



Furthering Positive Futures for Children with Intellectual Disabilities: A Longitudinal Investigation

The Institute for Positive Psychology and Education (Australian Catholic University), in collaboration with the University of Western Sydney, is leading an innovative cross-cultural project funded by the Australian Research Council and the Social Science Research Council of Canada and endorsed in Australia by the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities, to investigate the benefits of school life and physical activity for the well-being and positive development of students with mild and moderate intellectual disability.

Youth with intellectual disabilities form a high-risk population with an increased vulnerability for multiple psychosocial issues, school adaptation difficulties, and difficulties participating in their community.

This research will develop knowledge in these areas based on reports from students with intellectual disabilities themselves, as well as their parents and their teachers — making this study internationally unique. More importantly, the results from this

study will serve to develop rich avenues of actions for school communities to assist students with an intellectual disability fulfill their full potential.

As such, participating schools will receive research reports, as well as clear practical recommendations.

The researchers aim to recruit a sample of 300 Australian secondary students with mild to moderate ID, their parents, and their teachers. All participants will be asked each year to complete, with the help of research assistants, a questionnaire regarding the students' school life, psychological well-being, mental health, and physical activity (over two half day periods). There is also an additional physical activity component for the students, including fitness tests adapted to his/her disability.

A total of 13 schools in NSW have already agreed to join this important research program.



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