



W o r k i n g G r o u p

OBJECTIVES

This working group aims to foster collaboration, knowledge sharing, and problem-solving among YPAR practitioners. Through regular meetings, we will achieve the following objectives:

- Identify opportunities for collaboration
- Facilitate peer-to-peer learning
- Stay informed on the latest YPAR research
- Provide open forum to present specific challenges
- Plan for further resource development

YPAR Qualitative Interviews

Shared November 2024

HIGHLIGHT REEL

The aim of the YPAR Highlight Reels are to keep our working group informed regarding trending topics and areas of focus in recent YPAR research. Our hope is that these spark discussions and reflections on the implications of new research for YPAR practice.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Call for Applications: AERA Research Engagement and Development with Youth (READY) Program

This program brings teams of high school students, who are engaged in education research, to the 2025 AERA Annual Meeting in Denver to present their work, network with peers, and cultivate their interest in the field.

Participating youth researchers will:

- Present their work in featured poster session
- Participate in a mini-workshop to discuss and receive feedback on their ongoing research
- Meet with early career and senior researcher
- Attend a select set of Annual Meeting sessions and events

More information about the AERA READY Program and application is available [here](#).



Limitations to Traditional Approaches to Interviews with Children and Adolescents

Power Dynamics

- Adults often hold positions of authority, which can influence participants' responses. They may feel pressured to provide answers that they believe the adult wants to hear.

Social Desirability

- Participants may be inclined to present themselves in a positive light, leading to biased or inaccurate responses.

Sensitivity of Issues Topics

- When discussing sensitive topics like abuse, trauma, or personal experiences, children may feel uncomfortable or hesitant to share their true feelings

Interviewer Bias:

- Interviewers' own biases (e.g., adultism), assumptions, and preconceived notions can influence the questions they ask and the interpretations they make of the responses.

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

The 3 *formats* of interviews:

1. Structured
2. Semi-Structured
3. Unstructured

The 3 major *types* of interviews:

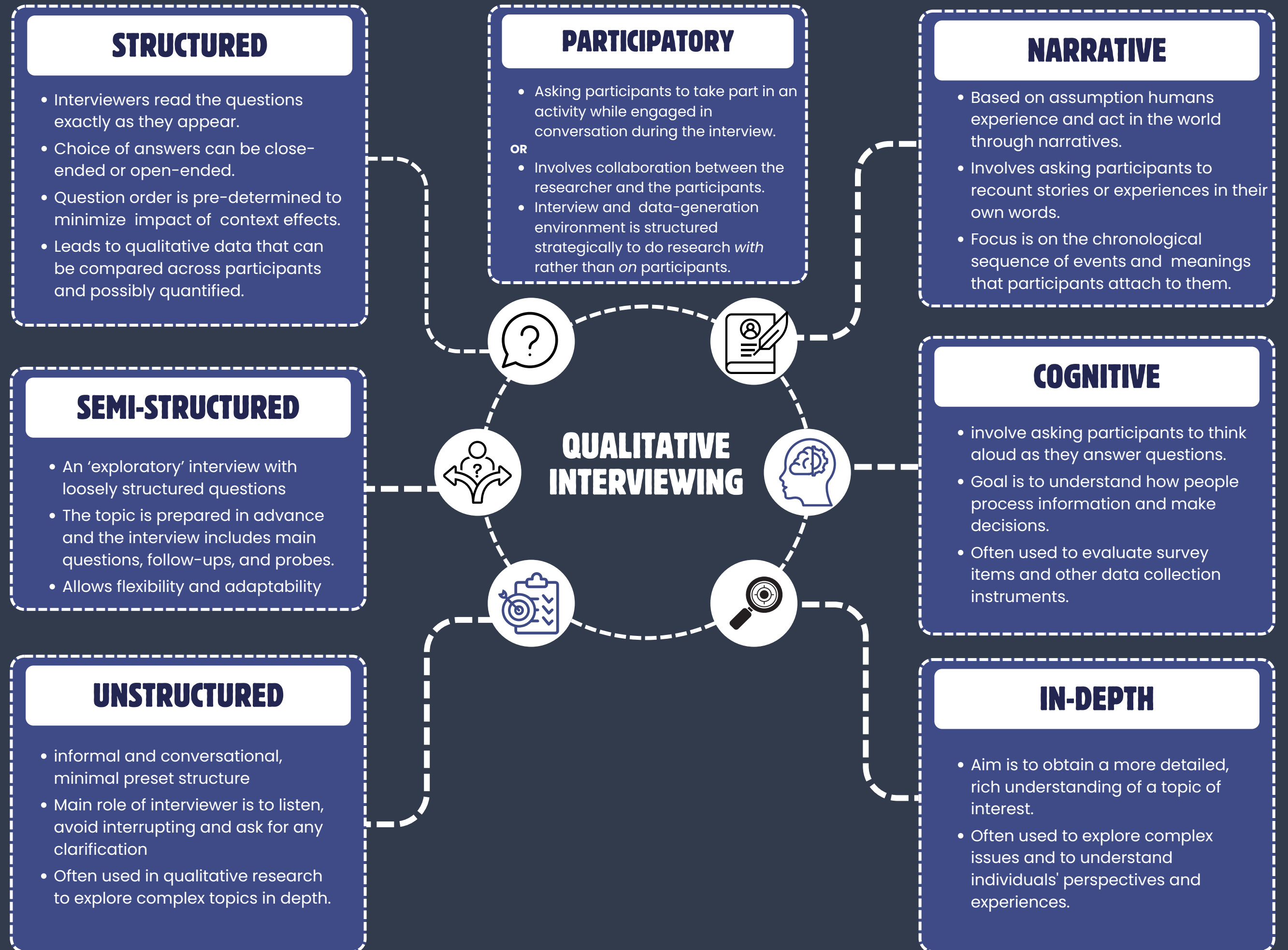
1. [Narrative](#)
2. [Cognitive](#)
3. [In-depth](#)

Participatory interviews is used to refer to active engagement of participants, either through:

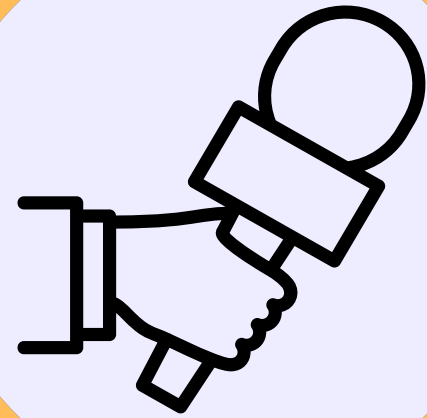
- [Tasks/activities during the interview](#)

OR

- [Collaboration](#) with researchers:
 - [Develop questions](#)
 - [Conduct interviews](#)
 - [Interpret responses](#)



YPAR Approaches to 'Participatory' Interview'



Youth as Interviewees

By focusing on inverting power dynamics, youth are empowered to share their perspectives and experiences, using interviews as a tool for social engagement rather than just information gathering.



Youth as Developers

Through training in conducting literature reviews, measurement development, avoiding measurement bias, etc, youth actively develop interview questions that align with their interests and concerns.



Youth as Interviewers

Through training in skills such as rapport-building, probing, and active listening, youth conduct peer interviews.



Youth as Analysts

Through training in coding and thematic analysis, youth examine interview data, uncover patterns and draft key findings that contribute to positive changes in their lives.



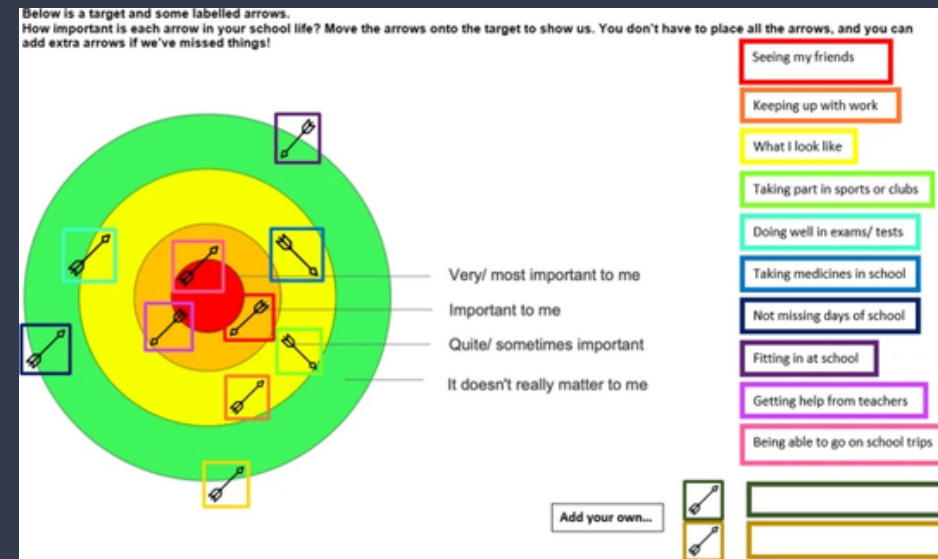
Youth as Interviewees

Interview is used as a tool for **social engagement** rather than just information gathering. Studies use various activities including: visual arts (drawing, painting, collage, video), performative arts (theatre, dance, song), written arts (poetry), storytelling (oral traditions), movement (walking) or a combination of these to address power dynamics and increase level of comfort participants feel during the process.

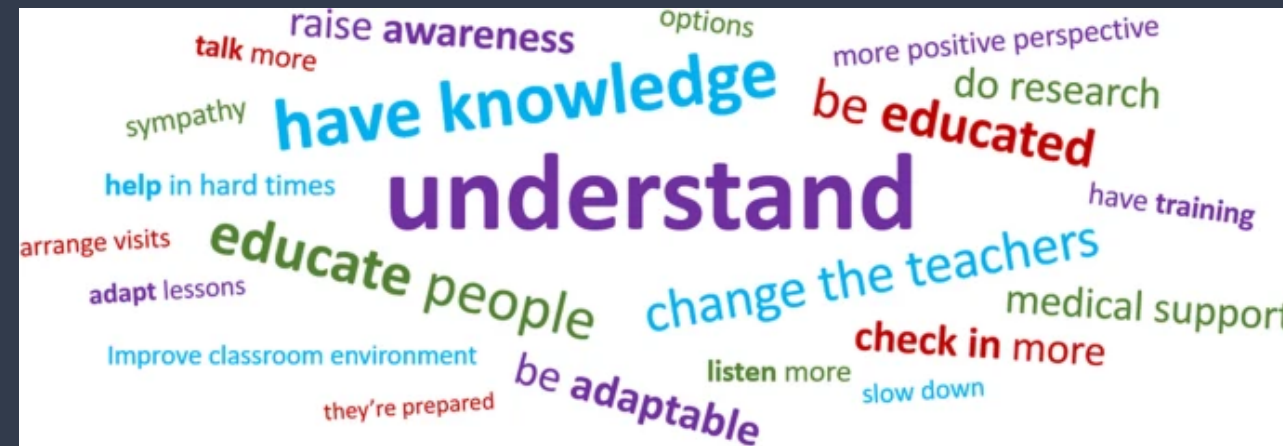
***'How To' Guide #1** and **'How To' Guide #2** (see "6.3 Technique Section")

Examples

- **Drawing** – perceptions of the online 'perverts' (Murumaa-Mengel, 2015)
- **Preparation Activities** (Spencer et al., 2023) – target activity, Venn diagram, mood board, letter writing, word clouds
- **Mosaic Approach** (Clark & Moss, 2001) – participant takes photographs, gives a tour, completes a map, etc.



Venn diagram (Spencer et al., 2023)



Word Cloud (Spencer et al., 2023)



Mood Board (Spencer et al., 2023)



Participant's drawing of an online pervert and his victim (Murumaa-Mengel, 2015)



Youth as Interview Developers

Participants develop/co-develop interviews.

***'How To' Guide**

Example:

'On Your Own Feet' Project in Children's Hospital in the Netherlands (van Staa et al., 2011)

- Explores adolescents' preferences regarding providers' qualities, and outpatient and inpatient care.
- Adult researchers presented open-ended questions inspired by the previous studies. Then, youth co-researchers rephrased questions/ added new topics.
- Organized a disco party for co-researchers to interview fellow patients

Your general impression of the hospital

- If I say, Sophia Children's hospital, what do you think?
- What is best in the Sophia Children's hospital?
- What is worst in the Sophia Children's Hospital?

Doctors, nurses and other staff

- According to you, what is a good doctor?
- How are your experiences with doctors at Sophia Children's hospital? please give examples of both positive and negative experiences.
- How are your experiences with other health care workers, such as nurses, dieticians and social workers at Sophia Children's hospital? please give examples of both positive and negative experiences.
- What is your number one advice for hospital staff?

When visiting the outpatient department

- What is most important to you when you're at the outpatient department?
- Do you feel that the doctor focuses mostly on you?
- What happens if you have a different opinion than the doctor?
- Would you prefer to talk with the doctor alone sometimes?
- If you could change the organization of the outpatient department, what would you do?

When admitted to hospital

- What do you miss most when you have to stay in hospital?
- How are your experiences with the Acute Care department at Sophia Children's Hospital?
- Suppose, you get a bag full of money for the hospital, what would you buy?
- How do you feel about the activities organized in the hospital?
- What is your opinion on the hospital clowns?
- Do you think it is important to meet fellow patients? how should the Sophia Children's hospital make this possible?
- Do you think adolescents should get a greater say in the hospital? how should this be organized?



Youth as Interviewers

Participants conduct peer interviews.

***'How To' Guide** (includes a methodological discussion of the process of peer interviewing)

Example:

Right2BCared4 and Staying Put 18 Plus Family Placement Programme (Lushey & Munro, 2015)

- Describes training peer researchers to conduct interviews with older children and care leavers.
- Training sessions included short formal presentations from the research team, role play, group discussion and feedback sessions.
- Peer researchers trained in interview techniques- building rapport, listening skills, and questioning and probing. Emphasis was placed on being empathetic without adding personal reflections, opinions or views.

Prompting and probing during interviews

Although the research served to identify important messages for policy and practice it is important to acknowledge that there were variations in the quality of the data. In some transcripts the peer researcher's inexperience was apparent, for example, it was clear that some of the peer researchers found it difficult at times to process information provided by participants quickly enough and asked repetitive or inappropriate questions as a result.

Peer researcher: Is there anything else that you would change about moving from care into independent living?

Interviewee: Yes. I'd rather be back in care.

Peer researcher: If you had a chance would you go back into care and if so, please tell me why?

This can be frustrating for the participant who may feel that the peer researcher is not interested in, or listening to what they have to say, but it also has an impact on the quality of the data obtained. Review of the transcripts also revealed that peer

Participatory research is beneficial both because of its implicit values (e.g., empowerment and inclusion) and also because it improves our level of understanding of the substantive subject area.' However it is also important to acknowledge that such benefits are not automatic. This example emphasizes how important adequate training is to ensure the quality of the data.



Youth as Interviewers: 1990s-early 2000s

Earlier researchers heavily relied on the approach of asking respondents of all ages to conduct one another's interviews as a means to achieve a higher level of participation and engagement in research and interventions.

For example, studies with:

- Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders ([Menzies et al., 2011](#))
- At-risk youth ([Graham et al., 2004](#))
- Youth's perceptions of health care ([Jackson, 2003](#))
- Youth's experiences of displacement after school closure ([Kirshner et al., 2010](#))

BUT in all of these studies, adult researchers designed data collection tools and conducted all analyses.



Youth as Interview Analysts

Participants inform or conduct coding and theme analysis.

***"How To" Guide**

Example:

Youth Gardent Project (Lile & Richards, 2016)

- Youth participants designed, conducted, and debriefed peer interviews in order to address their own questions about program impacts.
- Theme/patterns youth brought up in joint discussion became basis for coding process conducted by university researchers. Youth did not formally code the data, but their insights were incorporated in same way memos might be—they created the groundwork upon which to build the analysis. Thus, youth informed the analysis of peer interview data, although they did not read the transcripts or develop codes

Example 2 for Youth Synthesis Themes—Gendered Attrition:

1. Lena (M): . . . The differences, um, well the guys actually stayed in their garden, and our guys are flakes and don't really ever show up.
2. Sharon (M): I know, right?
3. . . . Lisa (P): Also, sometimes, guys tend to think that gardening is, like, something old ladies do, and so they don't think that it's gonna be a lot of work, and so, like, a lot of wimpy guys go, and they're like "oh I need to weed" and then they're like "I have to move a pile of leaves? This is hard." and then they bail. *(giggles)*
4. . . . Helen: Let's hear from some of the guys, if you want on that, and then move on.
5. Jack (P): Yeah, I don't know . . . I don't think we've ever like talked about the issue of like how many guys or girls are in the garden, it just seems like who's ever, or whatever, um, ya know, people are going to stick if they're gonna stick, it depends . . . and I don't think it's necessarily bad, you know with all the boy's clubs we have in the world and in this country that there's like maybe a couple of women-dominated things. I think it's healthy; there's nothing wrong with that.

Six out of 13 segments coded for attrition were dual-coded with gender, and several additional segments from Mountainside participants discussed wanting to recruit and retain more male participants



Youth as Interview Analysts

Participants inform or conduct coding and theme analysis.

Example:

Qualitative Pediatric Research in a university medical center in the Netherlands (Luchtenberg et al., 2020)

- Involved 14 children (aged 10 to 14 years) were engaged as co-researchers to analyze children's interviews about their experience while participating in medical research.
- Explores the use of videos rather than transcripts to present the interviews to relatively young co-researchers.
- Includes reflections of the adult researchers

'It actually felt a bit like I was a researcher myself.'
(Girl, group meeting)

They reported gaining new knowledge about certain health matters and they realised what it is like to be ill. They learnt how to do research, how to think critically and how to take notes. Here are some representative answers given:

'You have to think carefully before you draw conclusions.' (Boy, group meeting)

'A bit about how ill children felt afterwards (after participating in research).' (Girl, group meeting)

All the participants were positive about the idea of being a co-researcher more often, mostly for similar reasons as for wanting to take part in the first place:

'Yes, it was fun, relaxed and instructive.' (Girl, group meeting)

It was challenging for the adult researchers to not provide answers themselves when the participants indicated that they did not know how to proceed with the analysis. By repeating or rephrasing their question and by acknowledging that they were doing the right thing, the adult researcher could reinforce the children. Both adult researchers were surprised by the co-researcher's achievements. Throughout the project, the co-researchers displayed the ability to identify themes and to visualise them in mind maps, underlining the feasibility of this approach and its value for interpreting data.

The co-researchers in the other group together decided that they all wanted to write down their own notes on 'sticky notes' and to put them all on the mind map. The outcome was a mind map that displayed different topics as well as providing insight into how important the individuals thought a certain topic was by the number of 'sticky notes' on the same topic. Others only needed a bit more time and space to find their own role.