



PROGRAM 3: ADULTHOOD: PROJECT 3.030

STUDIO G: A PROGRAM TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM AFTER LEAVING SCHOOL

AIM



1. To learn how the Studio G program helps young people on the spectrum with: (a) joining in socially and making friends, (b) general happiness and confidence, (c) learning new skills, (d) becoming aware of future training and job possibilities, and (e) getting into training courses.
2. To gather feedback on what the students, their family members, and the mentors thought about Studio G.

WHO TOOK PART?



11 Studio G students
aged 17-21 years



12 family
members



7 Studio G mentors
21-30 years

HOW WE DID THE RESEARCH



Students and family members took part in two interviews near the beginning and the end of semester 1, 2015.



Mentors completed fortnightly records on the students' progress and took part in an interview near the end of semester 1, 2015.

WHAT IS STUDIO G?

- Studio G is an Autism Queensland program that supports young people on the spectrum aged 16-24 years, transitioning from school.
- Students work on projects that suit their skills and interests such as game development, animation, graphic design, photography, music, short film making, and creative writing.
- Mentors with skills in these areas support the students to complete their projects.
- The Studio G Program Coordinator helps students to work out what their interests and strengths are, and supports them to move on to training courses or jobs.
- Studio G runs three-hour sessions twice weekly at the State Library of Queensland, Brisbane.

WHO WERE THE RESEARCHERS?



WHAT WE FOUND

HOW DID THE PROGRAM HELP STUDENTS?

STUDIO G WAS FOUND TO HELP THE STUDENTS:



They were motivated to attend the program and very much enjoyed it.



They learned many new skills.



They became more sociable and made new friendships.



They became more aware of study, training, and/or jobs that they could do in the future.



They became happier and more confident.



Two of the 11 students started new courses and are still attending Studio G.

THE FEATURES OF THE PROGRAM THAT WERE MOST HELPFUL WERE:



- Social activities and outings
- Workplace and college visits
- The skillful, friendly and encouraging mentors
- The flexible and supportive place to learn new skills.

FEEDBACK ON THE PROGRAM



- Students, family members, and mentors were very satisfied with the program overall.
- Family members wanted more feedback on the students' progress, and some felt the cost of the program was too high.
- Students had minor concerns about the venue (comfort of chairs, lack of windows, poor internet signal, room changes and noise levels), and some said that they would like more mentors.
- Mentors enjoyed their roles, especially watching the students make progress.
- Sometimes mentors found it difficult to motivate some of the students.
- Mentors wanted more guidelines about their role.

CONCLUSION

Overall, Studio G seems to fulfil an important need for a program to help young people on the spectrum when they leave school. It helps them to make friends, work out what their interests and strengths are, and move on to training courses or jobs.

FIND OUT MORE

Project Leader:

Dr Jill Ashburner

Manager, Research and Development
Autism Queensland

e jill.ashburner@autismqld.com.au

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Autism CRC and the authors wish to sincerely thank the participants in this project for their time and their willingness to share their experiences and perspectives. Without these contributions, the project would not have been possible.