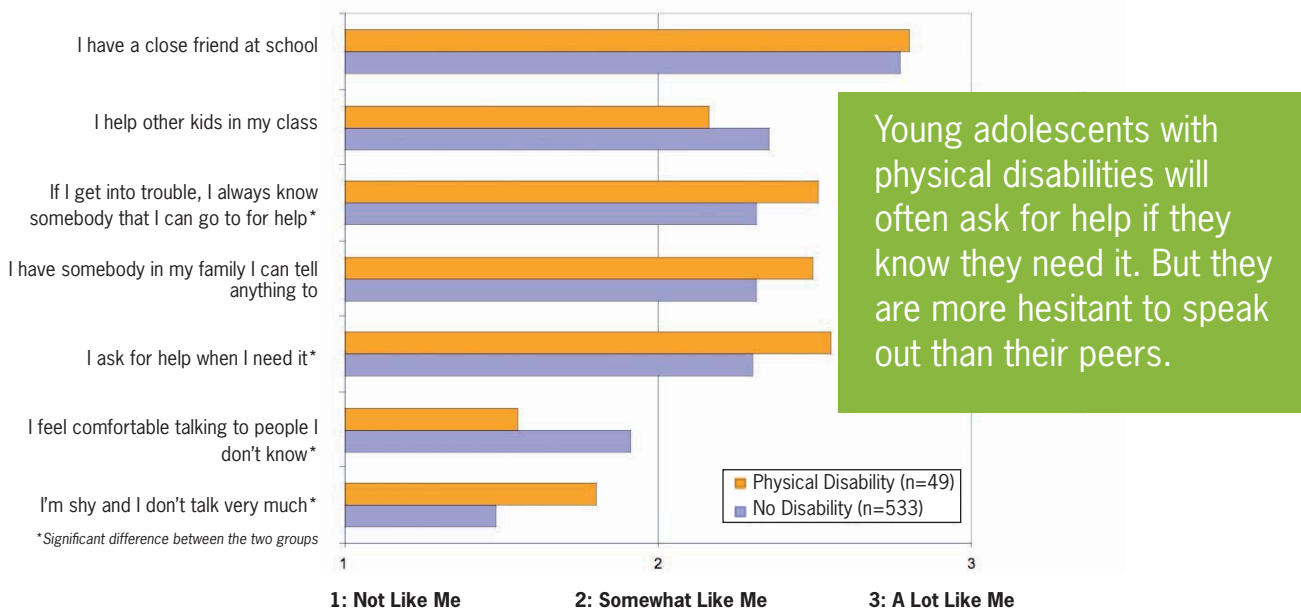


Social skills and social supports

Young adolescents with physical disabilities have similar social supports to their peers. They know they have to ask for help more often than their peers. But they are sometimes shy about speaking out, especially with people they don't know.

Social skills, social activities and social supports for adolescents in Years 7-9



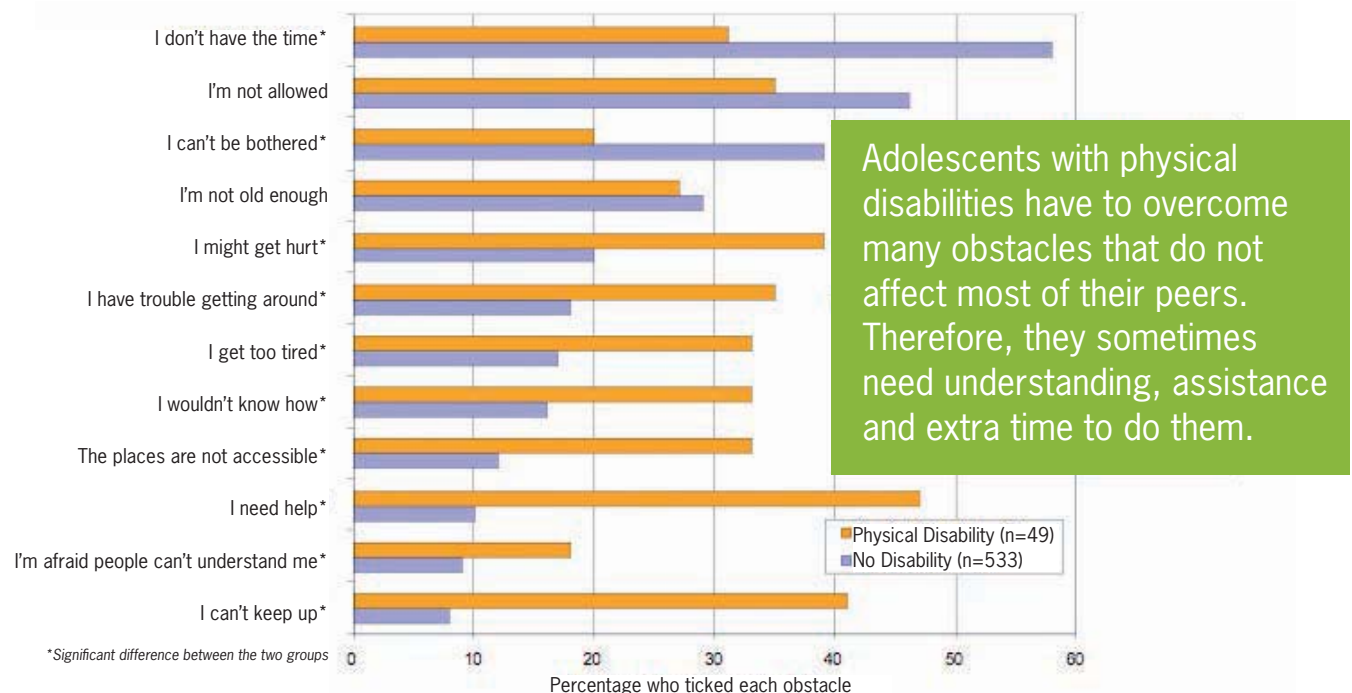
What obstacles do adolescents with physical disabilities have to overcome to do activities?

At least one in three young people with physical disabilities ticked these:

- I need help. ■ I can't keep up. ■ The places are not accessible to me. ■ I get too tired.
- I might get hurt. ■ I wouldn't know how. ■ I have trouble getting around.

One in five also ticked: ■ I'm afraid people can't understand me.

What obstacles stop adolescents in Years 7-9 from doing the activities they would like to do?



WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT FROM THIS STUDY?

Young adolescents with physical disabilities in Years 7 to 9:

- like doing much the same activities as their peers without disabilities
- are less independent and have fewer responsibilities than their peers
- are not as independent at getting around as their peers
- know they need to ask for help, but tend to be more hesitant to speak out than their peers
- have to overcome obstacles that do not affect their peers, especially the following:
 - I need help.
 - I can't keep up.
 - The places are not accessible to me.
 - I might get hurt.
 - I wouldn't know how.
 - I have trouble getting around.
 - I get too tired.
 - I'm afraid people can't understand me.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Give adolescents with physical disabilities as much support as possible to develop independence, responsibilities and important life skills.
2. If you think that an adolescent with a physical disability might need help, ask them. But let them decide how much help, if any, they need.
3. Learn what you can about physical disabilities from your students/friends/classmates with physical disabilities. There is a lot they can teach you. This will help you to understand them, their challenges and needs.
4. Adapt activities to enable adolescents with physical disabilities to participate in them safely. Give them extra time, when needed, to complete the activities.
5. Always give adolescents with physical disabilities credit for their achievements, but never under-estimate what they can do!

Note: Separate tip sheets will be available in 2010

www.tccp.com.au

Further information

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