



# INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

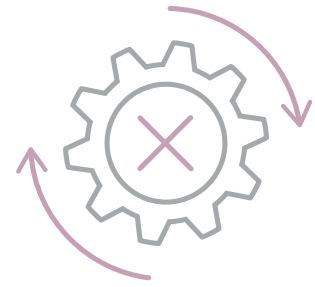
Intellectual disability covers a range of conditions that cause difficulties and differences in a person's intellectual functioning and adaptive skills.

## Intellectual skills

include things such as learning, reasoning, abstract thinking, decision making, attention, concentration, memory, and problem-solving.

## Adaptive skills

include things such as self-care, communication, social and interpersonal skills, academic skills (literacy, numeracy), self-direction, regulation and community living skills.



## TYPES OF INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Some conditions which fall under the intellectual disability category include:

- William's syndrome
- Fragile-X syndrome
- Down syndrome
- Acquired Brain Injury (occurring during the developmental period)
- Rett syndrome
- Prader-Willi syndrome

Depending on their particular condition, it is common for people with an intellectual disability to also have some differences in other areas of functioning such as sensory or physical differences. Physical differences in muscle tone (e.g. low muscle tone), issues with balance, strength, endurance, coordination and motor planning are common.

## POSSIBLE CAUSES

Intellectual disability may be the result of issues during pregnancy or birth, genetic conditions, significant illness and/or environmental factors. Sometimes the cause is unknown.

## DIAGNOSIS

Intellectual disability is diagnosed through an IQ test and tests of adaptive functioning. To receive the diagnosis, difficulties with intellectual and adaptive functioning must be present during the developmental period (childhood or adolescence).

## STRENGTHS

Each individual will come with their own unique strengths, however, in general, people with an intellectual disability can be very supportive and encouraging of others when they achieve something; with support they are generally keen to give new things a try; and they often enjoy the social aspects of a team and finding their own key role in it.

## SUPPORTING THE PERSON AT NETBALL

# 1

### Get to know the person

- Use the 'All About Me' form to better understand the individual and the supports they may need

# 2

### Gain the person's attention

- Make sure you have the person's attention before giving information or demonstrating something: minimise distractions as much as possible, particularly when giving new or important information



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**Allow time**

- Allow the person time to process information and respond (e.g. if you are giving an instruction or asking them a question)

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**Think about how and what you are communicating**

- If the person has communication aids learn to use them / encourage the person to use them
- Use visuals (gestures, pictures, demonstrations, actions etc.) as much as possible to help communicate
- Try to be consistent in the words you use and instructions you give (e.g. what you say to get the group's attention each time)
- If needed, simplify what you are saying; break down information into smaller 'chunks' given one at a time. For example: instead of "line up over there and one at a time pick up the ball and throw it through the hoop"; "okay everyone" [to get attention] "next we're going to line up behind the blue marker (point to marker)" [this is a clearer description with more visual cues] "where are we lining up?" [this is to check understanding] "okay go line up" ... then move onto the next part
- Be honest: if you don't understand what the person is trying to tell you, don't pretend that you do – think about different ways for them to get their message across to you (e.g. can you show me?)

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**Check understanding**

- Check the person's understanding of the information given before continuing (e.g. where do we need to start from? How many turns does each person get?)
- Repeat information as needed

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**Support learning**

- A person with an intellectual disability can continue to learn and develop new skills throughout life with the right support
- Find out how the person learns best – often using visual prompts, gestures, and demonstrations assists with understanding rather than lots of verbal instructions and information
- Break down skills and activities into steps/components to learn one part at a time before putting a bigger sequence together
- You may need to review and practice skills from previous sessions multiple times before moving on to new skills
- Create an environment where people feel able to try new things and that it's okay to make mistakes (e.g. by making mistakes when you demonstrate something and showing that it's okay to try again, by introducing new activities at the group's pace)
- Provide praise/reinforcement for successes (try to be specific about what they did well to help with learning e.g. instead of "great job", "great job waiting for your turn") and praise when the person has tried their best

**THINGS TO REMEMBER**

Each person is an individual and will have different strengths, interests and support needs even when they have the same disability or condition.

**Remember to:**

- Utilise the 'All About Me' form and have a conversation with the person
- Create a culture where the person will feel comfortable asking for assistance if they need it
- Don't worry if you make a mistake, it's all a part of learning
- Small changes will make a big difference

Continues on the next page —



## INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

### Sports Inclusion Australia



[Sports Inclusion Australia website](#) →

### Council for Intellectual Disability



[Council for Intellectual Disability website](#) →

### Down Syndrome Australia



[Down Syndrome Australia website](#) →

### Fragile X Association of Australia



[Fragile X Association of Australia website](#) →

### Prader-Willi Syndrome Australia



[Prader-Willi Syndrome Australia website](#) →

### Rett Syndrome Association of Australia



[Rett Syndrome Association of Australia website](#) →

### Information in this resource card has been adapted from:

- <https://www.inclusionaustralia.org.au/intellectual-disability/what-is-intellectual-disability/>
- Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) - American Psychiatric Association
- The resources listed in the 'interested in learning more' section