

Canadian High School Students' Attitudes and Perspectives Towards People With Disabilities, Autism, and ADHD

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Abstract : Canadian High School Students' Attitudes & Perspectives Towards People With Disabilities, Autism, and ADHD. Objective: To survey Canadian high school students' regarding their attitudes and perspectives towards people with disabilities and explore how age, gender, and personal experience with disability may impact these views. Methods A survey was developed using the standardized Attitude Toward Persons With Disability Scale as its base, with the addition of questions specifically about Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The survey also gathered information about the participants' age and gender and whether or not they, or a close family member, had any disabilities. Participants were recruited at a public Canadian high school by fellow student researchers. Results A total of 219 (N=219) students ranging from 13 - 19 years old participated in the study (m= 15.9 years of age). Gender was equally split, with 44% male, 42% female and 14% undeclared. Experience with disability was common amongst participants, with 25% self-identifying as having a personal disability and 48% claiming to have a close family member with a disability. Exploratory trends indicated that females, and people with self-identified disabilities, and people with close family members with disabilities trended towards having more positive attitudes toward persons with disabilities. This poster will report upon these trends and explore in more depth how personal factors such as age, gender and personal disability status impact high school students attitudes toward persons with disability in general and in regards to Autism and ADHD specifically.

Keywords : disability, autism, ADHD, community research, acceptance, adolescence, high school

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