



# Activity Participation of Young Adolescents with and without Physical Disabilities

## Acknowledgements:

Thanks to all the adolescents and their families who agreed to participate in this study.

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## Aims:

We aimed to survey adolescents in Years 7-9 with physical disabilities and their classmates without physical disabilities, to find out:

- what activities they do,
- their level of independence, responsibilities, and ability to get around by themselves,
- their social skills and social supports, and
- what obstacles they have to overcome to do activities.

## Why we did this project:

Most people nowadays believe that everybody in our community should have a fair go. It doesn't matter whether they have a disability or not. We should treat everybody the same. This questionnaire gave us a chance to find out whether adolescents in Years 7 to 9 are getting the same opportunities, regardless of disability.

It enabled us to find out what ordinary everyday activities adolescents in Years 7 to 9 normally do. We wanted to see whether adolescents with disabilities do the same ordinary everyday activities as other adolescents, and if not, what stops them.

## Who participated:

We surveyed 601 participants, in Years 7 to 9 (aged 10-15), from 40 schools around Perth. They included:

- 49 participants with physical disabilities (e.g. cerebral palsy, Duchene muscular dystrophy),
- 533 participants with no disabilities.

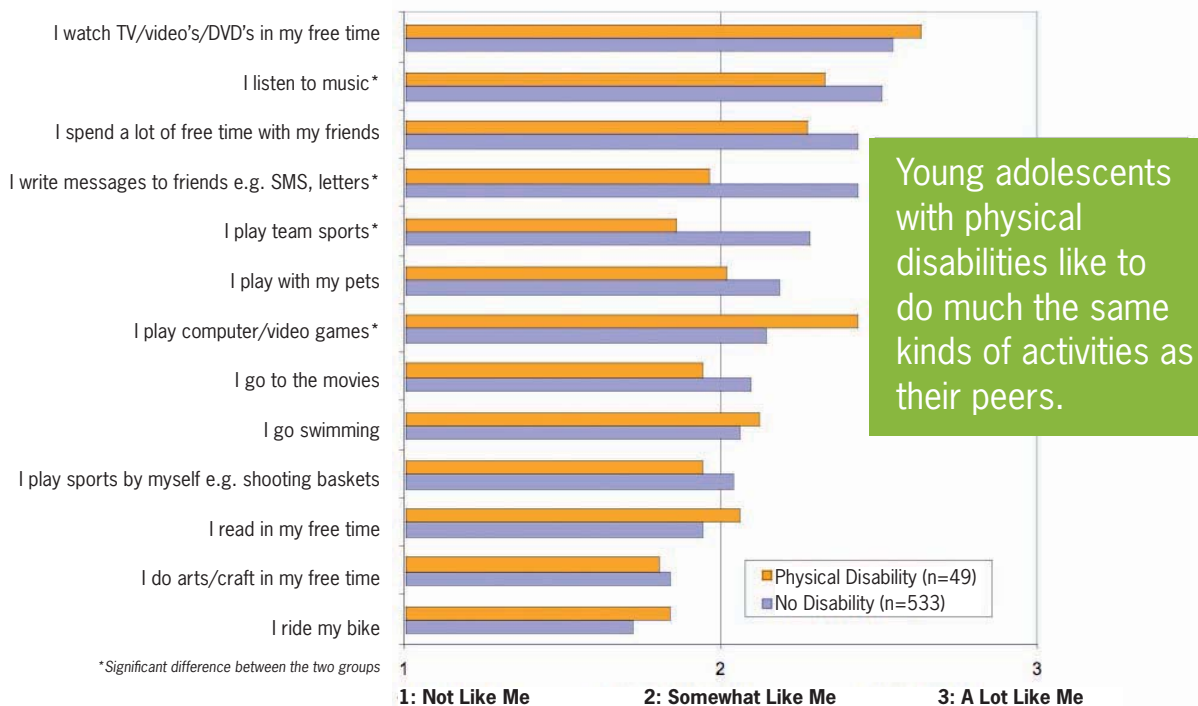
There were also 19 participants with other conditions, including ADHD, Central Auditory Processing Disorder, Down Syndrome, as well as some rarer ones. But we didn't have enough of those groups to be confident about our conclusions, so they are not included in these results.

## WHAT THE PARTICIPANTS TOLD US

### Activities adolescents do

We asked our participants what activities they did. The thirteen most popular activities are shown in the graph. It shows that young adolescents with disabilities like to do much the same kinds of activities as their peers.

#### Activities that adolescents in Years 7-9 do



### Independence, responsibilities and ability to get around

We asked participants questions about their responsibilities at home, how independent they were, and how easy it was for them to get around. The results show that adolescents with physical disabilities are generally less independent, have fewer responsibilities, and have more difficulty getting around.

#### Adolescents' levels of Independence, responsibilities, and ability to get around

