

SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN AN URBAN CONTEXT



Photo by F. GUY

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Introduction

3 September 2024, the temperatures are still high, but it's already back to school time at DIME Aline Renard. Youssef, 12, who was diagnosed with an intellectual disability several years ago, can no longer be educated in an ordinary environment and is making his first time at the DIME. He's happy to be discovering a new place, but a little anxious, regretting that he won't be able to go to his old ordinary school like the other children. He loves football, which he played at club level, and would like to continue doing so. But will this be possible in the new environment he is discovering?

The fictional story of Youssef is the starting point for this academic case study, which analyses the care system provided to children with intellectual disabilities in France, based on the case of one specific place hosting them in the Lyon region: the DIME (Medical and Educational Institute) Aline Renard.

In this case, we begin by providing some general background and more specific information on the definitions of disability and the support provided to children at DIME Aline Renard. We then give an overview of the data used in the case and the theoretical background that is relevant to understanding the issue we address. We then focus on two main perspectives:

- Different conceptions of the relationship with the city for children with Intellectual Disability (ID)
- Identifying favorable or limiting conditions for the inclusion of young people

SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES: INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

International definition of disabilities and intellectual disabilities: disabilities as a system

We begin this case study with some background information on the international definition of disability. This definition has evolved considerably over the course of the 20th century. We have moved from a model in which difficulties were perceived solely from the person's point of view, based on individual limitations, to a model in which disability is produced by interaction with an environment that introduces obstacles for certain people. The World Health Organization (WHO) definition of disability emphasises the role of personal and environmental factors in the production of disability: "Disability results from the interaction between individuals with a health condition, such as cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and depression, with

personal and environmental factors including negative attitudes, inaccessible transportation and public buildings, and limited social support.”¹

We find this definition of disability in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), adopted by the United Nation in 2006, which gives a definition of disability: “Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.” Disabilities as a system has been developed through the PPH model (Fougeyrollas, 1988), with an understanding and explanation of the Disability phenomenon based on the interaction between three conceptual domains: personal factors, environmental factors and life habits. According to this model, “disability is not necessarily a permanent and static state for everyone. Since everything depends on personal factors or the environment in which a person lives, people may see the quality of their social participation improve or deteriorate over time.”²

There are several types of disability, including intellectual disability. The work carried out by INSERM (French National Institute for Health and Medical Research) in France identifies three criteria in the definitions of intellectual disability by the leading international organizations: the World Health Organization (WHO), the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) and the American Psychiatric Association (APA) with the DSM-5:

- the finding of deficits in intellectual functions such as reasoning, problem solving, planning, abstract thinking, judgement, academic learning, experiential learning and practical understanding.
- significant limitations in adaptive behavior in general, i.e. in the conceptual, social and practical skills learned to function in everyday life.
- the appearance of these intellectual deficits and adaptive limitations during the developmental period (INSERM, 2013)

Nowadays, intellectual disability is included in neurodevelopmental disorders, classified into six groups: intellectual, communication, autism, attention deficit hyperactivity, motor, and specific learning disorders (DSM-5).

For young people with intellectual disabilities, there is the issue of access to education and schooling. At international level, the UN Convention recommends the social participation of pupils with disabilities in the community and the classroom (United Nations, 2006). There is an international trend towards including young people in mainstream schools and classes (Garrote, 2017). However, what is the situation in France?

¹https://www.who.int/health-topics/disability#tab=tab_1

²<https://ripph.qc.ca/en/hdm-dcp-model/definition-of-handicap/>

Care for young people with intellectual disabilities in France: from segregation to inclusion

We can outline three stages in the attention devoted to children with disabilities in France:

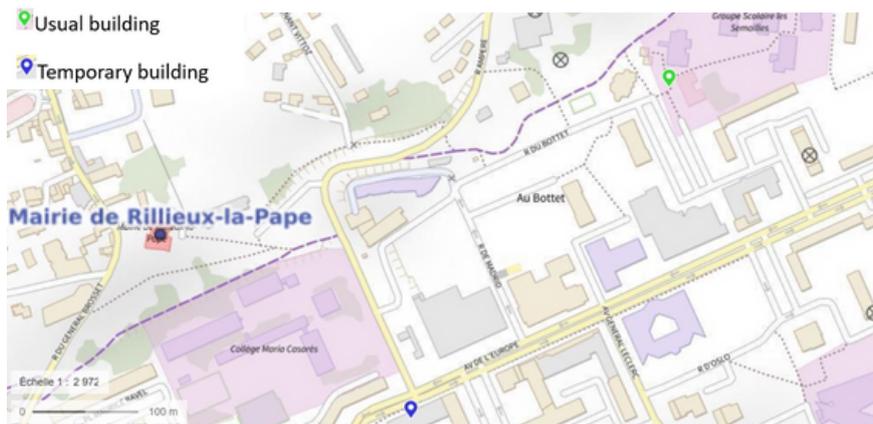
- before the 70s: segregation = in this model, children with disabilities are separated from others and educated in specialized institutions
- Between the 70s and 90s: integration = in this model, there is no longer any separation, but children with disabilities must adapt to society.
- After the 90s: inclusion = it is up to society to adapt to the specific needs of children with disabilities

A study by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education shows that France has a 'multitrack approach': some young people with disabilities are still educated in specialized schools, while others are in ordinary schools, in both specialized and ordinary classes. Other countries belong more to the 'one-track approach', with few specialized schools and ordinary classes. On the other hand, there are countries with a 'two-track approach', with many specialized institutions. Although this study rather dated, France's position between the two approaches is still relevant today (EADSNE, 2003).

DIME Aline Renard in the Lyon region

The DIME is located in the city of Rillieux-la-pape, in the north of Lyon metropole. The city had 31 247 inhabitants in 2021 and faced many social and economic difficulties such as poverty (25 % /14,4 % in France), high unemployment rate (11,2 % /9,1 % in France), high rate of single-parent families (23,6 % / 17,1% in France). A major urban renewal program is underway, and the town is undergoing works.

The DIME is currently located in a fairly central location but relatively remote from the main roads and shops. It is located in a residential area right next to a school. The building has a surface area of 1200 m² and will be completely renovated in 2023/2024. The building was unusable at the time and the facility was relocated approximately 500 meters away.



DIME between two locations photo by F. GUY

Despite the proximity, there have been several major changes:

- a significant reduction in the surface area of the building, since the temporary buildings have a surface area of 270 m²
- unsuitability of the building, which was the former commercial building of a bank
- a much more visible location, on an avenue and in immediate proximity of shops (Usual and temporary building : analysis of two entrances)



Usual and temporary building: analysis of two entrances. These two pictures show the usual building (left) and the temporary one (right). We can see that the usual building is surrounded by a court, while the other opens directly into the street, photos by F. GUY

DIME Aline Renard is a specialized institution where children and young people with mental disabilities can stay during the day or at nighttime according to their needs.

Young people are welcomed at DIME in three ways:

	Public	Capacity	Age
Accommodation / boarding school	ID	12	6-14
Day care	ID	24	6-14
Others services	All deficiencies	30	6-20

In this case, we focus on day care, which is organized in several groups according to the age of the children:

- 6-10 years old group
- 11-13 years old group
- 13-16 years old group

A typical day in day-care is organized as follows:

9am: Arrival by public transport organized by the institution or by the families.

9.15am: Welcoming session for each group, with ritual questions: how am I doing? Do I have anything to share? Overview of the day and activities

9.15-11.30am: School time, either in an outsourced class (in an ordinary school or collège), or in an internal class. In both cases, the teacher is made available by the Education Nationale for DIME. In day classes, the children do not mix with other pupils. Depending on their individual progress, young people may join a mainstream class from time to time.

11.30am - 1.30pm: Lunch in the school canteen, in the collège self-service restaurant, or in the school itself.

1.30 p.m.-4p.m.: Cross-curricular activities in the educational, pedagogical and therapeutic fields through sport, culture and leisure activities.

3.45pm: Collective return to say goodbye

4pm: Escort to the gate



Visual tools to help you find your way around the day. In the DIME, young people can use this visual tool to find their way through the day. Under each photo, pictograms indicate the activities in the order in which they take place, photo by F. GUY.

Professionals work either directly (educators, teachers, house mistresses, psychomotor therapists, psychologists, neuropsychologists, speech therapists, nurses, psychiatrists) or indirectly (service agents, secretaries, management) for the children.

All children welcomed at the DIME come from the Rhône region, and more specifically from different cities around Lyon.

The institutional project identifies 10 direct objectives:

1. Promoting, maintaining and developing social life
2. Promoting, maintaining and developing links with family and friends
3. Exercising one's rights
4. Promoting, maintaining and developing access to leisure activities and culture
5. Live your emotional and affective life
6. Supporting, maintaining and developing daily life
7. Make appropriate decisions and ensure his/her safety

8. Developing learning and managing professional life
9. Maintaining and looking after your health
10. Encouraging, maintaining and developing communication

According to the topic of the case, we focus on two of these above-mentioned objectives, such as described here:

- 4. Promoting, maintaining and developing access to leisure activities and culture*
- Develop links between people receiving support and cultural and sporting associations (enrolment in physical activity clubs where possible, joint activities with community centers, participation in cultural events, etc.)
 - Offering in-house cultural and sporting activities (photography, cinema, cycling, etc.)
 - Helping children sign up for cultural and artistic activities
 - Helping children to enroll in libraries and media libraries in their environment

Here, we can notice the expression “enrolment in physical activity clubs where possible”: it means that it is sometimes not possible and that, for example, the wish of Youssef to practice football, in the introduction text, will maybe not be easy to grant.

- 8. Developing learning and managing professional life*
- Maintaining access to schooling
 - Support schooling in an ordinary environment
 - Develop inclusion according to possibilities
 - Work on the student's attitude
 - Work on a vocational project in line with their interests
 - Supporting the transition to new areas of schooling
 - Develop research and work placements in the ordinary and/or sheltered sectors according to opportunities
 - Helping students to lead their own lives

Here also, we can notice that “inclusion” and the education in ordinary schools depends on the possibilities of the children.

THE APPROPRIATION OF THE CITY BY YOUNG PEOPLE RECEIVING DIME SUPPORT

In France, social policies on disability advocate inclusion, particularly since the law on 'equal rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship for people with disabilities' (Law 2005-102 of 11 February 2005). As far as young people are concerned, we have moved from a segregation model to an exclusion model and then to an inclusion model. From a more general point of view, disability policies aim to recognize how the environment, through its maladjustment, is a vector of obstacles that create disability. But these changes take time and encounter obstacles. In this context:

- What are the obstacles and levers to an inclusive use of the city by children with intellectual disabilities?
- How do children with disabilities make the city their own? How can we understand their relationship with space?
- Do social workers make it easier to take ownership of the city and develop spatial skills?

A GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE EXPERIENCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ID

This case study is based on data collected as part of a research project. This is primarily qualitative data collected using the following methodology:

- Immersion in the place: Observations were made during several activities: class time and "learning bus" time. This is an activity when the educators and psychologists take the bus with the young people to work on social skills. They teach them how to find their way around the transport system, as well as appropriate and inappropriate behavior.
- Individual and collective (focus group) interviews with various stakeholders: educators, teacher, director, municipal disability officer
- 4 workshops with children:



Methodological framework, by F. GUY.

This methodology addresses some specific issues:

To gather the voice of people with communication difficulties (non-verbal): The main difficulty concerns the communication difficulties of young people. In the teenager group, some of them cannot speak and others have very strong communication difficulties. To have access to their thoughts, I³ used pictograms, but these were too symbolic and not easy enough. I am now working with pictures which prove to be more adapted.

It is also an issue because there is a risk for the professionals to step into the shoes of the young people. Sometimes, they told me “she wants to say that...”.

To gather feelings and feedbacks from people that are not able to name them because of intellectual disability: After a discussion with the psychologist, it was very clear for me that some of the teenager were not able to identify and name their feelings. They are learning this process and the research will be part of this learning process.

The main theoretical perspective used in this case is a “social geography” perspective with the overall aim of identifying the interweaving of social and spatial relationships. The aim is to understand how the relationship to space reproduces forms of domination, in this case for young people with ID. We refer to the concept of place (Cresswell, 2004) that combines:

- Locations, as physical spots on the surface of the planet where things exist.
- Locale that refers to “the material setting for social relations—the actual shape of place within which people conduct their lives as individuals”.
- Sense of place means “the subjective and emotional attachment people have to place”.

To summarize, we can say that when people make space their own, when they give it a name for example, it becomes a place. **We focus here on this conceptual approach in order to understand how children with ID can build their own place, including sense of place.**

Here, we are combining the social geography approach with the concept of self-determination defined in a more psychological approach, in studies focusing on children with ID. Self-determination is defined by Wehmeyer as “acting as the primary causal agent in one's life and making choices and decisions regarding one's quality of life free from undue external influence or interference” (Wehmeyer, 1992). In this model of self-determination, people need to be offered opportunities to develop their attitudes and intrinsic capacities, which will translate into convictions that they can make decisions and choices in order to exercise personal or shared control in the areas of their lives that they consider important. In our case, going outdoors and choosing activities are opportunities to put these skills to work. As we read on, we can ask ourselves: **what is it about the environment and people's representations of it that can encourage self-determination?**

³This research was carried out by a researcher, the author of this document, in close collaboration with DIME management.

DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CITY FOR GETTING TO KNOW THE CITY FOR CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (ID), A VARIETY OF APPROACHES

The professionals

Here we will first identify the different stakeholders and how they perceive the place of children with ID in the city.

The stakeholders on which the case is based are: social workers, psychologists, municipal agent in charge of health and disability. It is important to note that certain points of view have not been taken into account because of the methodology used, particularly those of care professionals and young people's families.

Openness to the outside world and the relationship with the city is approached through access to education. When I asked the question about access to the outside world in interviews with the headmistress or professionals, the first thing I heard was access to secondary school. It is primarily through the prism of access to mainstream schools that openness and frequentation of the city is envisaged.

On closer examination, however, the views of the professionals are not homogeneous, and the survey has brought out specificities in the way they approach the question of appropriation of space and inclusion. Let's start with a short bus journey:

I arrive at the DIME for a period of observation of the 'Social Skills' workshop, dedicated to learning how to get around. The two professionals in charge of the afternoon were Jacques, an educator, and Thomas, the establishment's psychologist. Thomas has prepared a paper itinerary (Appendix: paper itinerary for the social skills sequence) and we set off with four young people. The itineraries were handed out to the young people, who did not look at them, if at all. We left the school and Thomas designated a young person to take us to the bus stop. This young person takes up a position in front of the group and we follow him. There's a bus stop on either side of the street, so Thomas asks the young man which stop to take and shows him the direction on the itinerary. He pointed out the direction on the route and told them to look at the bus stop. While waiting for the bus, some of the young people walk around the stop, playing with their bags, and Jacques points out that this behavior is not appropriate.

Throughout the journey, which lasts about thirty minutes, Thomas invites the young people to observe the environment, the stops that are indicated on the bus sign... Once we arrive at the designated point, we wait for the bus and take it back in the other direction (Observation of a learning bus time).

In this observation extract, we can see two ways of understanding young people's relationship with space. For the psychologist, Thomas, it's more a case of learning how to find your way around, how to get around using public transport. For the educator, Jacques, it's more a question of behavior, as he explained during the focus group:

Jacques: [...] it's true that in social skills with the psychologist, it's really something we've been able to work on in terms of what's appropriate and what's not. How can we react if someone looks at me insistently, but also how can we, as disabled children, avoid looking at people strangely? (Interview with Jacques, educator)

While professionals work on children's relationship with the city from the point of view of mobility and social skills, the more emotional relationship between children and space is difficult for professionals to understand, as this interview extract shows:

Researcher: Does Rilleux-la-pape mean anything to them?

Headmistress: Well, it's tricky with these populations because I'm not sure they have... it's too... too broad a subject... You ask them this question... They can't give you an answer, it's too graphic, too abstract, it's too abstract or, for the most part, they come because they want to go to school. (Interview with the Headmistress)

In discussions with the psychologist of the DIME, the difficulty children have in expressing their own emotions was also mentioned. According to him, some children tend to repeat what others say. However, the 4 workshops conducted with the children revealed certain preferences and the ability to express choices.

Children – their feelings about the city

The workshops held with the young people revealed a number of things, starting with an interest in the issue of location. The different media used (Appendix) enabled young people to express themselves and reveal their preferences and choices, both individually and collectively. Here is a list of the different places that were identified by children as being their favorite places, or places that they particularly like.

Places	Type of place	Picture workshop 2 (internet)	Picture workshop 3
Market	Shops		<i>Not retained, young person absent for the second workshop</i>
Action	Shops		
Bike room	Sports and leisure facilities		<i>No photo at the time of workshop 2</i>
Park	Sports and leisure facilities		
DIME	Institutionnal place		
Swimming pool	Sports and leisure facilities		<i>No photo at the time of workshop 2</i>
Pizzeria	Restaurant		

Summary of places mentioned by young people by F. GUY.

These different places - shops, sports and leisure facilities, restaurants - are places that are usually frequented and enjoyed by teenagers.

The four workshops held with the young people showed a strong commitment to thinking about space and places. When they talked about their emotions, the young people were able to express a very individual relationship with places. This was the case for certain places that were mentioned by only one young person, such as the Action shop, which was mentioned by one child. He explained that he really liked going there to look at toys, especially cars. The case of the swimming pool is also interesting. While most of the emotions evoked in this place are positive (joy), one of the young people clearly expresses an emotion that contrasts with that of the others: fear. He went on to explain that he couldn't swim, which might explain his fear. In the park, too, the children express their preferences: one prefers the swing, another the spider, another the trampoline. The discussions show that certain games are attributed to the 'little ones' and are denigrated by the older children. Discussions with the children about this everyday space showed that the space was genuinely shared, organised according to age and preference. Here, young people are able to make choices and express their preferences.

The two tours carried out with the young people also enabled us to gather more spontaneous impressions, such as one young person who exclaimed in front of a painted wall, «it's beautiful!" So, even if the relationship with the city is an abstract notion, asking the young people about the places and going through them with them allows them to express their emotions and individual appreciation. At the end of the last session, the feedback session, the head of the school was positively astonished by their interest in the project.

Crossing the perspectives of professionals and young people

It is interesting to note that the places mentioned by children are not necessarily the places mentioned by the professionals. For example, when I asked the professionals in the focus group about children's relationship with the city, the discussion quickly turned to the question of the secondary school. When we talk about the outside world, professionals immediately think of schools outside the DIME where young people spend time, with the aim of inclusion. For example, the teacher recounts an anecdote: on leaving school, one of the young people from DIME was called out as a 'schoolboy'. The young person repeated 'I'm a schoolboy', which for her showed how important being at school was to him. Although access to secondary school is important for inclusion, it is also essential to consider their own relationship with the city.

Through the question of the places that young people like, we also perceived the question of choice. Here we focus on the place chosen by one young person, whom we'll call Yanis, who from the very first workshop said that his favorite place was 'the bike room'. When we went there to photograph him, he explained that he would like to open the bike room more often. During the return visit, he also mentioned the code that locks the lock and to which he would like to have access. We then understood that he would like to cycle more often and have freer access to this room. By questioning the places and the emotions associated with them, we bring to light the question of rules of access and choice.

IDENTIFYING FAVORABLE OR LIMITING CONDITIONS FOR THE INCLUSION OF CHILDREN

In our research, we identified several favorable conditions to encourage openness to the outside world and the inclusion of young people with intellectual disabilities: institutional support for this approach, numerous external partnerships (schools, but also cinemas, youth clubs, community centers, media libraries, etc.).

What really stood out as an opportunity to open up the establishment to the outside world was the change of building which took place in 2023 / 2024. On several occasions during the interviews and observations, the professionals spoke of this situation in which 'they had no choice' but to relocate their activities outside the facility, in particular because the buildings were too small:

Headmistress: So, this year we've been invited to take part in the Primary School Council meeting.

Researcher: When you say this year, is it because of being in this building ?

Headmistress: I think so, I think that because we're there more often at the ordinary school, we're seen more and we're not forgotten. Hm, because before, we were really out of step. They'd arrive at 9.15am and leave at 10.45am. There wasn't necessarily... there wasn't any time, even informal, where they could bump into each other and talk. At first they were worried, but then they realised that our young people are actually very nice. And that in the end there's a lot to do with them. So now, it's not just our teachers who come to us, it's the others who come to us and say 'ah Ben, I've got this project'. You might be interested in what we could do together'. Yeah, so that's nice.

(Interview with the Headmistress)

During the focus group, the following exchange goes in the same direction. The size of the temporary building, much smaller than the usual building, meant that the youth workers had to do more things outside with the young people:

Jacques: Going to college... That's something we did last year, because we had no choice. We took all the teenagers to secondary school. We didn't say to ourselves, "Is this going to work or not?" We all went and then it...

Headmistress: Did this particularity break down any barriers for you?

Educator: Yes, maybe, yes...

Headmistress: Before we did this, there were young people like Anaïs who you'd never have... at school you'd say 'Oulala, Oulala, Oulala'. And last year's experience also showed that Nora would never have gone to college. You didn't have a choice, it showed you that she's what she's but she's managed not too badly. You made all the adaptations possible, but she still went to secondary school. (Focus group with professionals of the DIME)

Reading this extract, we understand that the educators were pushed out by a building that was too small and unsuitable. There are normally classrooms in the usual building, but not in the temporary one, therefore they were "forced" to bring children to the ordinary school. The question then is why is it necessary to wait until this extreme situation arises for inclusion to take place, and why do the educators need to 'have no choice' in order to take the young people outside?

Three possible answers emerge from the research:

- Going outdoors represents a risk for the educators, who tend to talk about the vulnerability of young people and the fact that their behavior is not adapted to the outdoors.
- This risk-taking is compounded by urban planning, which is described as unsuitable. The educators mention, for example, the presence of cars, pavements that are not very wide and, more generally, signs that are not suitable for people who cannot read.
- This risk-taking is also a risk of stigmatisation, as in the example described by Patricia, a social worker, who described this situation during the focus group, in response to an open question about young people's relationship with the city:

Patricia : Then I think about last year, you know, Jack, he's a boy with epilepsy and last year he was wearing a helmet. So he was at boarding school and in the evening we went shopping in a big supermarket. And so it's the way other people look at him that's difficult. Because when he went to the checkout, a young girl walked past him and looked at him, saying 'What's wrong with that guy with that thing on his head? And he looked at me and I didn't answer. So I went over, didn't say anything, he didn't mention it again, but I felt really uncomfortable. I wanted to intervene with this young girl, but I didn't because we were in a supermarket. (Focus group with professionals of the DIME)

There are also more institutional limitations, for example regarding partnership. The various observations made at DIME revealed the existence of many partnerships, as mentioned above. However, these seem to be linked to individual affinities and not always shared by the team. For example, certain partnerships are always mentioned in connection with a particular professional and the educators I work with systematically tell me 'XX is in charge'. This can be seen, for example, during the first pathway followed with the young people. The youth worker who accompanied us and who mentioned a partnership with the garden didn't seem to know much about the project and explained that it was being handled by another college.

Finally, the limitations in terms of the representations of educators and the institution must not mask more structural limitations. For example, if we go back to access to sport and leisure activities, which is present in the DIME's project and in the situation presented at the beginning of the case, this is not so easy. The town's health and disability officer, whom we interviewed, explained that some facilities are still reluctant to welcome young people with disabilities:

Interviewee: They [the sports clubs] say that they're not trained to support this type of public, it would be too complex to implement in their workshops and that... that's about it. So they don't have the skills, they don't know how to do it and it could actually cause problems for the rest of the group too. In sport, from a certain age onwards, there's also a notion of competitive sport, even if we're developing the issue of leisure sport as a means of self-fulfillment rather than a competitive activity. So there's also this complexity that sometimes comes up, when you get to certain age levels and you're involved in competitive sport, the impact that integrating one or two disabled children can have on the team and the group. (Interview with municipality officer)

	Helpful to achieving the objective	Harmful to achieving the objective
Internal origin	<p>Strength</p> <p>Institutional will A large number of partnerships</p>	<p>Weakness</p> <p>Inclusion approach focused on access to college Difficulty in taking young people's choices and wishes into account Fear of risk, support focused on protection</p>
External origin	<p>Opportunities</p> <p>Moving to smaller building Opportunity to showcase the expertise of professionals and young people Community willing to listen</p>	<p>Threats</p> <p>Stigmatisation / other people's views Denial of access to certain facilities unsuitable facilities</p>

The conditions for inclusion and openness to the outside world (SWOT analysis), photo by F. GUY.

This case helps us to understand the daily life in a place hosting children with ID. We identify the limits and favorable conditions of inclusion and debates that occur in this field. The main lessons are to be learned at different levels:

- Educational level: the diversity of approach of relation to space between children and professionals shows the importance of taking into account young people's emotional relationship with space, even if it is difficult to grasp. Allowing young people to question the places they like and where they want to go is an opportunity to contribute to their self-determination.
- Institutional level: despite a real institutional desire to open young people up to the city, it seems necessary to share partnerships and enable educators and young people to put forward their expertise in favor of an inclusive city.

In real-world social work practice, it shows the necessity of taking greater account of people's choices and their relationship with space even when they don't seem to fit in with what is socially expected.

At the end of this case, a key question emerges: how can an institution like DIME and its professionals contribute to the development of the city? The research revealed real expertise in the needs of children and the obstacles that persist in the city. This expertise is taken into account, as DIME took part, for example, in the town of Rilleux-la-Pape's reflections on the redevelopment of a playground, which was rebuilt taking inclusive criteria into account.

However, this expertise could be shared more widely. The town hall is prepared to receive more feedback from DIME professionals. But this is not an obvious role for the educators: their work focuses primarily on the children and not on the transformation of the urban space. One youth worker asked, 'Should the city adapt to young people? Or the opposite? As far as I'm concerned, it's the other way round: we teach young people to adapt. When asked about the possibilities they had for transforming the urban environment, the youth workers explained that they brought things to the attention of their managers, but that that was the end of their mission. As they are so close to the children and their needs, aren't educators in the best position to defend an urban space that is suitable for everyone? Couldn't support for young people with disabilities include more collective action to promote an inclusive city?

If we go back to the situation at the beginning of the document, it is clear that Youssef's path to joining the football club and going to secondary school will not be an easy one. However, this case shows concrete ways of helping to remove the obstacles identified: even if it is not self-evident, the educators can encourage him to express his wishes, and work with him to see what the possibilities are. If there is resistance on the part of the football club, the partnership work undertaken with the local authority could help to train the club manager and remove the barriers in terms of his representations.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Key learning objectives and the main lessons that students or readers can take away from the case:

- understanding the debates surrounding the care of young people with disabilities in France
- understanding how a place for young people with disabilities fits into its urban environment
- understanding how young people with disabilities develop their relationship with urban space, and what hinders and encourages them to explore it

The knowledge gained can be applied in real-world social work practice on this fields of practice:

For professionals working with young people with disabilities:.

- This case study can help to raise awareness of an unthought-of aspect of support: the relationship with the city outside school. It shows the value of questioning young people and taking an interest in their own relationship with the city in order to anchor practice in the environment.
- This case study can also help to combat certain stereotypes by showing that, given the means, young people can express themselves about the places they love.
- This case study can contribute to become aware of the role of advocacy in bringing up and listening to the specific needs of young people in terms of urban development.

For urban planning professionals and urban stakeholders, this case study can also be used to raise awareness of the issue of exclusion of people with disabilities and to encourage the participation of professionals and young people in urban decision-making.

OUTCOMES AND SOLUTIONS(FOR THE TEACHERS)

a) What are the viewpoints of the various stakeholders?

There are differences of opinion between professionals, with some focusing on mobility and others on social adaptation.

We can also identify differences in viewpoints between professionals and young people. For professionals, openness to the outside world is centred on school, whereas for young people it is much more complex, involving a multitude of places.

b) What points of tension can be identified in this case?

The way disability is understood and how environmental factors are taken into account. While the PPH model advocates taking environmental factors into account and therefore adapting the environment, some actors believe that young people should adapt to the environment.

The concept of self-determination is also under debate in this case. As far as openness to the outside world and relationships with the environment are concerned, professionals consider the outdoors to be a high-risk area.

c) How the place can have an impact on support for young people with disabilities?

Here students are encouraged to take an interest the physical and material dimensions but also the relations between stakeholders in the city. In this case, the place is in the original situation of a move. This allows us to identify how the building plays a role in the way in a place for young people with disabilities fits into its urban environment, through :

- *location: the location of the place is more or less central and more or less hidden. A location directly on the street provides greater visibility and more links with the environment (shops, etc.).*

- *architecture and available space: a smaller venue that is less suited to accommodating young people may make it more attractive for them to stay away from the venue. This is one of the main results of this case study: when the space is unsuitable and solutions have to be found, certain barriers are removed.*

d) What are the relations between DIME and the structures of the municipality? How could they develop?

These relationships exist and partnerships are being forged. However, two limitations have been identified in this case:

- *on the part of DIME, the role of advocacy is not sufficiently considered by the educators. For them, this role is more the responsibility of the centre's management, even though they have in-depth knowledge of young people's needs.*
- *Outside structures: certain stereotypes continue to exist, with reticence about welcoming young people with disabilities into sports facilities, for example.*
- *This calls for more in-depth work on the issue of inclusion, bringing together all the players involved.*

Further reading :

Wehmeyer, M. L. (1992). Self-determination and the education of students with mental retardation. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation*, 27(4), 302-314.

Holt, L. (2011). *Geographies of Children, Youth and Families An International Perspective*. => Part 4 : **Institutional Spaces** 16. Tears and Laughter at a Sure Start Centre: Preschool Geographies, Policy Contexts *by John Horton and Peter Kraftl* 17. Social and Educational Inequalities in English State Schools: Exploring the Understandings of Urban White Middle Class Children *by Sumi Hollingworth, Katya Williams, Fiona Jamieson and Phoebe Beedell* 18. De/re-institutionalising Deafness through the Mainstreaming of Deaf Education in the Republic of Ireland *by Elizabeth S. Mathews* 19. 'The Teachers seemed a bit Obsessive with Health and Safety': Fieldwork Risk and the Social Construction of Childhood *by Victoria Ann Cook*

Rieger, J. (2023) *Design, Disability and Embodiment Spatial Justice and Perspectives of Power*.

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APPENDIX : PAPER ITINERARY FOR THE SOCIAL SKILLS SEQUENCE

1. Je marche jusqu'à l'arrêt du C5

1. I walk to the bus stop

2. Je regarde dans combien de temps il arrive

2. I'll see How soon it arrives

3. J'attends le bus

3. I wait for the bus

4. Je monte à l'avant du bus

4. I get on at the front of the bus

5. Je valide mon ticket

5. I validate my ticket

6. Je regarde si mon ticket est validé

6.1 check if my ticket is validated

7. Je m'assois sur une place libre ou me tiens debout en tenant la barre

7. I sit on a free seat or stand at the bar

8. J'écoute mon arrêt ou je regarde

8. I listen to my stop Or I look

9. J'appuie sur le bouton de demande d'arrêt avant l'arrêt final

9. I press the stop button before the final stop.

10. Je descends du bus

10. I get off the bus

Mon itinéraire du Jeudi 20 juin 2024

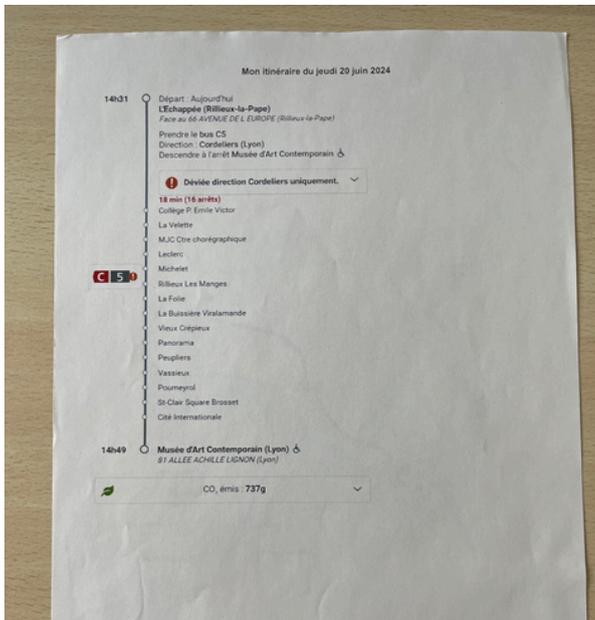
14h31

Départ : Achille-Flex
L'Échappée (Bibliothèque de la Poste)
Point de départ : AVENUE DE L'EUROPE (Rue de la Poste)
Prendre le bus C5
S'installer : Cordeliers (Lyon)
Descendre à l'arrêt Musée d'Art Contemporain

14h49

Musée d'Art Contemporain (Lyon)
ET ALLEZ ACHILLE LAGANON (Lyon)

CO, 4min 737g



APPENDIX : TOOLS USED TO TALK WITH CHILDREN ABOUT THEIR EMOTIONS

