

Listening to the voices of young people with disability experience

Life experiences particularly in late childhood and adolescence can impact on how young people see themselves in relation to their peers. Dr Spirtos' previous research indicates that although children with physical impairments spend considerable amounts of their childhood in contact with disability services, they can be ill equipped for managing greater autonomy associated with moving into adulthood. Fostering the development of resilience, self-advocacy and an inclusive identity in young people with physical impairments has the potential to positively influence how they will experience new transitions such as employment, further education and romantic relationships.

The impact of the TCD MED Research Award

Dr Spirtos has established a *Disability and Transitions to Adulthood* research team to develop resources to support transitions for both the young people and the service providers working with them. This research award will ensure that the voices of young people with experience of disability are central. In doing this what is

important to them and how transition is experienced, will inform the participatory programmes being developed.

"The Disability and Transitions to Adulthood research team are developing resources to assist young people with disability experience in preparing for adulthood. This award funds a participatory project which will gather the ideas of young people to ensure that their voices are central to the supports being developed."

Dr Michelle Spirtos

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