

Project Ignite (7-22)



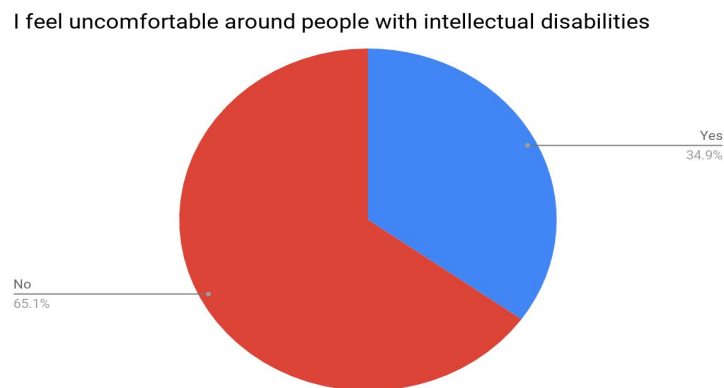
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Section 1: Overview

1. Area of Concern

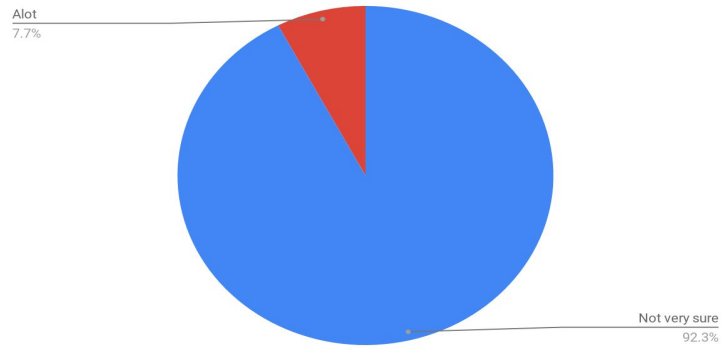
Despite years of awareness raising, intellectual disability remains a commonly misunderstood topic. According to statistics published by the Society for the Physically Disabled (SPD), about 1.5% of Singapore's population has intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorder, showing how People With Intellectual Disabilities (PWIDs) make up a sizeable proportion of our population. Yet, social stigma is prevalent. News articles like The Straits Times' *'Your son has special needs? So do my dogs'* and Channel News Asia's *Couple 'tortured' intellectually disabled waitress, who died after 8 months of abuse* highlight how PWIDs are continually looked down upon, and this may even result in mistreatment.

We conducted a needs analysis to assess people's awareness of intellectual disabilities and our beneficiary, Association for Persons with Special Needs (APSN).

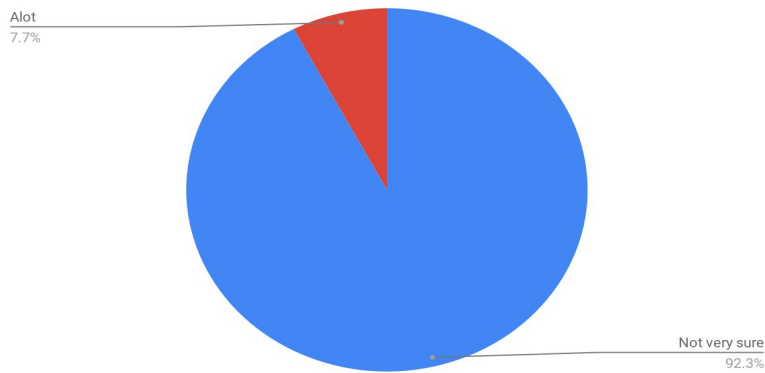


About a third of our respondents expressed that they felt uncomfortable interacting with intellectual disabilities, showing that there is a portion of individuals who are stigmatised against PWIDs.

How much do you know about helping intellectually disabled people?

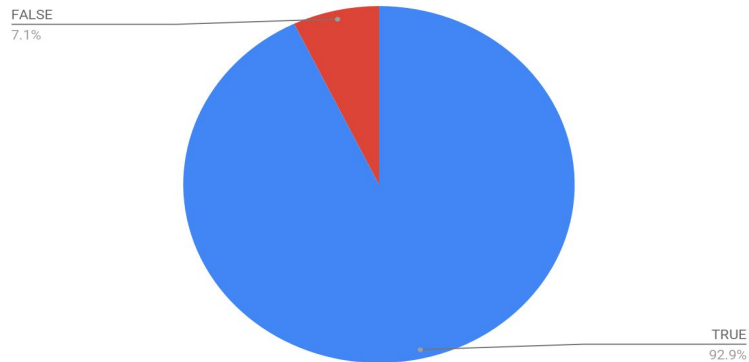


How much do you know about helping intellectually disabled people?



While the most were willing to offer assistance to PWIDs, almost all were unaware of how to help them, showing that people had the right mindset but lacked the knowledge to help them.

I feel that intellectually disabled people face stigma from the public



It was heartening that many were aware of the stigma that PWIDs face from the public, but ultimately this showed the prominence of this problem in our society.

2. Challenges identified

APSN's core vision is to empower lives for an engaged community and inclusive society, which requires a certain level of understanding of the PWIDs. As part of their mission, APSN currently operates many schools and centres, benefitting over 1,200 beneficiaries yearly. However, they could use more resources, and have expressed the need for school supplies like notebooks. The COVID-19 pandemic has also impeded their ability to aid PWIDS, as many of them - particularly younger ones - are unable to concentrate fully for extended periods of time through online platforms.

3. Underlying problem

Given that there is a lack of public awareness about people with intellectual disabilities, and financial and logistical strains for APSN, how might we, as students, help to correct stereotypes and stigma against them and alleviate some of the burdens that APSN might have?

To resolve the underlying problem, we have a two pronged approach, to increase awareness about those with intellectual disabilities, and to help APSN with logistical and financial difficulties.

Section 2: Implementation of Action Plan

Date	Action	Objective(s)
Nov (2019) - Feb (2020)	1. Liaising and communication with APSN 2. Recruitment of Organising Team members and volunteers 3. Applying for the Young ChangeMakers (YCM) grant	- Partnering with APSN to raise awareness - Funding to carry out our events and initiatives
March - May	1. Replacing our events with more online initiatives 2. Preparation of online material and content for online outreach purposes	- Overcoming the limitations posed by COVID-19
June	<u>Awareness Raising Session</u>	Awareness

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-depth introduction to the various intellectual disabilities 2. Shed light on problems PWIDs face in society 3. Clarify any queries and doubts our participants had 4. Hosted a Kahoot quiz to test their knowledge 	
July - Aug	<u>Facts and Myths</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and address the common misconceptions that society has towards PWIDs 2. Content is vetted by APSN before being uploaded to ensure that it is reliable and factual 	Awareness
	<u>APSN stories</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Posted “success stories” and experiences of PWIDs that are/were from APSN 2. Included APSN’s role in helping/empowering them 	
	<u>Online interviews</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Held two online interviews on zoom with professionals who have had experience working with those with intellectual disabilities 2. Asked a series of questions which would enable viewers to gain a deeper understanding of intellectual disabilities 3. Posted the recordings of the interview on our social media page 	Educating the public
	<u>Panel Discussion</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invited a teachers from HCI and special schools, and family members of PWIDs 2. Discussed a large range of issues, such as the sufficiency of resources 3. Uploaded on Youtube 	
Aug	<u>Donation Drive</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partnered with APSN to host a donation drive 2. Collect pre-loved items, such as stationery, books, board games and electronic items from the public 	Helping APSN with logistical burden of student supplies

Section 3: Project Outcomes

1. Accomplishments

We managed to reach out to about **1,000** followers on our Instagram account and provided them greater insights. In addition, we also created **2 hours** worth of online resources. Although we were not able to have much physical activities, we still had a **10 day** donation drive which is still ongoing, which can alleviate financial and logistical issues that APSN might have

2. Reflections

Throughout the project, we have managed to learn more about PWIDs, and how we can be more inclusive towards them. We are grateful for being able to accomplish our proposed plan of action even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, receiving positive responses from the public. In hindsight, we could have activated our OT members for more initiatives to make a greater impact. We ensured the continuity of our project by passing it to the next batch and we will work with them to ensure that the project will continue to make an impact.

3. Scope of Impact

Community Impact: Members of the community could learn more from the online resources that we have posted on many different platforms, and gain an in-depth understanding about those with intellectual disabilities

Involvement of community: We had the participation of the community in our online activities. Through the online awareness raising session, we educated the community about those with intellectual disabilities, allowing them to play their part in building a more inclusive society. Additionally, the donation drive allowed them to positively impact the lives of PWIDs.

Resolution of AOC/UP: We had multiple events to help raise awareness among the public to correct stereotypes and had the donation drive to deal with logistical and financial burdens. With

our initiatives, there are now more online resources available, allowing individuals to contribute towards a more inclusive society

Citations:

Tai, J., & Hui, K. X. (2016, June 29). 'Your son has special needs? So do my dogs'.

Retrieved August 14, 2020, from

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Chelvan, V. P. (2017, December 01). Couple who 'tortured' intellectually disabled waitress jailed. Retrieved August 15, 2020, from

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/annie-ee-tortured-waitress-couple-jailed-9454834>