

# Transition to adulthood of people with intellectual disabilities

Natalia Postek

University of Vienna

Department of Education

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# Experiences of (Non-)Participation in the (Vocational) Biography of People with Intellectual Disabilities

- Since 1993 Austrias educational system is changing from special school structures to inclusive education structures.
- For persons with intellectual disabilities special provision sectors such as occupational therapy and sheltered workshops still dominate the labour market.
- Austrian Science Fund (FWF) research project number P20021
- Project duration: 1.2.2008 – 31.1.2013
- Staff: Gottfried Biewer (principal investigator)
- Helga Fasching (postdoc researcher)
- Oliver Koenig (predoc researcher)
- Natalia Postek (predoc researcher)



# People with intellectual disabilities

- Are seen as „children“
- Exclusion through systems in the society like:
  - school
  - work
  - leisure
  - relationships
  - sexuality



# Subjective view?

- Few data about views of young people with intellectual disabilities concerning f.e. school, work, health, political views or leisure activities in Austria
- No data about views on adulthood of young people with intellectual disabilities in Austria
- Adolescence seems not to exist for people with intellectual disabilities (see f.e. Shepperdson 2001)

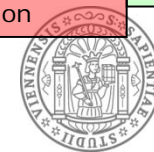
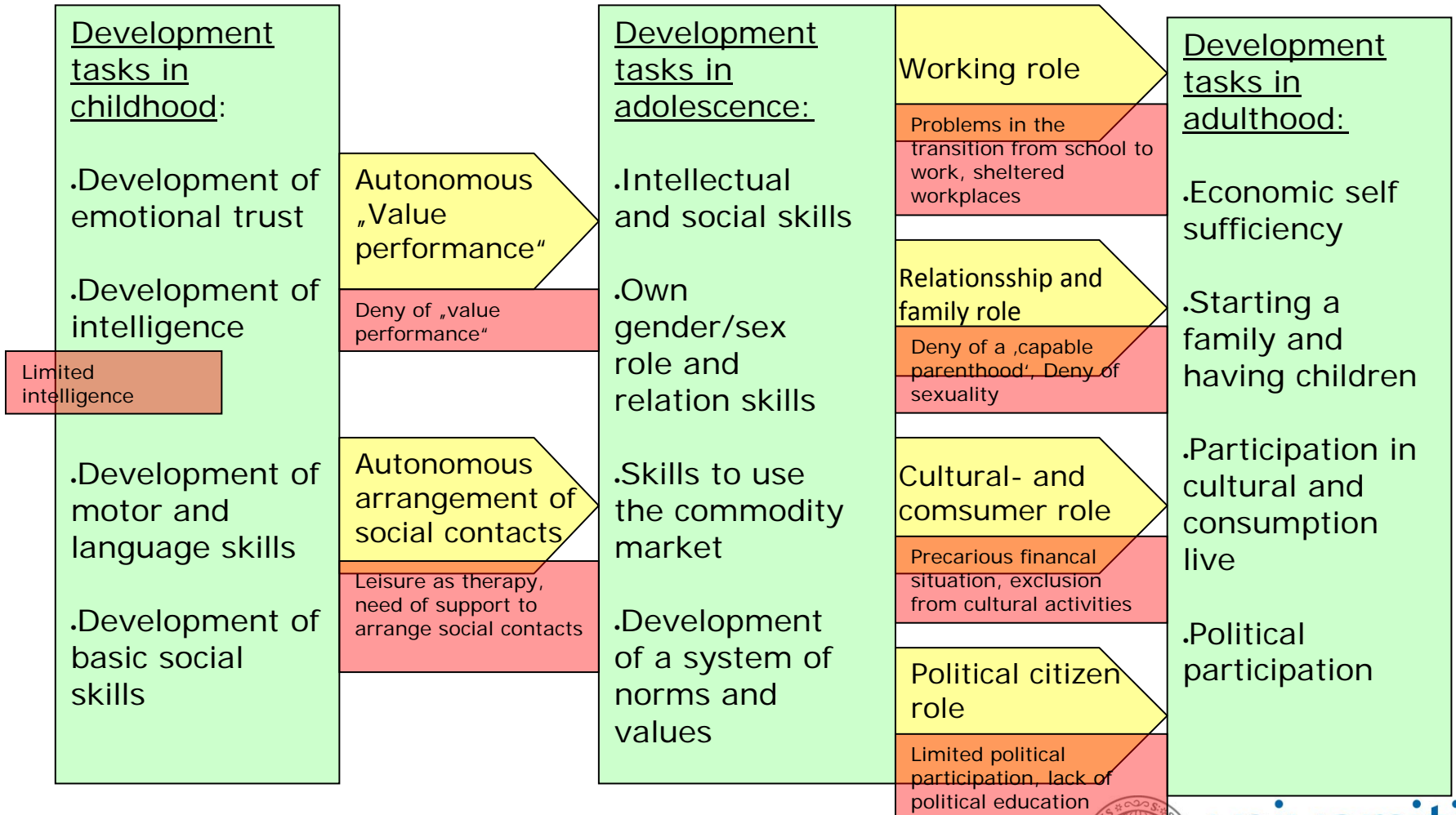


# Transition to adulthood

- Transition to adulthood should be (see Hurrelmann 1995):
  - the working role
  - the interactive relationship role
  - cultural- and consumer role
  - active citizenship
- “Patchwork identity” (Jung 2000)
- Disability as “Master status” (Davies & Jenkins 1997)



# Development tasks in 3. phases of live and status passages (Hurrelmann)



# Research Questions

- **Development and recognition of an identity as an adult**
  - Perspectives towards a „normal life“
  - Role of disability
  - Impact of social inclusion (work, leisure, etc.)
  - Other contributing factors



# Methodology

- Constructivist Grounded Theory Methodology (Charmaz) in reconstructing experiences of participation and exclusion
- Method of collecting data: biographical interviews with young people with intellectual disabilities





# Research Sample

- 10 young people with intellectual disabilities (Between 17-30 years old)
- Parents are active in the community
- Majority in inclusive education structures
- Majority in vocational training or work



# First theses

- A „new generation“?
- Shaping the „future space“
- „Motivational management“?
- Navigating different social addresses



# First theses

Leisure activities with friends without disabilities

To be proud of something

To earn money

appreciation

work

Family system

Images of adulthood

Being independent

To know about your strengths

Take responsibility

Have key competences

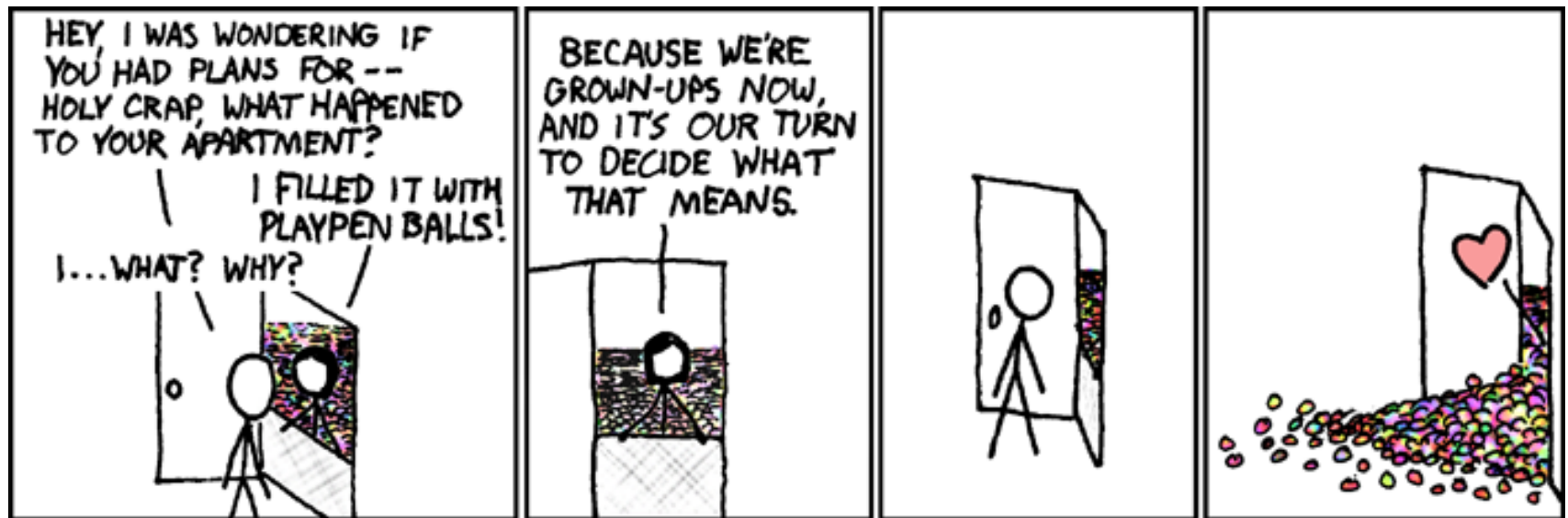


# First theses

- A “New theory” of images of adulthood need to look at:
  - Being independent
  - Take responsibility for something
  - To know about your strengths
  - Have key competences
- Support of this units concerning the individual needs and views



# Thank you for your attention!



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