Summer Get-Together better, 3 preferred the Saturday programme, and 2 students said they were about the same. (One was not asked this question.)

Four of the questions used a multiple choice format where the alternatives corresponded to a 5-point rating scale of students'

satisfaction with the Summer Get-Together, their regular school and their teachers. For example, the students were asked "How much do you like your school? Pick the sentence that best describes how much you like your school." The 5 alternatives, ranging from "I love it" to "I don't like it at all", were carefully read to the students, and after all alternatives were read, the students chose their answer. All of the students interviewed, including the youngest and the handicapped children, answered these multiple choice questions with ease. There was no attempt to associate numerical values to the statements, and the concept of "liking" something is a concept that all the children were familiar with, so these factors may account for the ease with which they answered these questions. For those children who have problems with language or communication (such as a hearing impaired student), the 5 alternatives were supplemented with pictures of happy or sad faces to help convey the meaning. (For example, two happy faces corresponded to "I love it" and one sad face indicated "I don't like it very much").

The results of the 4 multiple choice/rating questions are presented in Table 12. The majority (61.3%) of children "love" the Summer Get-Together and most (87.1%) picked the highest rating for the teachers at the Summer Get-Together. In contrast, only 29% "love" their regular school, and 38.7% picked the highest rating for the teachers at their regular school. Children tended to give higher ratings to their teachers than they did to their schools. In a direct comparison question between the Summer Get-Together and their

Table 12

Comparison of Children's

Satisfaction with Summer Get-Together

and their Regular School

	Overall Satisfaction				Teachers			
	Reg. School		S.G.T.		Reg. School		S.G.T.	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Love it/Like them alot	29.0	(9)	61.3	(19)	38.7	(12)	87.1	(27)
Like it/them	25.8	(8)	35.5	(11)	32.3	(10)	12.9	(4)
O.K.	32.3	(10)			25.8	(8)		
Don't like	6.5	(2)	3.2	(1)				
Don't like at all	6.5	(2)			3.2	(1)		
Total	100.1	(31)	100.0	(31)	100.0	(31)	100.0	(31)

regular school, 27 students liked the Summer Get-Together best, 3 preferred their regular school, and one student liked them equally.

Favourite activities at the Summer Get-Together were (in order of popularity): swimming, playing on the climber, going on trips, making new friends, playing with games and toys, reading, and lunch. In terms of academic content, the children enjoyed: working with maps, "nature stuff", reading and solving problems. The children also liked the following programme features: helping people, going outside, having free time, making their own rules, and naming the animals. One child appreciated the fact that "The teachers are not always telling you what to do or to stop talking."

When the students were asked "What are some of the things you don't like about the Summer Get-Together, a lot of children became quiet and couldn't think of anything they didn't like. One third of the students said that they liked everything. Some of the things that the students weren't too happy with are:

- "The meetings."

- "Having to sit in the circle all of the time."

- "We can't play pinball."

- "When we get told off."

- "When the other kids boss me around."

- "I hate being last."

- "The girls don't have as much fun as the boys."

- "When I'm tired I don't get to lie down."

- "The bus bounces too much."

- "Sometimes I don't like the food."

- "We eat lunch outside when its too hot."

- "I don't like the rule that we can't play the piano till
  10:00 a.m."

- "I don't like people playing on the piano."

- "I didn't like it when the guinea pig died."

The students made a number of suggestions for changes and
improvements in the programme. Table 13 lists the activities they'd
like to do more of, and Table 14 lists the responses to the question,
"If you could change anything you wanted in the Summer Get-Together,
what would you change?" Several of the changes they suggested deal
with practical problems; others are concerned with improving inter-
personal relations.

The students were asked if they thought that their friends would
like the Summer Get-Together, and whether or not they'd recommend it
to their friends (i.e., tell their friends to come). Eighteen said
yes, their friends would like it, 5 said no, and 6 weren't sure. One
student said that her "friends" no longer want to be friends with her
because she's around handicapped people. Twenty-five students said
that they would recommend the Summer Get-Together to their friends;
4 said they wouldn't. One said that his friends always go on trips
and wouldn't have the time, another said that his friends would rather
stay home and watch T.V., a third wasn't sure if her friends would
like the Summer Get-Together, and the fourth felt that his friends
would play with the animals and not with him.

Table 13

Student Responses to the Question: "What
would you like to do more of?"

Swimming (8)
Reading (6)
Play on climber (3)
Make lunch (2)
Work with maps
Ballet
Gym
Go on trips
Play with rabbit
Help little kids
Play with all the people
Play checkers
Stay at home

Table 14

Changes that Students would
make in the Summer Get-Together

- More swimming (3)
- Go to gym more often
- Make it longer; an extra half hour
- Start a half hour later
- Make it safer for the animals
- Put softer mats in the classroom
- We should not eat on slanted desks
- More space
- We shouldn't split up in groups
- People should wait their turn
- Make everybody pay attention in the circle
- Everyone should look at job chart
- Some people should stop pushing, hitting and fighting
- We should not have to eat lunch
- Get rid of the soft "Snerf" balls and get another toy
  like Mr. Mouth
- Take out the reading corner and put in another climber

One question that yields important information on the impact
of the programme on the students was "What did you learn from the
Summer Get-Together?" The students said that they learned how to:

1. read maps (6)
2. read or read better (6)
3. swim better (3)
4. behave better (3)
5. cook (3)
6. how to help people (2)

The map reading lessons left a big impression on the students;
this was one of the first things they mentioned. Two students were
also excited by experiments with the senses. They said that they
learned what it's like to be blind.

The student's responses to this question and several of the
other questions give us some clues as to what makes children happy in
an educational setting, and makes learning a pleasant experience for
them. There are five aspects of the programme that the children
very much appreciated which can be applied to any education programme.

1. Experiential learning was satisfying for the children.
   They loved demonstrations, field trips, doing experi-
   ments and any other activities where the content was
   clearly and closely related to their personal exper-
   ience.

2. Students enjoyed their freedom, autonomy and respon-
   sibility. They appreciated being able to name the
   programme, animals, etc., and to be given freedom
   of choice. Most children were able to live up to
   the new responsibilities they were given.

3. They enjoyed learning practical, non-academic skills.
   Several children were thrilled that they learned to
   cook, swim, play the piano or use yo-yo's. It also
   serves to increase students' self-confidence, and

boost their self-image if they can learn a new skill.

4. The students loved learning about people, especially how to help other people. The fact they they sat in a circle and tried to solve conflicts was a new and satisfying experience for them. Learning about "being nice to people" also left a big impression on the students.

5. Children want to read. They have a strong motivation to read and it's a skill they are proud of. They have internalized at a young age the value that reading is important and the language experience programme appeared to tap that strong motivation.

Conclusion

On the whole, the Summer Get-Together ran smoothly without any major problems. Any problems that did arise (medical, transportation, or behavioural problems) were dealt with effectively.

The strengths of the programme included, among other things:

(a) the reading programme and emphasis on communication skills;

(b) the social benefits gained by both the handicapped and non-handicapped children because of integration;

(c) increased confidence and independence shown by the students;

(d) improvements in children's behaviour at home;

(e) strong parent support for the programme;

(f) the emphasis on student autonomy;

(g) the cooperative community atmosphere;

(h) compassion and sensitivity shown by the students;

(i) the warm relationship between teachers and students;

(j) experiental learning (field trips, experiments);

(k) the opportunities for students to pick up practical, non-academic skills;

(l) use of the confluent educational model;

(m) teacher training.

The major recommendations made in this report can be classified into four broad areas: (1) Planning and administration, (2) Parent and community involvement, (3) Programme structure and (4) Social interaction.

1. Planning and administration. The recommendations relevant to this area include:

(a) establishment of an advisory board;

(b) implementation of a weekly planning strategy based on goals, to allow greater continuity in academic and other programmes;

(c) monitoring of academic progress;

(d) development of standards or a system for keeping student records;

(e) clarification of staff responsibilities and roles;

(f) discussion of issues raised by PASS evaluation with each new staff member.

2. Parent and community involvement. Generally, the recommendations call for increased involvement of parents and citizens in the community through:

(a) the innovative use of parent resources;

(b) increased consultation with parents;

(c) parent representation in the planning process;

(d) provision of more detailed information on individual children to their parents;

(e) an organized effort to bring in people from the community.

3. Programme structure. Suggested changes to the programme structure include:

(a) development of a more challenging programme for older students;

(b) flexibility in arranging group composition during the general meeting and encourage younger children's participation in the meeting;

(c) attention to the consequences of a large ratio of handicapped children in the programme;

(d) greater emphasis on individualized programmes based on overriding needs (particularly for handicapped children).

4. Social interaction. Suggested methods of improving social inter-
action between the children are:

    (a) divert the time spent in "unoccupied" and solitary
        play by handicapped children into socially integrated
        activities;

    (b) encourage older children to get involved in a variety
        of activities during free time;

    (c) increase the number of attractive play activities that
        draw children together to encourage integrated play;

    (d) assist those handicapped children who tend to be iso-
        lated to become socially involved and accepted as
        part of the group.

There are several areas where research and evaluation should be
directed towards in future programmes. Some of the evaluation pro-
cedures should be developed from overriding concerns of staff and
parents and should serve to provide feedback to teachers and
parents. Measures of academic progress may be one such priority
area.

Other areas for future research include changes in student
attitudes in an integrated programme and collection of time series
data (changes over time) on social interaction and integration. Work
in these areas would make a valuable contribution to knowledge on
integrated programmes.

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