„Inclusion and Sports with Handicap“
A project to bring pupils closer to inclusion and disability

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Introduction
To bring inclusion closer to pupils we started the project “Inclusion and Sports with Handicap” in cooperation with a local integrated school. The purpose was to raise the children’s awareness for people with disabilities and for an inclusive education system.

Methods
For measuring changes in attitude towards peers with disabilities we analysed written questionnaires before and after the project using the “Chedoke-McMaster Attitudes Towards Children with Handicap Scale” (CATCH) which is one of the most complete instruments in this field and includes all three attitude components (Vignes et al., 2008). The CATCH-score is generated as described by Rosenbaum et al. (1986) by encoding negatively worded items, summing items, dividing sums by the number of items and multiplying by 10. Differences between the questionnaires were tested by Wilcoxon signed-rank test. In ten lessons within six weeks 32 participants aged 15-16 took part in the project. Out of the 32 data sets 13 were analysed. 11 were excluded because of incomplete data in both questionnaires before and after the intervention. Further 8 were not considered because of answering more than 25% of the questions with “I can’t decide”.

Results
While there were significant changes ($p = .013$) in attitude in the affective sector, no significant changes can be found in behavioural and cognitive components and total CATCH-score (Figure 1). Representative questions out of 36 are shown in Figure 2.

Discussion
Even after a relatively short period of six weeks the attitude towards people with disabilities changed measurably and in case of attitude even significantly. Pupils came in contact to people with an impairment and empathized with them. In conclusion, a comparably short sensitization period is sufficient to raise children’s awareness for people with disabilities and inclusion.

References