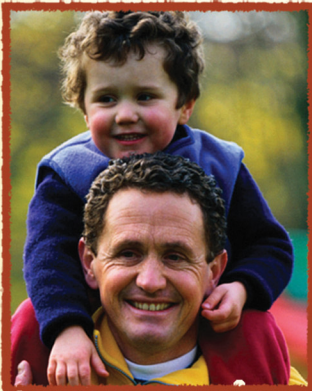


# Strategies for Increasing Peer Social Interactions: Prompting and Acknowledgment



Project funded by the Child Care and Head Start Bureaus in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



## What Works Brief Training Kit #17



Center on the Social and Emotional  
Foundations for Early Learning  
[www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/)

June 2009



The **What Works Brief Training Kits** were developed to help in-service and pre-service providers conduct staff development activities. Each kit is based on one What Works Brief and contains the following items: presenter's PowerPoint note pages, participant handouts, activity ideas, pre-training survey, demographic form, training evaluation, and training certificate.

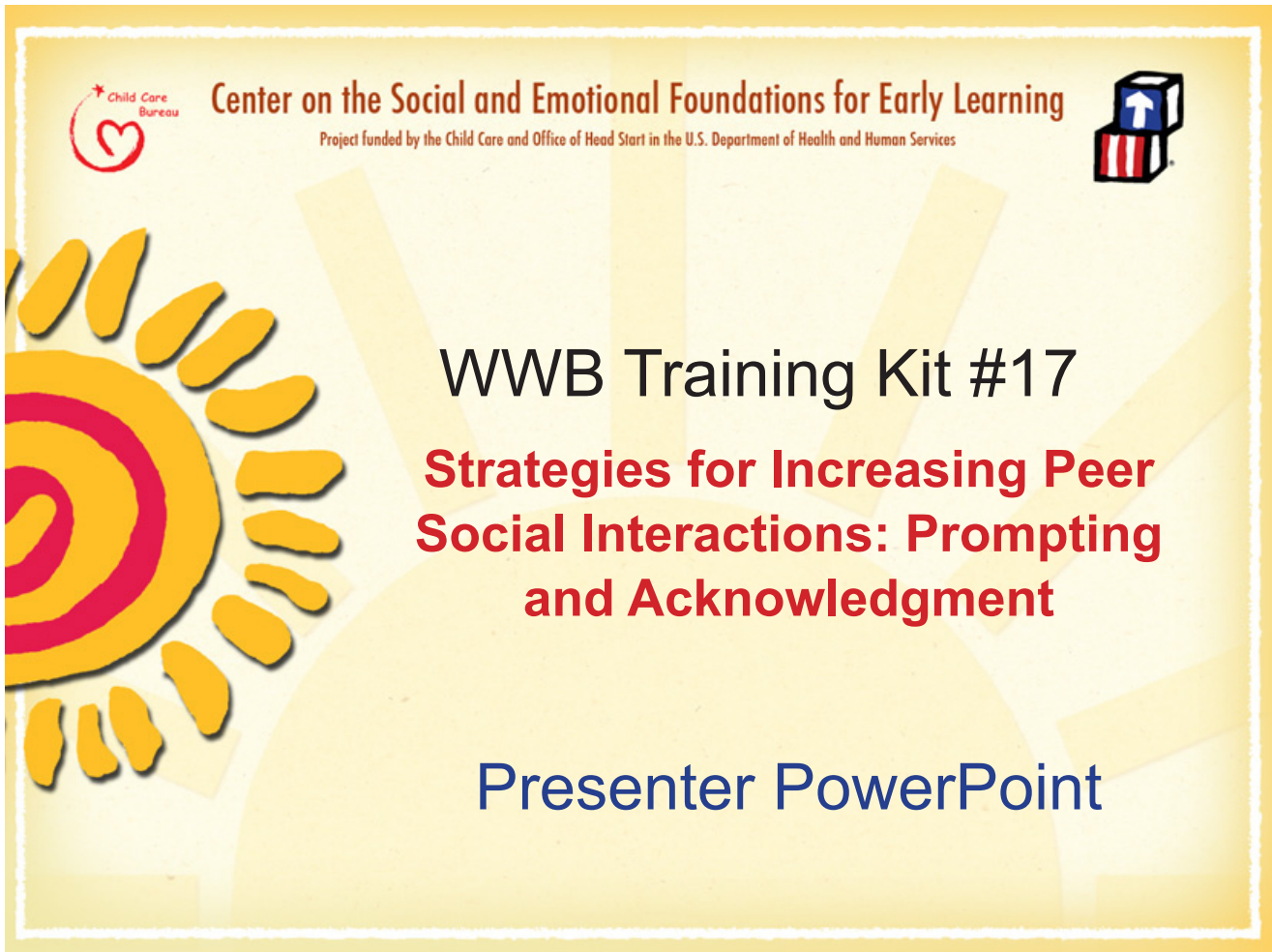
The What Works Brief Training Kits are grounded in the Pyramid model depicted below which provides a framework for describing the four interrelated levels of practice that address the social and emotional development of all children. The Pyramid is designed to guide practitioners in understanding the importance of children's social-emotional competence in terms of school readiness and the prevention of challenging behavior. This What Works Brief Training Kit relates to the "Targeted Social Emotional Supports" level of the Pyramid.



We welcome your feedback as you provide professional development activities with these materials.

Special thanks to the Meginnis Endowment at UIUC for funding to help support this effort and to the following individuals who developed the What Works Brief Training Kits materials: Micki Ostrosky, Hedda Meadan, Greg Cheatham, Monique Mills, Sallee Beneke, Nancy Gaumer, Amy Hayden, Elenor Rentschler, and Angel Fettig.

## Presenter Notes



Child Care Bureau

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning

Project funded by the Child Care and Office of Head Start in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

WWB Training Kit #17

**Strategies for Increasing Peer Social Interactions: Prompting and Acknowledgment**

Presenter PowerPoint

### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Presenter should be familiar with the content in *What Works Brief #17* and Module 1, Section III on “Developing Friendship Skills” (available at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel>).
- Welcome participants.
- Take care of any logistics (e.g., length of time for session, break, handouts, etc.).
- Consider using *What Works Brief #17* handout as a supplemental resource.
- Pass out pre-training survey for all participants to complete and turn in.
- As you present the workshop, remind participants to take the culture and background of children into consideration and to work hand-in-hand with parents when they select target behaviors, since some behaviors may be part of the child’s culture.

# Children Engage in Many Activities and Interactions

- **Positive**
  - Sharing
  - Helping
- **Challenging**
  - Hitting
  - Fighting



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## *Speaker Notes:*

### **Activity #1**

- In addition to the positive behaviors listed here, what are some positive behaviors that you would like to increase in your classroom? Record at least two on Activity 1 Handout.
- In addition to the challenging behaviors listed here, what are some challenging behaviors that you would like to decrease in your classroom? Record at least two on Activity 1 Handout.

## Pair-Think-Share

- **Pair** with a partner
- **Read** the following scenario
- **Think** about why
- **Share** your thoughts



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### *Speaker Notes:*

#### **Activity #2**

- **Assign** partners.
- Have the group read the scenario on the handout for Activity #2.
- Pairs should **think** about what Ms. Kerry did to increase positive behaviors.
- **Share** thoughts with the large group by having several pairs share their ideas. Continue until all who volunteer have had an opportunity to participate.



# How Can Adults Increase Positive Behaviors?

- **Prompting**
  - Assisting with a reminder; reminding
- **Acknowledgment**
  - Answering or responding in return for something done

*(American Heritage Dictionary, 4th edition)*



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## ***Speaker Notes:***

Explain to participants:

- Evidence shows that prompts or cues increase social behaviors with peers

Ask participants:

- Which of Ms. Kerry's actions were prompts? Which were acknowledgments?

# Prompting and Acknowledgment Techniques Are Supported by...

- Cues in the environment
  - See What Works Brief #6,  
<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/briefs/wwb6.html>
- Direct instruction in social skills



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## ***Speaker Notes:***

Discuss with participants:

- Provide one or two examples of cues in the environment (see below) and then ask participants to offer any examples from their own classrooms that come to mind.
- Provide one or two examples of teaching social skills through direct instruction (see below), and then ask participants to offer any examples from their own classrooms that come to mind.

### **Examples—Cues in the environment**

- Placing four chairs at a table, when you want no more than four children to work at that table during center time.
- Displaying photographs in the Block Area of children from the classroom building with blocks in that area.
- Labeling children's journals with both their photographs and their names, so they know which one belongs to them.

### **Examples—Direct instruction in social skills**

- Providing a child with words to use when he/she wants another child's toy, and then asking him/her to practice. For example, the teacher might say, "Ask Alejandro if you can use the tow truck when he is finished with it."
- Telling a child that he/she should come to the meeting area when he/she hears the class "gathering song."

## What Are Promoting Strategies?

- Behavioral Momentum
- Priming
- Correspondence Training



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### *Speaker Notes:*

Explain to participants that there are three general types of prompting strategies.



# Behavioral Momentum

- **Step #1:** Ask child to do something he/she is already good at doing. Make several such requests.

**The Key:** Child experiences a lot of positive attention before being asked to attempt a more difficult act.

- **Step #2:** Make a more difficult request.



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## ***Speaker Notes:***

Explain behavioral momentum to participants by reviewing each point on the slide.

- Give an example:
  - The teacher says, “Billy, touch your nose, touch your mouth, touch your ears.”
  - Then the teacher says, “Billy come over here and play with Aaron.”
  - The teacher says, “Billy, can I use the black marker?”
  - After Billy passes the teacher the black marker, she says, “Billy, can I use the blue marker?”
  - After Billy passes the teacher the blue marker, she says, “Billy, please pass Chryso the blue marker.”

Discuss the following with participants:

- Ask each participant to think of something he or she is good at doing. Ask the participants to think about how that sense of competence and accomplishment makes them feel. Then ask them to think of something that they have never tried (i.e., roller blading, baking a souffle, sewing a shirt). Ask them if thinking about their prior accomplishments first helps them believe that they can probably master the task they have not yet tried.
- Ask participants to imagine how this technique might work with a child that they know: Imagine child. Identify difficulty. Identify something the child is already good at doing.
- If time is available
  - If a large number of participants are attending the workshop, they may share examples with members of their small group.
  - If the number of participants at the workshop is not large, then participants may share examples with the whole group.

# Priming

- Providing ideas on how to participate in social activities before the start of the activities
- Some children may also need to practice the target behavior



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## ***Speaker Notes:***

Explain priming to participants:

- Review each point on the slide.
- Give an example:
  - Asking: “Marty, you can ask Sara if you can use the dump truck.”
  - Following up: “Pretend that I’m Sara, and ask me for the dump truck.”

## Activity

- Ask individual participants to imagine how this technique might work with a child that they know.
  - Imagine child.
  - Identify difficulty.
  - Write down words they would use to prime this child.
- Optional, if time is available:
  - If large number of participants are attending the workshop, they may share examples with members of their small group.
  - If the number of participants at the workshop is not large, then participants may share examples with the whole group.

## Correspondence Training

- Done prior to child's engagement in an activity
- *Asking* the child what social skills he or she is going to use in a social situation
- *Following up* regarding whether or not the skill was used



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### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Review each step to correspondence training.
- Example: Before Isaac goes to the block area, Ms. Heaton asks him what he will do there, and with whom he will build a construction. After center time, Ms. Heaton asks Isaac about building a construction with his friend Gus.



# Acknowledgement

- Increases future occurrences of positive social behaviors
- Follows a specific targeted behavior
- Occurs immediately after the desired behavior



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## ***Speaker Notes:***

Explain acknowledgment to participants:

- Review each point on the slide.
- Give an example:
  - (Referring to scenario on handout) Ms. Kerry provided feedback to Sam after he shared the shovel with Kristi at the sand table.
  - (Referring to example on Slide 10) Giving Marcus a “high five” because he followed his plan for interacting with Jamal at the messy table.

## Types of Acknowledgement

- Verbal (praise, enthusiastic cheering)
- Physical (high five, hugs, pat on back)
- Tangible (food, stickers, toys)

Note: Monitor and change reinforcement to ensure that effectiveness is maintained.



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### ***Speaker Notes:***

Explain the types of acknowledgment to participants.

## When Should These Strategies Be Used?

- Use prompting and acknowledgment strategies together, when possible.
- Look for natural opportunities to prompt and acknowledge positive social behaviors.
- Use them frequently in a variety of circumstances to achieve best results.
- Adapt strategies to the unique child and family.



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### ***Speaker Notes:***

Explain when these strategies should be used:

- Review points on slide.
- Inform participants that research has shown that the use of systematic prompting and acknowledgment can significantly increase the number of positive social interactions.
- Increase in frequency of peer interactions can lead to greater acceptance of child by his or her peers, and consequently, improved social and emotional development.
- Caution participants to keep in mind the effect of the child's cultural and linguistic background on target behaviors. Communication with parents about the child's behavior may provide valuable insight into the reason for the behavior. Some behaviors may not be acceptable in the classroom, but may be encouraged at home, or may be a part of the child's culture.



## How Do I Maintain Positive Behavior?

- Occasional acknowledgment will reinforce and maintain targeted behaviors.



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### *Speaker Notes:*

- Explain to participants that once the target behavior has been established, it is not necessary to acknowledge it every time it occurs. Intermittent or periodic reinforcement by acknowledging the behavior will support maintenance of the behavior.

## Making it Real

- Select a target behavior.
- Consider opportunities for addressing the behavior in your classroom environment and routine.
- Devise two or more prompting strategies.
- Devise two or more appropriate ways of acknowledging positive behavior.
- Record your plans on your “Prompting and Acknowledgment Planning Sheet.”



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### *Speaker Notes:*

#### **Activity #3**

- Ask participants to examine the list of positive and challenging behaviors they made in conjunction with Slide 2.
  - Participants select one behavior that they would like to target for change using prompting and acknowledgment strategies.
  - With a partner, participants should brainstorm two ways they might use prompting and acknowledgment strategies to change the target behavior.
- After completing the activity, thank the participants for participating and have them complete the evaluation form, if appropriate.
- Distribute the certificate of attendance if appropriate.

# Pre-training Survey

WWBTK #17: Strategies for Increasing Peer Social Interactions: Prompting and Acknowledgment

☀️ **What is prompting and how can it be used to increase peer social interactions?**

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☀️ **What is behavioral momentum and how can it be used to increase peer social interactions?**

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☀️ **What is acknowledgment and how can it be used to increase peer social interactions?**

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☀️ **What are the three most pressing issues you face as an early childhood professional?**

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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# Pre-training Survey

WWBTK #17: Strategies for Increasing Peer Social Interactions: Prompting and Acknowledgment

## Demographic Information

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Describe yourself (check the boxes that best describe you):

Your gender:  Female  Male

Your age:  under 30  31 to 40  41 to 50  
 51-60  61 and above

Your ethnicity:  European American  Asian-Pacific  Hispanic  
 African-American  American Indian  Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Check your current teaching certificates:

- Early Childhood Education
- Elementary Education
- Special Education
- Other (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Check the one that best describes your education:

- High school or GED
- Some college
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Other (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_


Your teaching experience:

How many year(s) have you taught preschoolers? \_\_\_\_\_


How many year(s) have you taught preschoolers with IEPs? \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for completing this survey.

# Participant Notes



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## WWB Training Kit #17

### Strategies for Increasing Peer Social Interactions: Prompting and Acknowledgment

#### Participant PowerPoint

## Notes

### How Can Adults Increase Positive Behaviors?

- Prompting  
-
- Acknowledgment  
-



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### Prompting and Acknowledgment Techniques are Supported by...

- Cues in the environment  
-See "What Works" Brief #6,  
<http://csefel.uiuc.edu/briefs/wwb6.html>
- Direct instruction in social skills



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## What Are Prompting Strategies?

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## Notes

## Behavioral Momentum

- **Step #1:** \_\_\_\_\_ child to do something he is already good at doing. Make several such requests.  
-**The Key:** Child experiences a lot of positive attention before being asked to attempt a more difficult act.
- **Step #2:** Make a more \_\_\_\_\_ request.



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## Priming

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## Correspondence Training

- Prior to child's engagement in an activity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ the child what social skills he or she is going to use in a social situation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ regarding whether or not the skill was used.



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## Notes

## Acknowledgement

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## Types of Acknowledgement

- Verbal (\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_)
- Physical (\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_)
- Tangible (\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_)

Note: Monitor and change reinforcement to ensure that effectiveness is maintained.



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## When Should These Strategies Be Used?

- Using \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ strategies together, when possible.
- Look for \_\_\_\_\_ to prompt and acknowledge positive social behaviors.
- Use them frequently in a variety of \_\_\_\_\_ to achieve best results.
- \_\_\_\_\_ strategies to the unique child and family.



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## How Do I Maintain Positive Behavior?

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## Making It Real

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# Activity 1

## Prompting and Acknowledgment

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Negative behaviors I would like to decrease:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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Positive behaviors I would like to increase:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



# Activity 1

## Pair-Think-Share

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Sam, a child at the Sand Creek Preschool, has difficulty initiating and maintaining social interactions with his friends. When Sam arrives at the classroom, Ms. Kerry greets him and helps him hang up his jacket and say goodbye to his mom. Ms. Kerry then gets ready to direct Sam to Table Time, the first activity of the day. However, as she does so, she also directs his attention to the table where Lisa and Dominick are already playing and says, “Look, Sam. Lisa and Dominick are playing with Mr. Potato Heads. When you get over there, ask Lisa if you can have one.” Ms. Kerry knows that Sam likes to play with Mr. Potato Head, and she sends him on his way. She then follows behind him, waiting to see whether Sam will indeed ask Lisa for one. Sam walks up to the table, looks at the Mr. Potato Head, looks at Lisa, looks at Ms. Kerry, and then looks back at Lisa and asks, “Can I have one?” Lisa gives Sam a Mr. Potato Head, and Ms. Kerry tells Sam what a great job he did asking Lisa. She gives him a pat on the back, then goes back to meet other children arriving for the day.

Later that day during Center Time, Ms. Kerry joins Sam who is playing at the sand table, in proximity to other children but not interacting with them. Ms. Kerry asks Sam if he would like a shovel, which he takes. After watching Sam play for a few seconds, Ms. Kerry asks him if she can use the shovel, which he gives her. They continue to play a little longer, and Ms. Kerry gives the shovel back to Sam. Then, moments later, she says, “Sam, can you pass the shovel to Kristi?” while she points to Kristi on the other side of the sand table. After the three successful interactions with Ms. Kerry, Sam is confident and hands the shovel to Kristi. Ms. Kerry and Kristi both thank Sam for sharing the shovel.

# Activity 1

## Planning Implementation

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Targeted Behavior:

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Possible Prompting Strategies:

1.

2.

Possible Acknowledgment Strategies:

1.

2.

# CSEFEL Training Workshop Evaluation

WWBTK #17: Strategies for Increasing Peer Social Interactions: Prompting and Acknowledgment

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Your position: \_\_\_\_\_

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☀ Circle the number that best expresses your reaction to each of the following items:

- |  |                       |   |   |   |   |                        |
|--|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|------------------------|
| 1. This topic is important to me.            | (Extremely Important) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not Important at All) |
| 2. The amount of information covered was     | (Just Right)          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Inadequate)           |
| 3. The information covered was clear.        | (Very Clear)          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Vague)                |
| 4. The activities conducted were beneficial. | (Very)                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not at All)           |
| 5. The handouts provided were useful.        | (Very)                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not at All)           |
| 6. Overall, this presentation was            | (Very Useful)         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not Useful)           |

☀ Things I liked about this presentation:

☀ Things I would change about this presentation:

☀ Additional information I would like on this topic:

☀ New things I am going to try as a result of this workshop:

☀ Additional comments:



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## *Certificate of Training* Strategies for Increasing Peer Social Interactions: Prompting and Acknowledgment

This is to certify that

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successfully completed the above training

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*Trainer*

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*Trainer*



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*Participant*

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*Date and Location*

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Additional training resources are available at: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/>