

Life with intellectual disability



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What is intellectual disability?



Intellectual disability is a lifelong condition



It slows down our learning



It affects our skills and behaviours

- in good and bad ways



It affects our day to day lives



With the right support we live successful lives



We can have different support needs



Some people need a little support



Others need more support



Support needs can also change



Intellectual disability is often invisible



People cannot always tell by looking at us

There are different names for intellectual disability



For example learning disability

Or learning difficulty



It depends on the country you live in

We use intellectual disability in Australia.



Health

Many of us have other health conditions too



It is important to have regular health check ups



We can learn to take care of our health

- with the right support



It can be difficult to cope with and focus on

- our disability and health needs at the same time



These struggles to deal with health care and disability needs

- can start mental health issues.

This is because it can cause stress and anxiety.



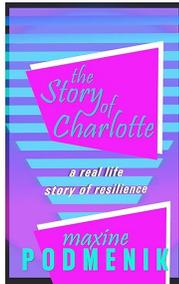
Our success can be seen

We can succeed in many areas of life.



For example many of us can:

- study and do well at school
- get jobs and very good careers
- start and run successful businesses



Maxine said: "I have a business by writing my book and have sold 36 copies already."



"I have a business with my drawings and different types of artwork.

I have already sold 29 products." Mark



Many of us

- can get married

Tammy said: "I love being married and my husband is a great support to me."



Many of us

- raise children

“I am a proud mum of 2 beautiful and kind loving children.” Skie



Many of us

- live by ourselves

Larissa said: “Proud to be living by myself and two ragdoll cats.”



Many of us

- prove people wrong when given chances



Sam said: “I always wanted to be a teacher but thought my disability made it impossible.

But now I co-teach future and current teachers at university.”



Many of us

- communicate without words



We can do many everyday things



We

- shop for ourselves and our family

- cook



- travel

- work



- study

- enjoy hobbies



We can have different ways to learn

We may need more time to learn new things



We can make choices about our daily life



Success can look different for everyone.



Strengths

We have different strengths like



- strength to keep on going
- will power
- being creative
- honesty
- kindness
- and a sense of humour.





We are able to think in different ways



We have strong values



We feel deeply for others

- because we had bad experiences

We do not want others to feel that way



We need chances to show what we can do



With person-centred support and chances

- we can reach our goals.

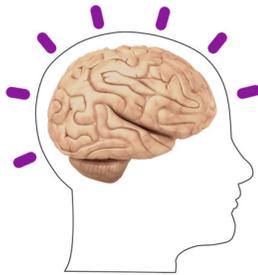
Struggles

We have different struggles



These struggles can range from low to very high

These can change in levels but are always there



Struggles can be caused by intellectual disability

Struggles caused by intellectual disability can be:

- communication
- social skills like meeting new people
- memory
- understanding





- money skills

- maths skills

- reading

- writing

- self care

- movement skills

- emotional skills

- low confidence



We can also find doing big tasks hard

- and it can help to do it step by step



We can also struggle to:

- solve problems

- make choices



- speak up
- make complaints
- control feelings
- do things without support



Reading about struggles can make you

- feel worried or stressed



Take a moment to calm down



- drink a cup of tea

- do crafts



- cuddle your pet



We now will continue talking about struggles

Struggles can also be caused by **society**



Society means other people in your community



Society can give us extra challenges and struggles



Struggles caused by society are called **barriers**



Society often sees people with intellectual disability

- in a negative way

As a result we might not get a chance to:



- access education
- be employed
- learn life skills



- fit into community
- access services
- fill in forms correctly



- get the right supports
- get support from services to get government funding



- make friends
- have relationships
- have children
- engage in next steps of life



We often face discrimination

People often



- look down at us
- think we cannot do much
- judge us quickly



- take advantage of us
- speak over us
- speak for us



- speak to our support person instead of us
- tell our story for us
- do not listen to us



- overpower us
- misunderstand us



And sometimes people

- limit us
- make decisions for us



People can also make us feel

- less
- broken
- not wanted
- like we are invisible
- like we are not equal
- our needs do not matter





As a result we

- do not believe in ourselves
- feel we must say “yes” all the time
- do not fit into society
- stop trying to reach our goals
- limit ourselves by what others think of us
- burn out trying to change ourselves
- lose understanding of who we think we are
- lack confidence in ourselves
- do not have hope for our future



We are at greater risk of mental health issues



We often trust too much

- when it comes to relationships and scams



We often trust people who have more power

- health care workers
- teachers and other education staff
- bosses
- police



This needs to change

It is not us who need to change

It is society who needs to change.

Who made this booklet



People with intellectual disability made this booklet



1. Julie Loblinzk Refalo OAM

2. Skie Sarfaraz

3. Sam Hurd

4. Mark Podmenik



5. Maxine Podmenik

6. Tammy Carlon

7. Luke Wheatley



Together with Iva Strnadová and the **GeneEQUAL** team.



GeneEQUAL is a program to support people with intellectual disability

- get better health care.