

# Children in South Africa with and without intellectual disabilities' rating of their frequency of participation in everyday activities

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## Why did we do this study?

We wanted to understand how children with intellectual disabilities (ID) take part in daily activities, compared to children without ID in South Africa. Participation in activities helps children develop skills and friendships. Many studies only ask parents about their children's activities, but parents might see things differently than children.



## How did we do this study?

We got permission from the university, schools, and caregivers to do our study. We chose children aged 10-16 from special and regular schools in Pretoria, South Africa. We used tests to check the children's abilities and then asked them about 20 activities using a picture-based tool. They rated how often they did each activity and how involved they felt. We compared the answers from children with and without ID.

## What did we find?

Children with ID did fewer social and family activities than children without ID. They took part less in preparing meals, religious activities, and community events. They also spent less time with family, at family meals, and doing quiet activities like listening to music. Children with ID did less formal learning at school, personal care, and looking after their health.



## What does this mean?

Children with ID in South Africa do more activities at home with family support. They do less outside the home, like at social or community events, because of issues with transportation or communication. This can limit how much they do on their own, and limit their social skills. Family and cultural factors also play a role, with some parents helping more, which might reduce how much children take part in activities.

## What can we do to help?

To help children with ID do more activities, we need to make sure they have support both at home and in the community. We can help parents understand how to support their children without taking over. We can use tools that are easy for children with disabilities to understand, to help us learn more about what they need and how to include them better.

