

## Site Description

- **Site Name:** Able ARTS Work
  - Nonprofit organization in Long Beach, CA
- **Population Served:** Adults with developmental disabilities
- **Mission Statement:** “To provide lifelong learning, community service, and vocational opportunities through the creative arts for people of all abilities and all ages in an environment of warmth, encouragement, and inclusion”

## Identified Needs

1. **Increased community involvement**
2. **Life skills development** focused on time management, financial management, and safety awareness
3. **Social skills development** to further develop social etiquette and emotional regulation

## Literature Review

- Interventions that involved **tailored support, social network building, and consistent community involvement were particularly effective** in enhancing social participation, improving social skills, and fostering community engagement for adults with developmental disabilities (Giummarra et al., 2022)
- Adults with autism often face **significant barriers to full community participation**, including challenges in social communication, limited social networks, and lack of tailored support (Cameron et al., 2022)
- A combination of **modeling, peer interactions, and technology-based training** proves to be particularly effective in improving social skills, with a need for research on long-term outcomes and best practices for integrating these strategies into daily life (Jacob et al., 2022)

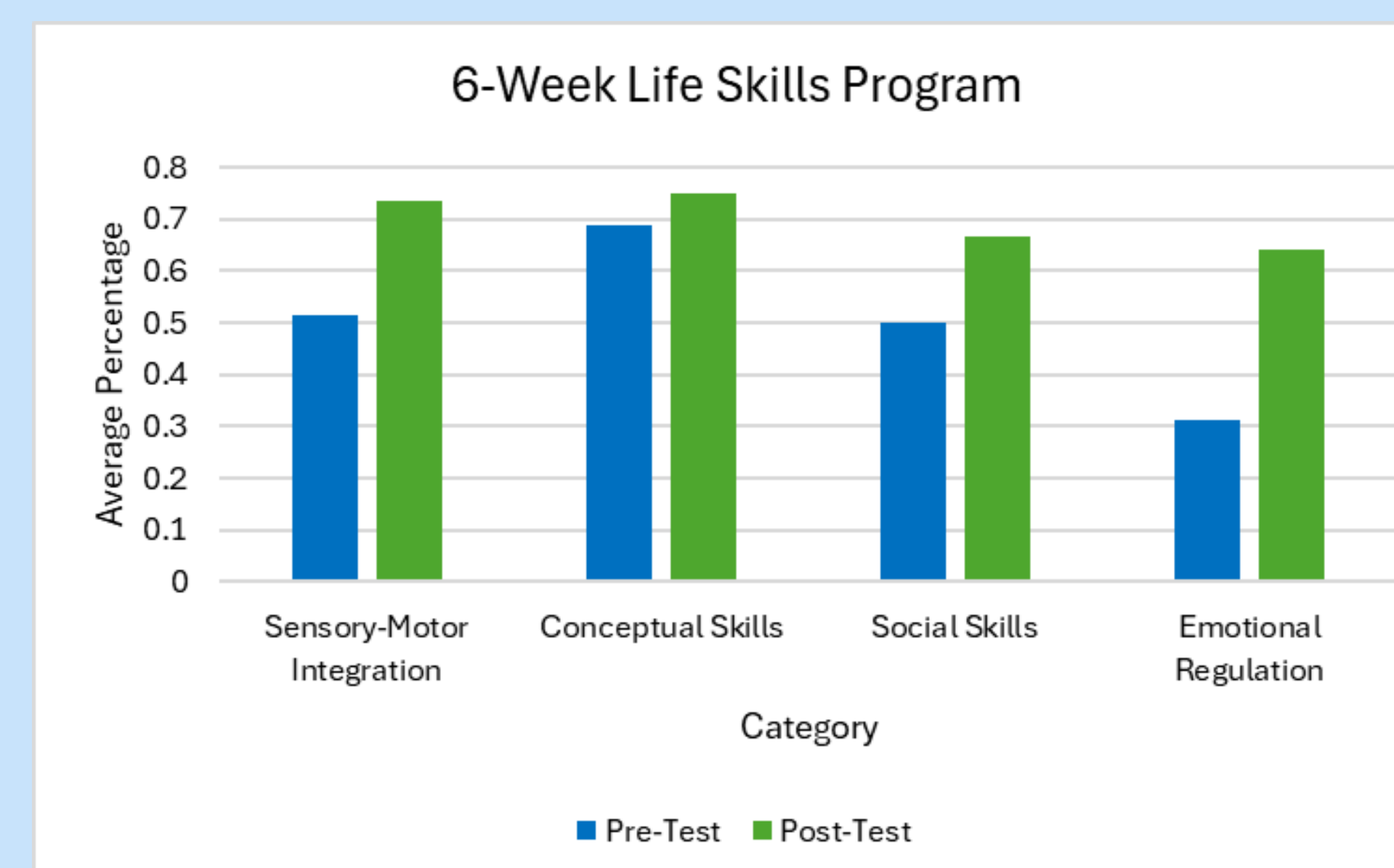
## Learning Objectives

1. Developed and implemented a life skills program to increase community participation for adults with developmental disabilities
2. Collected outcome measures and presented findings to staff members at Able ARTS Work adult program
3. Developed evidenced-based educational materials to increase social participation and community engagement

## Program Description

- **Purpose of life skills program:** to empower adults with developmental disabilities by enhancing their self-confidence and social engagement
- **Goals:** Promote social participation and community integration, strengthen emotional regulation, increase safety awareness, and develop problem-solving abilities
- Adults with developmental disabilities (**N=8**) enrolled full-time in the day program
- **Group Sessions**
  - Frequency: 4x/week
  - Duration: 1 hour 30 mins/session

## Evaluation and Outcomes



### Quantitative program themes:

- A paired samples t-test was conducted to analyze the differences between pre-test and post-test scores (**t(3) = -3.511, p < 0.05**), with a large effect size (**Cohen's d = -1.755**), revealing a **statistically significant improvement** in post-test scores compared to pre-test scores

### Progress Notes

- Observation notes were made after each group about service users' social and activity engagement

### Pre-test/Post-test

- Administered to service users at the beginning and end of the six-week program

### Qualitative program themes:

- Improved peer interaction
- Increased problem-solving abilities
- Increased engagement
- Improved self-awareness
- Increased confidence

## Scholarly Deliverables

### Six Structured Groups

- Time Management and Problem-Solving
- Introduction to Social Skills
- Navigating Social Situations
- Building Social Maturity
- Social Skills and Affect Discrimination
- Social Skills and Self-Esteem

**Program manual** for targeted skills

**Calming Strategies and Sensory Toolkit** for emotional regulation

## Discussion/Implications

- A life skills program was created using a client-centered approach to provide service users with the opportunity to develop skills needed to increase community engagement
- Findings indicate that targeted social skills training can significantly enhance confidence and increase social participation
- There is a need for continued research and program refinement to support long-term social inclusion and independence within this population

## Acknowledgements

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## References

Available Upon Request