

Topic:

Other

Title:

CLICK! ENGAGING CHILDREN IN RESEARCH ABOUT THEIR LIVES:
EXPERIENCES OF USING PHOTO-ELICITATION FROM ENGLAND,
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

Abstract:

Background and aims

Engaging children in research about their lives is an essential component of providing excellent health care services. Utilising participatory, visual/arts-based approaches such as photo-elicitation (PE) can extend opportunities for children to reflect on and talk about their lives. This paper aims to explore the use of, benefits and issues associated with using PE with children.

Methods

PE is a participatory, qualitative method that does not rely on high levels of verbal or written literacy and which creates equitable conditions for children's engagement in research. Within a broad brief, children are asked to take topic-related photos. Apart from safety/privacy related guidance about where it might not be appropriate to take photographs, the children are free to take any image that has meaning to them. The children then select the images they wish to discuss and the researcher literally has to 'follow' the children's data and adopt a flexible approach to the conversational interview.

Results

Reflecting on our experience with PE we note how the quality of discussion is enhanced and intriguing and unexpected insights into children's lives are revealed. What children choose to photograph or omit can create interesting tensions; these and other lessons will be shared along with exemplar photographs and stories.

Conclusions

Although PE provides considerable opportunities and benefits, it is challenging research to be part of and requires skilled researchers to ensure children are safe during research engagement and that the data provides a robust depth of insight into their lives.

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Title:

"GETTING ON" AND "FITTING IN": CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF GROWING UP WITH CHRONIC ILLNESS IN ENGLAND, AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Abstract:

Background and aims

Chronic illness can require children to have complex treatments/interventions; these can affect their everyday lives. Traditionally, studies have focused on proxy-based, quantitative measures of impact on older children/adolescents. Few studies have used participatory methods with children across illness types and cultures.

This study explored children's understandings of their illness, the meanings they make and how their lives are affected by their experiences of chronic illness in England, Australia and New Zealand.

Methods

The study adopted a qualitative, participatory methodology using photo-elicitation (photos and interviews) to build inductively derived knowledge grounded in the children's experiences. Forty-five children (6-12 years) from different diagnostic groups were recruited from hospital-based and support group settings in England, Australia and New Zealand. They used digital cameras to record aspects of their lives and chronic illness and their photos then guided audio-recorded interviews.

Results

Results across the three countries show similarities in the ways in which the children create meaning about their illness and the strategies they use to be 'like other children'. Thematic analysis identified two key themes: 'getting on, negotiating risks and benefits' and 'fitting in'. Although most children did not hide their illness from their peers, they 'didn't talk much about it'. The meaning associated with their illness shifts in response to changes in physiology and life course.

Conclusions

Using photo-elicitation promotes access to children's experiences by creating opportunities for them to talk of how they perceive, understand and manage their symptoms and experience their everyday lives.

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