**Spring 1 Meaningful Homework: Disability affecting childhood development**

**Task:** Sarah Storey, winner of seventeen Paralympic gold medals, is a disabled cyclist who was born without a functioning left hand. Had Sarah not turned out to be a highly successful athlete, how could her disability have impacted upon her physical, cognitive/intellectual, communication and language, emotional and social development? Write a fully detailed account of how her disability may have impacted upon her development.

**Guidance:**

- Using your knowledge of social factors, particularly discrimination, research the life of Sarah Storey using the link below and your own research <https://me-pedia.org/wiki/Sarah_Storey>.

- Considering the different stages of development; physical, intellectual / cognitive, emotional and social, produce a detailed account (one side of A4) on how Sarah’s disability could have impacted upon each stage of her childhood development.

**Success criteria:**

- I have provided evidence that I have researched the life of Sarah Storey

- I have explained how Sarah’s disability may have impacted upon all stages of her development.

**WAGOLL**



Ellie Simmonds is a disabled Paralympian athlete. She was born with achondroplasia which is a form of dwarfism. This means her bones did not grow properly, giving her shorter than average arms and legs. This affected areas of her childhood development

**Physical Development**

One way in which Ellie was affected physically was her limbs were shorter than average and her lower legs were also bowed. The condition also caused her to have a curved lower spine which leads to a condition called lordosis. It also caused her to have poor muscle tone and loose joints. This caused her to have delayed development such as she was unable to walk until she was 18-24 months rather than at 12 months. She was also affected by breathing issues which was caused by small canals in the bones of the spine. This also meant that Ellie had issues with her posture which caused back pain. This also affected delays in motor skill development such as being able to sit up and crawl. Like most other babies, Ellie did not play with her feet due to her shorter arms being unable to reach them. As Ellie also had an abnormally large head, this also affected her ability to lift her head at the expected age of 3 months. She also struggled to grasp large objects due to her shorter fingers which affected her fine motor development which meant when she was at nursery she struggled with using crayons, scissors and cutlery and was delayed in terms of her development in comparison to her peers.

**Intellectual / Cognitive Development**

Ellie’s intellectual development was not affected by her condition.

**Communication and language Development**

Ellie also had a speech delay and difficulty expressing herself when she was a baby and a toddler. It is thought that this might have been due to hearing issues when she was young.

**Emotional Development**

Ellie was not personally affected emotionally, however commonly individuals with achondroplasia report that they are bullied for their height which for some resulted in poor attendance at school, depression and anxiety. In a study it was also reported that high numbers of suicide were also found in individuals with this condition. Studies on this condition have also found that it results in low self esteem and family relationships can be affected.

**Social Development**

Ellie did not report that she was affected socially by her medical condition. Further research has identified that many individuals with this condition however do struggle with their social development as a result of height discrimination which leads to ridicule. This condition has been reported to reduce social and marital opportunities. It has also affected employment opportunities where there is a noticeable lower income in people with this condition. As dwarfism is uncommon, children with this condition often feel isolated from their peers.