

Surname	Given Name	Year	Title	Program	Abstract
Bennett	Susan N	1999	Speed of information processing and mental retardation	Honours	<p>Individuals of above-average intelligence were compared to mildly retarded individuals on tasks measuring inspection time and responding time. Inspection time has been defined as the shortest stimulus duration needed for reliable responding (Vickers, Nettelbeck and Willson, 1972). Responding time has been defined as the minimum time needed between offset and onset of stimuli for reliable responding. Reaction time was also recorded on the responding task. These measures were calculated from two choice compatible, two choice incompatible and four choice compatible tasks, using the adaptive method (Kirby and Nettelbeck, 1991). Further measures of response initiation time and checking and preparation time were also calculated from the responding time task by subtracting inspection time from reaction time and response initiation time from responding time respectively. It was found that nearly all processing times increased with degree of choice and with stimulus-response incompatibility for both groups. Retarded participants were found to have longer total processing times, inspection times and checking and preparation times, but not longer response initiation times. These results suggest that retarded individuals need longer to correctly identify the stimulus and to check the response and prepare for the next stimulus, but they do not need longer to initiate a response once they have correctly identified the stimulus. It has been suggested however, that retarded individuals may have carried out some stimulus-response translation during stimulus duration, thereby increasing inspection time and reducing response initiation time. The investigation of repetition and alternation effects on error rates revealed a repetition effect for the non-related group on all tasks, with the retarded group showing repetition effects only on the four choice task. No effects of stimulus repetition and alternation on reaction times were found. The effect of errors on pre- and post-error response reaction times was not as expected, with error reaction times generally being slower than pre- or post-error reaction times. It was suggested that the use of the adaptive method for obtaining information processing measures was the reason for the inconsistency with previous findings.</p>

Halstead	Joanne	2002	Factors affecting attitudes of staff towards inclusion of children with additional needs in before and after school care	Honours	<p>The overall aim of this study was to identify factors affecting staff attitudes towards inclusion of children with additional needs in Before and After School Care workers. Sixty-eight participants completed a number of scales pertaining to attitudes towards inclusion of children with additional needs. The study assessed attitudes towards inclusion to determine whether staff attitudes are affected by demographic variables. The study also examined relationships between Job Satisfaction, Organisational Commitment and the Work Environment Scale (WES) and attitudes toward inclusion. The result showed staff had a positive attitude towards inclusion and were willing to care for children with additional needs. The study found no differences in attitudes towards inclusion between specific demographic variables such as months in organization, job title, qualification, employment status, age and months in out of school hours care (OSHC). However, the study found a relatively small difference between males' and females' attitudes towards inclusion although males' attitudes were still positive. There were significant relationships between job satisfaction, organisational commitment, the Work Environment Scale and attitudes. Attitudes towards inclusion were positively associated with higher job satisfaction, greater organisational commitment and aspect of the work environment. The results showed that attitudes, as measured by Attitude Survey, were positively correlated with job satisfaction subscales, affective commitment and work environment subscales. The limitations and implications of the present study were discussed with a recommendation that future research seek to explore the Before and After School context further using actual observations rather than self-reported perceptions of workers.</p>
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Hesseen	Yasmin	2005	The effect of Intensive early intervention on the development of theory of mind in autism	Honours	<p>Theory of mind ability has been a focus of research in autism for the past 20 years. Research has found that theory of mind (ToM) ability is lacking in autism. Several theories have proposed why this might be the case. Such theories have focused on a triad of deficits found in autism and tried to explain these in terms of a missing ToM component. Research has examined differences in VMA, non-VMA, and IQ of children who pass and do not pass test of ToM ability, but it has not examined why children differ on developmental measures that correlate with ToM ability. Informed by theories explaining strengths and deficits in autism and by findings of benefits to development of interventions in autism, this study extended previous research by examining the impact of early intensive one-on-one intervention on the development of ToM in autism. The aim was to compare performance on the Sally-Anne test of ToM among children with autism who had have early intensive one-on-one intervention to performance of children with autism who have not had early intensive one-on-one intervention. A sample of typically developing children was also included. The design requires that the three samples be matched on the personal-Social Domain, Communication Domain, and Cognitive Domain of the Battelle Developmental Inventory (Newborg, Stock, Wnek, Guidubaldi &amp; Svinicki, 1984). However, insurmountable recruitment difficulties resulted in insufficient sample sizes. Only twenty children participated in this study, five with autism who have had intervention, five who have not had intervention and 10 typically developing children. The failure to recruit sufficient participants has severely limited the statistical power of this study to test theoretically desired predictions and to Generalise findings. Nonetheless result from this study have lent support to theories of autism that allow for intensive one-on-one intervention, that delivers general developmental benefits in the areas of language, cognition and behaviour, to impact the development of ToM. Finding provide limited counter evidence to theories that postulate that there is a specific brain type that prevents development of ToM in autism and to theories that postulate a missing ToM mental module in autism.</p>
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Johnston	Brian R	2004	Behaviour management knowledge of carers for the aged and carers for the aged with intellectual disabilities	Honours	<p>The aging population is increasing, and so to is the population of elderly intellectually disabled. Care requirements of the elderly intellectually disabled are hence becoming a prominent issue in helping to establish how to best provide a high quality of care for this particular population. One factor that is considered very important in care delivery for the elderly intellectually disabled is appropriate management of problem behaviours, as this has been shown in several studies to have strong links to the persons' quality of life. The direct care staffs' role in managing problem behavioural is vital in achieving a successful outcome. The study investigates the extend to which staff that provide services for people with intellectual disabilities have the behaviour management skills to continue to provide services for them when they become elderly. The specific goal was to assess the knowledge of carers of the intellectually disabled and carers of the elderly on how to deal with problem behaviours commonly associated with the elderly and intellectually disabled. This study also assessed the frequency with which carers of the intellectually disabled and the elderly encountered these behaviour problems. The sample for this study consisted of a control group of people with no specific training or background in behaviour management, care staff who worked for a nursing home and care staff employed by an institution for the intellectually disabled in Adelaide, South Australia. Data were obtained from participants via their completion of a questionnaire that consisted of two multiple choice components, one associated with behaviour problems in the elderly and one associated with problems concerning the intellectually disabled, and a demographic question sheet. The data gathered from the completed questionnaires were analysed primarily by comparing the responses of carers for the aged with carers for people with intellectual disabilities. It was found that the knowledge of carers for the aged was found to be significantly less that of carers for the intellectually disabled with respect to the behaviour management concerning the intellectually disabled. However, there was no significant difference between the behaviour management knowledge concerning the elderly of the carers for the aged and the carers for the intellectually disabled. While the interpretation of the findings was limited by the fact that only behaviour management knowledge was assessed and not the actual ability to apply behaviour management knowledge, carers for the intellectually disabled were found to be more suited in terms of behaviour management knowledge to the care of the elderly intellectually disabled.</p>
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Opolski	Melissa J	2004	Superachieving, withdrawing, acting-out and parentification: coping styles, stress and wellbeing in a sample of adolescent siblings of people with down syndrome.	Honours	<p>Previous research has established that siblings of people with special needs (such Down syndrome) may experience a wide range of positive and negative effects. It has recently been proposed that investigating the use of effect of the coping strategies used by siblings of people with special needs may play an important part in understanding why siblings experience more positive or more negative effects. Consequently, this study investigated the possible maladaptive effects (in terms of higher stress and lower psychological wellbeing) related to using the so-called ‘prototypical’ coping styles of siblings of people with special needs: parentification (taking on parental role in the family household); withdrawing (removing oneself from stressful situation related to the sibling with special needs); acting-out (drawing attention to oneself in socially unacceptable ways); and super achieving (excelling in activities such as school or sports). In this study, thirty-nine adolescent siblings (22 brothers, 17 sisters) of people with down syndrome completed measures of stress, psychological wellbeing, the use of the four prototypical coping styles, and demographic/family structure information. Overall, the siblings in the sample had fairly low stress, high psychological wellbeing, and did not use high levels of any of the coping styles. The degree to which coping styles were related to maladaptive outcomes appeared to depend on the level of use, rather than simply that the style was used. There were mixed findings regarding relationships between gender and coping outcomes, indicating that may be other variables impacting on these findings. Finally, limited evidence was found to suggest that while having a more complex coping repertoire (using more coping styles) may affect outcomes, and it seems that the specific coping styles within the repertoire are the important factors in what influence multiple coping styles have on sibling outcomes. The result of this study add to the currently limited knowledge about the strategies that siblings of people with special needs use to cope. Further investigation of this nature may provide additional insights into why some siblings of people with special needs experience positive outcomes, while others experience more adjustment problems.</p>
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Rillotta	Fiona	2004	Effects of an awareness program on attitudes of students without an intellectual disability towards persons with an intellectual disability	Honours	<p>Over the past 20 years, there has been much concern about inclusive education where students with an intellectual disability (ID) are educated alongside their same age peers who do not have disability. Research has suggested that mere physical placement is not sufficient for successful inclusion to occur and, in order to promote social acceptance and positive attitudes towards people with an ID, people who do not have an ID should be provided with opportunities to interact with and learn about people with an ID. The current study aimed to test theory that more education, information or training leads to more positive attitudes. Present and past students (N=259; 116 males and 143 females; aged 10 to 25 years) from private colleges in metropolitan Adelaide completed a 38-item questionnaire to measure attitudes. The efficacy of awareness of disability programs (ADPs) was tested by comparing the attitudes of students from a school that has a 3-session ADP (for year 6 students) and 8-sessions ADP (for year 8 students) with controls who did not have such training. Past students who took part in 10-session ADP 8 years ago were also tested and compared to their same age peers, to examine possible long-term effects of the program. The main findings were that those who participated in longer ADP showed more favourable attitudes toward people with an ID than their peers who did not have such education. Additionally, as predicted, an attitude that was presumably formed 8 years prior as a result of ADP persisted over time. Results provide further insight into what makes up a successful integrated educational environment and add to existing issues surrounding inclusion of students with ID in South Australian schools.</p>
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Sheppard	Sarah C	2000	Self-concept, school stress and social support: a comparison of children with and without learning disabilities	B.Health Sc	<p>This study examined the self-concept, school stress and social support of 46 learning disabled students and 97 non-learning disabled students of grades 4, 5 and 6. All participants completed three questionnaires – ‘Self-Perception Profile for Learning Disabled Students’, ‘School Stress Survey’ and ‘My Family and Friends Survey’ under group administration. Students with learning disabilities experienced lower academic self-concept but did not differ from their non-disabled peers in their global self-concept. A difference between the groups was not found for a measure of overall felt school stress. However, a sex and grade differences were found – boys experienced more school stress in grade 4, while girls were more stressed in grade 5 and 6. For social support, both children with and without learning disabilities experienced the most support from people in the home. Additionally, learning disabled students were found to experience less peer support than children without learning disabilities. A significant relationship was also found to exist between self-concept and school stress.</p>
Tsoukalas	Theodora	2003	Predicting length of stay for children and adolescents in South Australian psychiatric inpatient unit: A pilot study	B Sc (Hon)	<p>This study tested whether social supports and family relationship predict length of stay in South Australian child and adolescent psychiatric inpatient unit. Information was obtained from 20 girls and 12 boys, admitted for psychiatric hospitalisation. Their primary caregivers completed two measures assessing the nature of the parent-child relationship and extend of social support. As expected, severity of diagnosis, medication prescribed during admission and discharge, and the number of previous psychiatric admissions, were all found to influence length of hospital stay. However, no evidence was found to support the prediction that length of stay in hospital would be reduced by the level of support received and/or a positive family relationship. In part, this outcome reflected an inadequate sample base and there was evidence of undue influence of outliers. Implications for future studies are discussed.</p>