

PROGRAM 2: THE SCHOOL YEARS

SOCIAL ROBOTICS CLUB





We evaluated a robotics social club to support the inclusion of young people on the autism spectrum in mainstream school environments.

AIM

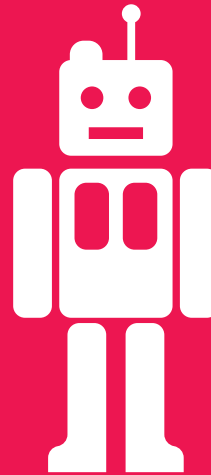


1. Evaluate how the robotics social club promoted:
 - a. peer relationships and academic engagement for students on the autism spectrum, and
 - b. the personal and social capabilities within the Australian Curriculum.
2. Identify effective robotics social club strategies that support the generalisation of students' academic engagement and peer relationships to the classroom.
3. Develop a robotics social club resource kit/manual for schools and individual teachers implementing a robotics social club.

WHO TOOK PART?

-  **19** students on the autism spectrum
-  **18** parents
-  **4** teachers
-  **97** typically developing students including those not in the Robotics Club

HOW WE DID THE RESEARCH



We implemented a **12-week robotics social club intervention** for students on the autism spectrum and their typically developing peers in Years 7 and 8 across two Brisbane Catholic education high schools.

WHO WERE THE RESEARCHERS?



WHAT WE FOUND

The club supported students on the spectrum to demonstrate:



- Increased awareness of social networks and friendship support



- Increased motivation and engagement
(e.g., improved student-student relationships)



- Improvements in personal and social capabilities
(e.g. teamwork, confidence, friendships)



- Improvements in task and technology skills
(e.g., building and programming skills, creativity and problem solving)

For teachers, participation improved their:

- Knowledge about robotics
- Learning and teaching
- Ability to support the students' generalisation of skills to other settings

Specific teaching actions important to the running of the club and were important to be integrated into the delivery of the club included:

- Effective teaching strategies and professional learning processes for applying and generalising the knowledge

FIND OUT MORE

You can get the full report of this study and an executive summary via the Autism CRC Knowledge Centre at www.autismcrc.com.au/knowledge-centre/reports/australian-education-needs-analysis.

You can contact the researchers about this study via:
Dr Beth Sagers Senior Lecturer, QUT
e b.sagers@qut.edu.au

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