



**Progress Report**  
**Limitless Youth Inc.**





***\*\*All names have been changed to protect the confidentiality of our clients\*\****

### **Participant Information:**

**Name:** Lucy Jones

**Age:** 6

**Biological Gender:** F

**Preferred Pronoun (if applicable):**

**Diagnoses:** N/A

**Strengths upon program entry:** Swimming and water play, dancing, singing, playing with dolls, playing and caring for her dog; enjoys nature discoveries; home experiments (e.g. mixing liquids, baking soda, etc). If she enjoys an activity ability to focus for a long period of time.

**Needs upon program entry:** Difficulty using her words to express how she is feeling especially if she is upset Easily frustrated with new tasks or unmastered tasks. Worried about failing, difficulty being flexible when expectations change negative self talk "i can not do it" "i am stupid" low self esteem, separation anxiety when entering new situations, (e.g. camp). Difficulty in transitions from one activity to another especially if she is being transitioned away from a favourite activity (e.g. Tv) Sensitivity to certain clothes, hats, tags, etc.

**Safety Concerns:** N/A

**Safety Plan Completed:** N/A

**Safety Strategies:** Support to wear a mask

## **Program Goals:**

Lucy's goal within the High-Five Program is: To help support a growth mindset and emotional intelligence.

## **Daily Summaries:**

**Monday:** Upon arrival, Lucy had some difficulty to enter the building, as she wanted to wait for her friend to arrive. Staff supported her with connection and redirection to help her enter the building. Staff brought her to the cool down room and engaged with her about her favourite disney princesses and listened to some music with her from the Beauty and the Beast Playlist. Afterwards, she was able to settle into routine, and although her friend did not arrive until halfway through the day she participated with the group until she arrived.

**Tuesday:** Upon arrival, Lucy had difficulty leaving her mother to enter the building. First with actions such as running back into the car, and then with refusal to wear a mask. She frequently expressed that she was tired, but was resistant and reluctant to enter the building. Once everyone in the group was settled, her mother helped her into the main foyer area which was separated from the group. There, she stood and cried while staff supported her with comforting words, validation, and empathy. Staff let her feel the emotion and did not rush her to start the day, just to feel. After about 15 minutes, she held her bag and was willing/able to enter the building. She watched the group play a game of the floor is lava, and then went to the library space to listen to music and rest. She sat alone and rested and when a camper came in to do the same thing they ended up talking together and then she joined the group to cool down. For the remainder of the day, Lucy was able and willing to participate in the routine of the day, and needed some reminders to stay on task when socializing with her friend.

**Wednesday:** Lucy began her day differently, and was able/willing to enter the building and wear a mask. She joined her friend on the obstacle course and was cooperative with staff. Notably, she was able to ask staff for help with her lunch bag and other tasks instead of her friend, and was more willing to participate in outdoor activities today instead of only wanting to talk with her friend. At the end of the day she seemed proud and happy as she left with her mother and said goodbye cheerfully to camp staff.

**Thursday:** Upon arrival, Lucy appeared in a good mood. She did not want to join the group in their games, but watched intently at her desk, appearing engaged. For the morning activity, she

sat with the group with less prompting and encouragement that was needed earlier in the week, and spent the whole discussion attentive and responsive with the group.

Notably, she put up her hand to share an idea with the group today unprompted and organically. Staff acknowledged this verbally and explained that they saw this as growth for her from day one. During the cool-down hour, Lucy and her friend continually experienced conflict where Lucy had her hair pulled and was pinching her friend. With staff support, Lucy was willing to pack up the toys and separate from her friend. After Lucy felt better, her friend still wanted space, so Lucy needed some support to understand and to respect her friend's space for the activity. As the afternoon progressed, the two girls were both willing to be in each other's space, and when they were able to be safe and respectful together, staff gave them praise and acknowledgment for being safe and kind.

**Friday:** Upon arrival, Lucy presented in a shy mood, but was easily engaged with humour from staff. When she entered, she was shown her seat which was decorated in birthday decor. She was invited to join the game that her peers were engaged in, but she chose to sit and watch instead. When her friend arrived they immediately began speaking together about birthday festivities. Staff engaged them about trust and safety from yesterday's events, which Lucy was able and willing to participate in.

Throughout the day, Lucy was willing to join the group, and participated well. During cool-down she was observed trying a new activity of creating bracelets, and remained focused on this activity throughout the hour. At this time, staff asked her if she would like to have a birthday song sung to her today, and Lucy expressed that she likes when people sing to her, but only when it is those close to her like family and friends, so staff did not engage in a birthday song for her as requested. Instead, staff created a birthday card and all signed it for her. In the afternoon, Lucy participated in several games with the group, as well as free dance party time. At first, she joined the group where there was dancing, but only stood still. With encouragement and staff modelling ballerina and princess like dance moves, Lucy began to move and dance more freely with the group. Before pickup, Lucy discussed her birthday plans with staff and a few peers and expressed being happy and excited.

### **Skill Support:**

#### **Overview of daily support strategies:**

- Re-directions/distraction when triggered
- More emphasis on acknowledgement when she is demonstrating pro-social skills
- Remaining calm when she appears upset

- Reviewing plans/routines at the before the day starts, offering this as needed
- Verbal cues before a transition
- Modelling and utilizing growth mindset language
- Acknowledge and Reinforce for mask wearing

**Summary:** Within our program, we utilized a variety of strategies to support Lucy's progress. Firstly, we acknowledged the importance of establishing a therapeutic relationship through attachment theory. We offered Lucy help with tasks, to talk when she needed, and reminded her we were here for her if she needed it. We verbalized our caring towards her both before, during, and after her day to help her feel supported, safe, and secure within our care. Even in moments when she did not appear to talk, we ensured we spent a few minutes engaging with her, and reminding her that we will make the time if/when she wants it to talk and help her. This appeared to establish some trust even within the short time supporting her, and she quickly allowed us to co-regulate her in situations.

We helped co-regulate her by asking to sit next to her in activities while she waited for her friend, walking her in and outside of the building, and in transitioning from a non-preferred activity to a scheduled part of the routine. In these moments, we verbalized that we would be alongside her, and we stayed with her until she appeared settled before leaving her proximity. When leaving her proximity, we provided her with emotional space to complete activities. This meaning we provided frequent check-ins with intentional growth mindset and attachment language (i.e. I believe in you, you've got this, i'll come check back soon, i'm here if you need me).

Additionally, both on a group and individual level, we ensured to bring acknowledgment and positive reinforcement back to values, not outcomes. Therefore, when Lucy completed or joined an activity, staff acknowledged the effort she put in, her willingness to accept help, her perseverance to not give up, and other values she would demonstrate, rather than what the end result of her activity was. Finally, we made sure to utilize a strengths based approach, and find intentional, meaningful moments to acknowledge and reinforce Lucy's strengths, Rather than suggesting she participate, or complete a task one way, we took moments when she naturally showed pro-social, healthy, and appropriate behaviours to build them up. We used this intentionally so that rather than feeling as though she was not meeting our expectations of socializing, participating, etc. she could navigate them her way and we could build her up where she was at. For example, we would not inform her she had to share with the group, only sit with them; but on occasions where she chose to share answers with the group we acknowledged and praised this, and shared with her the positive impact she brought to the group.

## **Effective Strategies:**

**Labelling Emotions:** During moments of distress for Lucy (in particular due to separation from her family or her close friend), Lucy presented with actions such as running from the entrance, crying, refusal to wear a mask, and some yelling while crying. During these times of distress, we labelled Lucy's emotions she was feeling to help build emotional intelligence. Labelling Lucy's emotions with words such as sad, tired, lonely, discouraged, disappointed, scared etc. allowed us to help Lucy through her emotions rather than redirect them. We noticed that during these moments of distress she was able to communicate/express what she did and did not want to do, but needed this support to recognize what emotions she was feeling at those times. Overall, labelling her emotions appeared to help Lucy work through her big emotions with staff support.

**Co-regulation:** Once a therapeutic rapport was established with Lucy, it was utilized to help her navigate potentially triggering situations, such as speaking out to the group, being in a group without her close friend and more. In these moments, a staff would sit or walk with Lucy to complete the task at hand with verbal prompts, and emotional support. This was utilized frequently throughout the week, and she appeared to respond well to this strategy. When this strategy was used, it was observed that she went from sitting quietly with no engagement to being able to participate individually or in small numbered groups. This strategy was specifically effective during group transitions, group activities, and in transitioning from home to a new environment.

**Validation:** In moments of distress or conflict, we found validation to be an effective tool to help problem solve with Lucy. When we validated that a situation was difficult, stressful, happy, sad, etc. Lucy appeared more able and willing to engage and elaborate on what she was doing, feeling, and thinking. This was helpful in moments where she appeared frustrated and in conflict when staff validated that it made sense she was feeling a certain way, and offered to help her to feel better. It was notably helpful in engaging her outside of distress as well, as validating what she was feeling in happy or fun moments and verbalizing that validation to her created more opportunities for connection from her verbally as well. It was observed that validation when she didn't agree or want to comply with the rule or routine helped her to move forward with her day (i.e. "i know it may feel annoying, I get it, but we can't change the rule because..."). At times, it took several validation comments in order for this strategy to work, and it is probable that she responds most when the feelings, thoughts, and/or opinions that are being validated are accurate and resonate with her.

**Individualized positive reinforcement:** When participating in the camp routine and activities, Lucy's engagement and participation level appeared different than some of her peers. Since she was in a group with several outgoing, expressive, and athletic peers, we ensured we positively

reinforced her on prosocial behaviours that reflected where she was at in her social development. We individualized reinforcements to reflect her ability to enter and join the group in the same space, participating in the routine/schedule, trying new things, and interacting with peers outside of her usual social circle.

This was effective because it allowed us to recognize Lucy's existing strengths, and build on them in a non-intrusive way. Within a week of camp, it was important to allow Lucy enough comfort to have more fun than stress in her day within a new environment. Therefore, individualizing her positive reinforcement gave space to encourage behaviors that are healthy for holistic development alongside her existing social strengths with her close friend.

**Values based decision making:** During times of conflict, non-compliance, and what appeared to be stressful moments for Lucy, we ensured we used values based decision making. This was to ensure that the changes in expectations or routines were not perceived as either staff giving in to her comfort, or as staff making decisions from a punitive perspective. When explaining decisions that were made for and with Lucy, we used language such as 'trust' 'healthy' 'safe' etc.

We found this effective because it opened up the opportunity to support her in building skills and mindsets for more prosocial behaviour and mindsets. When communicating separation from her friend we explained it as everyone needs to feel safe when they are with other humans, and were able to work with her on what being safe with someone when you feel upset means. When discussing situations where Lucy appeared to experience stress or anxiety without being with her friend, staff was able to discuss the decision to have them away from each other for a little while with the value of healthy friendships, and this opened a door to discuss what healthy friendship looks and feels like.

### **Growth and Progress Overview:**

Throughout the week, Lucy built upon her social skills and emotional intelligence noticeably. On the first day, Lucy could be described as cooperative and shy, as she followed routine with support and engaged minimally with peers or staff. Midweek, she had tired and sad feelings upon arrival, and after receiving staff support to calm, find a coping strategy and rejoin the group when she was ready. Following this episode, Lucy began to engage more openly with staff, which trickled into a few more peer interactions. As the week progressed, Lucy was observed genuinely engaging in more activities outdoors, joining organized group games, and at the end of the week she raised her hand to share with the whole group. Overall, Lucy left her comfort zone

in safe, appropriate amounts with staff support and began to show signs of doing this on her own more throughout the week.

### **Next Steps:**

**Making a Safe Space at Home:** It was communicated by parents that Lucy expressed wanting to create a space at home similar to the cool-down area at camp. As parents expressed they do not have the extra room to accommodate an identical space, it's recommended to validate, encourage, and utilize safe spaces within the home for Lucy to use as a coping strategy. Limitless Youth Inc. will provide Lucy's parents/guardians with some resources to help accomplish this with the space they already have

**Concrete space, items, or words to engage in counselling/talking moments at home:** While it appears that Lucy engages well and appropriately with her parents, having a concrete space, item or word to begin engaging in a problem solving, counselling, or intimate conversation together may benefit her in other environments. Similar to safe space, there would be one concrete visual/action that Lucy can use to show/express she wants to talk about her emotions and thoughts. When she uses this concrete space or item, the people around her will know she is ready to talk through something.

The caring adults around her can prompt her that if she needs/wants to share her emotions, she can use that item, and if not, the adults will help her to cope or move forward with her day. This indirect way of communicating may help her to communicate her needs simply enough to receive the support she needs when she needs it, as well as to create a foundation for people in new environments to set her up for success in building emotional intelligence. Since she presents as more shy and quiet outside of the home, this strategy may be able to support social and emotional intelligence in group settings, as it does not require full communication with others right away, but is still communicating and recognizing her emotional needs. By practicing this at home it may become a helpful strategy to be transferred to new environments.

**Social Skills Programming:** In a home environment, Lucy may benefit from one on one social skills programs. When she is in a state of calm, her prefrontal cortex can be more easily engaged to learn, understand, and apply healthy friendships, leaving her comfort zone, coping strategies, speaking to others, entering new environments, managing separation anxiety, and other social skills. If group settings trigger Lucy this may be a helpful way for her to build a social skills foundation as her development continues. If a social skills program is not applicable or available, increased opportunities to be in emotionally supportive group settings as may continue to build on the progress we have seen within the week of High-Five Summer Camp