

Including Disabled Children and Young People in your Research: Transcript



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Julia Hayes: Hello, everybody. My name is Dr Julia Hayes and I'm an Educational Psychologist with a specialism in inclusive education, and I'm also a conference illustrator. And today we're going to be looking at how you can include disabled children and young people in your research. The purpose of today will be to look at practical ways to make your research accessible and engaging in all aspects of the design and process, and I'm also going to advocate that you should think wider than disability, so think what other intersections might affect children in their place. I'd recommend that, as well as this video, you watch the other two in the set, one that focuses solely on children and young people, and another that focuses on disability. Together, they should cover many of the issues that you'll be considering.

So, first off, my key question would be what are your messages and how can you make them accessible? You'll see that I used my conference illustration skills to make a poster, and I began with the question. So, what was my question? It was how is the education of children with disabilities addressed in Colombian Escuela Nueva schools, and then my research was based on these premises. So, number one, you can see here, one, that Colombia has signed global agreements but there's... around inclusive education there's a gap between policy and practice. And then you can see in two and three, I was saying, "But look, Escuela Nueva is a Colombian home-grown approach perhaps that itself is inclusive for children". And number four, that there are gaps in that research.

And just to give you quick overview of my research, I worked in five case schools in rural Colombia, I worked with 101 children, of whom 27 had a disability, and identified that using the Washington Group questions. And this presentation focuses on the work with children.

So, first off, around consent, I used a simple poster that helped explain who I was, what we were going to do and the important themes around confidentiality. So, at the top you can see it says Quieran Participar? And in a very simple globe, Julia comes over from England, wants to talk to five schools, going to be asking your opinion, and you are the experts, so I've set my stall out. Bottom left, you see that children have the options of the things we're going to do, que vamos a hacer? What are we going to do? And I just used simple images to say these are the things that we might do, take photos, draw, chat with Julia or another idea. This would be great to use with autistic children to give them a visual timetable of what it is you're going to do and when. Also, to introduce the important things, three important things on confidentiality, that their participation was voluntary, and also that I was recording, but I would be the only one that could hear that. I also introduced the idea here that we were going to do action planning in the future and I was going to put it into a big document, a thesis.

So, having thought about that, then it's about what design and methods support research to be with or by children, and there are many different methods you could use. And I recommend you go to the NCRM participatory and collaborative research MSIG page, where we have Padlets with resources and different methods. But the one I'm going to talk to you here is about photo voice. So, photo voice was developed in 1997 by Wang and Burris, and it's being used with adults as well as children. It begins with an introduction, where children get to practise taking photos. As you can see, here are my photos. You then discuss the issue further with the children, and children then start to take photos. My questions were what helps and doesn't help you learn? For each photo then you sit down with the child and you do a little interview, where you find out what they meant when they were thinking about this photo. Then it's handed over to the children in that they bring their photos together, they identify themes, and finally, they come up with an action plan together about what they can do about the issues they've identified.

Then you want to think about dissemination. So, children decide on that, and there's a really nice example of that in Nguyen et al's 2015 work, where they

engaged girls with disabilities in Vietnam. They brought disabled people, local people to facilitate, and they helped the girls draw, take photos, craft, and then think about how they could take their messages to government, and they did so. It's a really good article that would give you a good overview.

And finally, I want to say that, yes, while your research focuses on disability, I would think more than that in that there might well be other intersections that matter to children in that place. So, for example, in my research, I found that in Colombia disability was way down on the list. The things if you wanted to be included in these children's schools was going to be more about skin tone and poverty, and you can see more about that in my article from 2023, Listening to the voices of children in Colombian Escuela Nueva schools in Disability in the Global South.

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And finally, here are some references that I've used and also things that I think you might find useful... you might find useful. And finally, just see this poster here on the left for you, so it says this door is alarmed after 5.00pm and somebody has added a picture with a little robot, saying, "But before then, it's just generally anxious". And so if it is you're here because you're thinking about your PhD, I want to tell you, you are making the right decision, yes, it is worth involving children, and yes it is worth it at the end with all the stress. So, keep on going, and we're thinking about you and let us know how you get on. Thank you.

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