

# “Treated Like an Outcast”: Experiences of Social Inclusion from the Perspective of Young Adults with Intellectual Disability

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# Social Inclusion & Intellectual Disability

- Unique, complex and personal
- Importance:
  - Core domain of quality of life
- Intellectual disability definition (AAIDD, 2013)



(Wolfensberger, 1998; MacNeil & Anderson, 1999; Crane, 2002; Schalock, 2004; Duvdevany & Arar, 2004; Lemay, 2006; Meininger, 2010)

# Significance

## Gaps in research:

- From the perspective of people with intellectual disability. (Abbott & McConkey, 2006)
- Young adults and social inclusion. (McIntyre et al., 2004; Van Naarden Braun et al., 2006)
- Social inclusion within Western Australia
  - Providing information for initiatives implemented in Western Australia.

(Australian Government, 2009; DSC, 2011; DisabilityCare Australia, 2013)



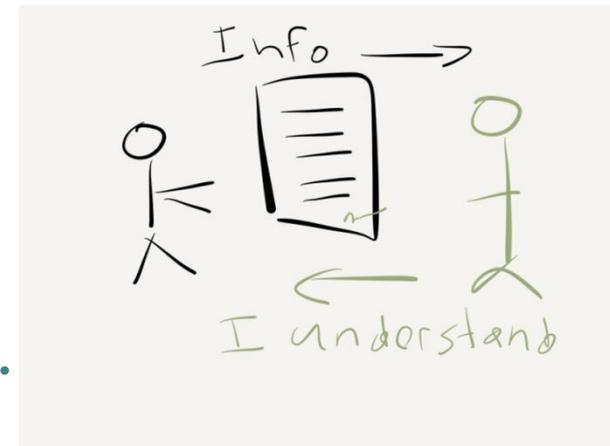
# Aims of the research

- To describe how young adults with intellectual disability spend their time, form relationships and feel included.
- To explore the experiences of social inclusion from the perspective of young adults with intellectual disability.



# Study Design

- **Phenomenology** (Moustakas, 1994; Creswell, 2007)
- **Purposeful sampling; criterion sampling** (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2008)
- **Recruitment**
  - **Service Coordinators**
- **Interviews**
  - **Semi-structured, 1 hour, one-on-one.**
  - **Language level appropriate** (Perry, 2004)
- **Ethical consent** (National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, 2007)

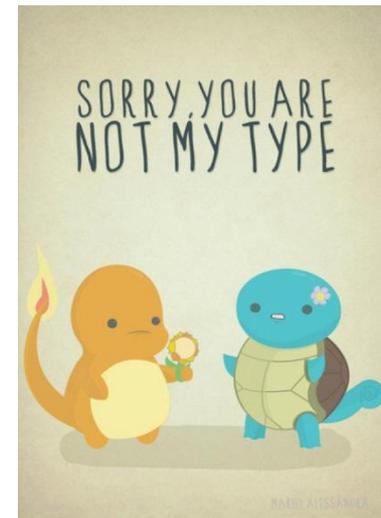


# Data Analysis

- **Thematic Analysis**
  - QSR International- Nvivo 10
  - Analytical Process by Creswell (2008)
- **Validation** (Creswell, 2007; Creswell, 2008)
  - Researcher bracketing
  - Reflective diary
  - Triangulation
- **Limitations**
  - Small sample
  - External factors



# Theme One: Segregated, excluded and “treated like an outcast” in my community



# “We always feel left out”: Treated like an outcast.

*I don't have many friends my own age because I was treated like an outcast... at school. So, because I had a disability nobody wanted to do ... do anything with me and nobody wanted to invite me to anything... (Grace)*

*And we always feel left out and ... it was really, really hard to handle and I just completely shut down and felt like killing myself and I said, 'Nuh, can't handle any more.' (Pepper)*



# “The disability people don’t have jobs”: Exclusion and rejection from paid work in the community.

*I really want to get into work but I feel rejected by the people. Like, I don’t think they want to employ me because I have an intellectual disability... I think they want mainstream people... I don’t understand why there’s, ah, like all the mainstream people have work and we don’t, the disability people don’t have jobs. (Anne)*

**“Not sitting around on my backside all day at home”: Several days a week spent in formal programs.**

*...Just going out doing something. Not sitting around on my backside all day at home. [It makes me happy] socialising with other people. Doing activities out of home. (Daniel)*



## “...a boring lifestyle”: Nothing to do.

*Cleaned my house, did my dishes, um, went to the shops, looked around, got some DVDs last night to watch, yeah....get bored so I just go to the shops, but the shops get boring after a while. Most of the time when I'm bored I mainly clean up my house... (Anne)*

*“Kind of have a boring lifestyle right now.” (John)*



# Theme Two: Challenges in experiencing, initiating and maintaining peer friendships



**“Kids find it easier to talk to me ... I find it easier to talk to them”**: Narrow experiences of peer interaction and friendships.

*“My mate and me used to play around with the swimming pools and stuff and the toys and all that, all day.” (Aaron)*

*There’s probably about 20 year olds but no one my age...So, I don’t really get their humour...The younger [primary school age] kids find it easier to talk to me and they don’t actually judge me... I find it easier to talk to them than someone my own age. (Grace)*



# “I don’t really have much friends”: Face-to-face interaction becoming less.

*“I hardly see them.” (John)*

*“I don’t really have much friends.”  
(Anne)*

*“I think it was last year or the year before ... Anyway, I can’t remember [Laughs]. Um, I went there for my cousin’s birthday and, ah, recently just had my birthday. And I went for my friend’s birthday, like, last year, I think.” (Jodi)*



# “Don’t have no phone”: Not using electronic communication.

*“I don’t use Facebook so that wouldn’t work out... It depends if the people that I’m talking to are next to me. Like if they’re standing beside me, if they’re like within talking range [then I talk to friends].” (Daniel)*



**“My mum coming over here and sleeping over my house”: Family as a replacement for friendships.**

*“I like spending time with my mum. Like, my mum coming over here and sleeping over my house, spending time with me.” (Anne)*



# Key points to take away

- How time was spent → further segregation.
- Received assistance, yet still felt segregated and had difficulty finding employment.
- Formal programs ≠ interaction with peers without disability nor friendships that continued outside of the program setting.
- Lack of social media and phone usage.

# Conclusion

Ideal  
experiences



Lived  
experiences



# Future recommendations- Where to from here??

- Beneficial to social inclusion initiatives.
- Reflect on your therapy/practice: *How can we improve support for young adults with intellectual disability to make friends and feel included?*
- Further understanding of experiences.



# Thankyou

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