

Rapid Evidence Review of best practices in health and social science literature



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How to read this document

Checklists for practice, are in sections 5.2 and 6.2

Case studies, are in **blue example boxes** in all sections

Theoretical Insights, are in **yellow theory boxes** in sections 4 and 7

Use the Section bookmarks to jump to the content you want

Acknowledgements:

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Authors: Cath Larkins, Rebecca Nowland, Laura Robertson, Nicola Farrelly, Darren Sharpe, Alastair Roy, Nora Morocza and Jamilson Bernardo de Lemos.

Collaborators: Chole Harris. Daniel Sheehan. Evie Researcher. Rosie Winstanley. Thomas Researcher. Tim Moore, Kaz Stuart, Camile Warrington. Helen Lomax. Angela Broadbridge, Franca Roeschert and Ellie Taylor.

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Peer Research by Children and Young People and their allies: A Summary

The Youth Endowment Fund have set up a network for young people to do peer research about issues related to violence. They asked us to find out about how peer research has happened in the past with children and young people (aged 5-25 years).

So, we met with a group of young researchers, university researchers and adults involved with the YEF network to talk about what peer research is and what questions we should be trying to answer.

We built and explored a database of academic articles and reports from the last ten years. We will use this database to answer more questions– so let us know if you want to find out anything else! **This report tells you about the answers we found so far.**



What peer research is being done, where it is happening and who is involved?

Peer research involves children or young people taking the lead in some or all of the parts of a research project. It is happening across the world, in communities, schools and other places.

Children and young people, working with adults, find out about health, education and community issues that they are interested in. Peer research about violence and the causes of violence has looked at things like racism, gender violence, bullying, and effects on health.

What sorts of things happen as part of peer research?

Peer research starts when children, young people or adults come up with an idea for something they want to find out about, or an opportunity they want to provide. Then it involves:

- Preparation and planning
- Connecting with other people
- Learning about research and the issues
- Deciding on topics and on different ways of investigating
- Investigating – usually a combination of interviews, group discussions, creative activities or surveys
- Analysis of what they are finding out

The new things they have learned are used to plan, take action and are shared.

All through the research they reflect. This means taking time to think about themselves, what is going well and how to deal with any challenges.

At the end they sometimes think about what has happened and how well it happened and people share feedback.



What does success look like in peer research?

Peer research is successful when:

- It is safe and everyone involved feels included and valued
- People take time to really think about and learn from what they are doing together
- It helps provide evidence or new understanding. This can be new understandings of the challenges of doing peer research, or new understanding of a particular topic or issue
- Children, young people and communities get something positive out of it

People have used activities like surveys, group discussions, journals, films and interviews to record their successes and challenges.

How do people deal with the opportunities and challenges of peer research?

Children, young people and adults co-research together to understand the places they are working in and the relationships between people. It is important to think about how different people can be included, how power is shared, how support can be provided, how to make decisions about going public and how to tell compelling stories. Achieving change is possible, but it doesn't always happen. Being realistic and planning for change over time really helps.



Do you have other questions that you want us to answer?

Please ask and we will try to find the answers from the library we have created or from the work we do together in the months and years ahead.

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Definitions

In the peer and academic cocreation meetings that led to this review we developed these definitions, used in this document.

Peer Research

Peer Research is young people's research. Young researchers doing collaborative research, working with different groups to develop an idea and discovering interesting new things about people and experiences in a conversation. It's people powered research.

It is enabling young people to take the lead with adults playing a support role, where children and young people play an active role: as advisers, co-researchers, co-analysers, co-presenters and where they contribute to shaping what is done, how it's done and what is done with what is gathered.

It is research that is led by people with experience of the issues being studied. People who have something in common do research about the thing they have in common.

It is sometimes called participatory, user led research, service user voice, Co-research, co-designed research, participatory research, end-user-driven research.

It builds, it doesn't take away, it's not extractive. It brings people together and weaves in stories like a beautiful patchwork quilt, with intricacies and messy bits and bits that don't quite fit together but are linked!

Ally and Allies

The words we use to describe the adults and children and young people who are alongside peer researchers and who collaborate.

A description of the terms we use to define groups of papers included in this review (*review of reviews, process papers, about papers and generalised critique*) is on page 11.

1. Introduction

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) has come together with the #iwill Fund (a joint investment between The National Lottery Community Fund and Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) and the Co-op, with the shared objective of creating a fairer world for young people, so that every young person can live a life free from violence. To support this objective they have set up a network to support young people's peer research and social action.

They have commissioned The Centre for Children and Young People's Participation as the Learning Partner for this network. Our role is to share learning from past peer research, to connect with the new peer research teams, to explore their projects and the contexts they are researching, and to help them share the new understandings that come out of this work. This report provides systematic and extensive evidence from existing peer research with case examples and frameworks for thinking designed to meet the needs of this new network and for peer researchers in other contexts.

This report is written in a variety of ways to respond to the different learning styles of the people who may read it. The report is not designed to be read in one go. Instead we would suggest that you, as readers, start with either a subject of interest:

If you are interested in what peer research has happened previously, go to section 3

If you are interested in first principles, go to section 4

If you are interested in research being engaging or being ethical, go to sections 5 or 6

If are interested to understand and measure change, go to section 7

If you like to start from critique, go to section 8

or an approach to digesting information that works for you:

If you like checklists for practice, go to sections 5.2 and 6.2

If you like charted information in tables go to Appendix 2. If you need more information about the table go to the written section that has the same number (and vice versa!).

If you like case studies, read the blue boxes.

If you like theory, read the yellow boxes.

If you like graphics, flick through and see what you find.

This is a live document and we invite readers within the network to tell us where they would like more details, or to request additional insights on specific questions. We also invite readers within the network to give us feedback about the variety of different styles we have used in the report to make it inclusive.

1.1 Aim of the review

This rapid evidence review used a mixed method combining findings from peer reviewed empirical papers, review papers and grey literature reports to identify theoretical principles and practice

modes and mechanisms of what works in peer research in the field of health and social sciences, that are generalisable as a basis for designing effective peer research projects, protocols and establishing best practice.

This review scopes and synthesises existing knowledge about how to do youth peer research well using the following research questions co-created with experienced youth peer researchers, academics and third sector partners involved in peer research:

1. What are the different modes and mechanisms of doing peer research? Which of these are valued, by whom, in which contexts and why?

2. How is success, impact and change documented, understood, negotiated and evaluated in peer research?

3. What are the opportunities, barriers and tensions in youth peer research and how can these be understood and addressed?

We have put adults into the title of this section because many people have written about adults being always involved in some way in the research that children and young people do (Cuevas Parra and Tisdall 2019), this was highlighted in the hackathon and this is what we have also found in our review.

1.2 Contents of this report

This report outlines our methodology and initial charted accounts of the reviewed texts and selected extracts and examples from previous studies in relation to these questions as follows:

- What is peer research, where is it taking place, who with and on what?
- What is the thinking behind how children, young people and adults do peer research?
- How do children, young people and adults put peer research into practice?
- How is an ethical approach followed in peer research on violence related topics?
- How are benefits, successes, impacts and change in peer research recorded and understood?
- What are key opportunities and tensions in peer research and how are these dealt with?

2. Methodology: Searching for and selecting literature to include

This section provides information about:

- 2.1 How we coproduced the search framework for this rapid review
- 2.2 How we conducted the review
- 2.3 What sorts of research articles we included and how we categorised them

2.1 Coproducing the search

A number of systematic or mapping reviews have been conducted on peer research since 2012, however, apart from the Wilson et al. (2020) review which focused on health, there has not been a synthesis across different approaches to peer research. This review therefore worked with young people and adults experienced in peer research to develop a broad definition of peer research to incorporate learnings from different disciplines/approaches to peer research (i.e. Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR), public and patient engagement, citizen science, community-based peer research etc.) and topic area.

We recruited a review steering group involving participants from Youth Endowment Fund, study partners, appointed advisors and youth peer researchers from marginalised groups, academics experienced in youth participation and relevant third sector professionals and policy actors. Online discussions with this group were held in the form of a week-long hackathon (creative problem-solving sessions conducted once a day for a full week) involving activities to enable:

- Reflection and sharing of ideas about key concepts and challenges in peer research
- Selection of a proportionate systematic approach and relevant inclusion criteria
- Agreement of definitions, research questions, inquiry themes and focus for the review

2.2 Conducting the review

The findings from the online hackathon informed the focus of the research, search strategy, inclusion and exclusion criteria and framework for synthesis. In addition, we conducted a priori scoping searches to identify key review papers in this specific research area which also informed our search strategy.

The rapid evidence review was conducted between February and June 2021. We used the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols checklist (PRISMA; Shamseer et al., 2015) as a framework for the review. We conducted searches in April 2021 on eight bibliographic databases:

PsycINFO, Medline, CINAHL, Embase, SocINDEX, ASSIA: Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (Proquest), Social Care Online and SCOPUS

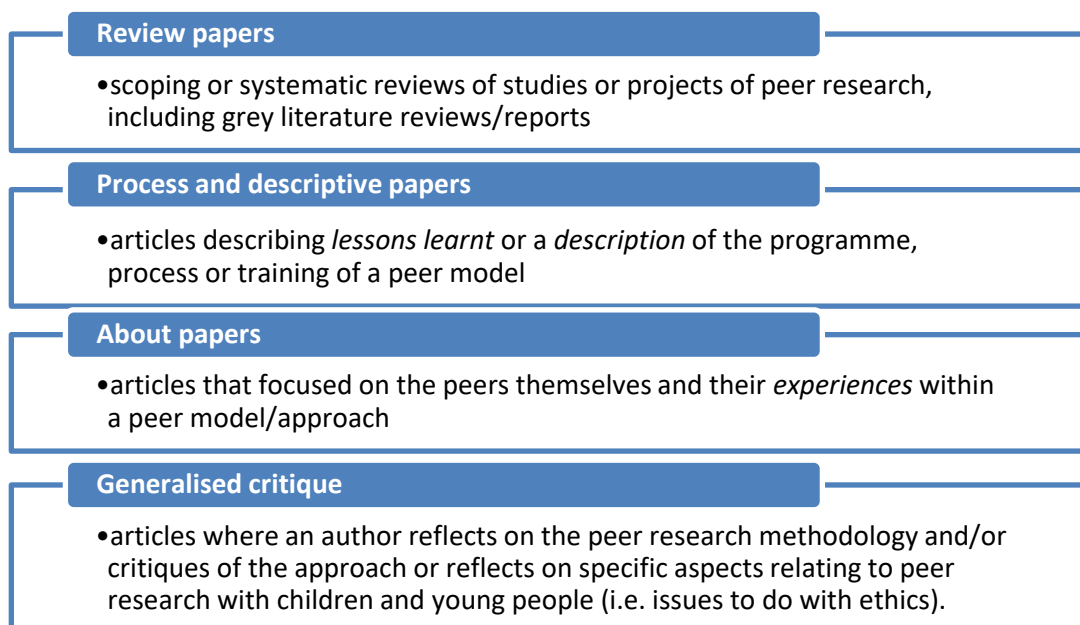
In order to locate wider reviews on peer research that have been conducted we included grey literature reports, which were obtained through Google searching using the key words (the first 200 hits have been screened).

The following search terms were developed from scoping exercises and online forum exercises with experienced young peer researchers and stakeholders:

Key terms	Search words used
Children and young people	Child/ or Adolescent/ or child or children or kid or kids or girl* or boy* or adolescen* or teen* or Youth* young people or young adult or young person or young men or young women
Peer research	Community-based participatory research/ or participatory research* or participatory method* or participatory approach* or participatory design or participatory model* or user led research or peer led research or peer research* or consumer led research or action research or youth inquir* or co-produc* or coproduc* or co-research or coresearch or co-creation or cocreation or co-design* or codesign* or co-develop* or codevelop* or co-investigator* or coinvestigator* or citizen science or citizen scientist or YPAR or advisory group* or advisory council or youth participation or young involved or child led research* or peer model or research partner or social action

We used a working definition of **peer research** as studies where children and/or young people are explicitly involved in at least one stage of the research process beyond collecting data about themselves and beyond involvement in dissemination or recruitment. This excluded, for example, studies which involved child participants who gave information about their ideas and experiences and then helped create an accessible summary.

We included studies about peer research involving children and young people (aged 5-25 years) and excluded peer research conducted exclusively between adults. Using an adapted version of Vaughn et al. (2018) papers were categorised as follows:

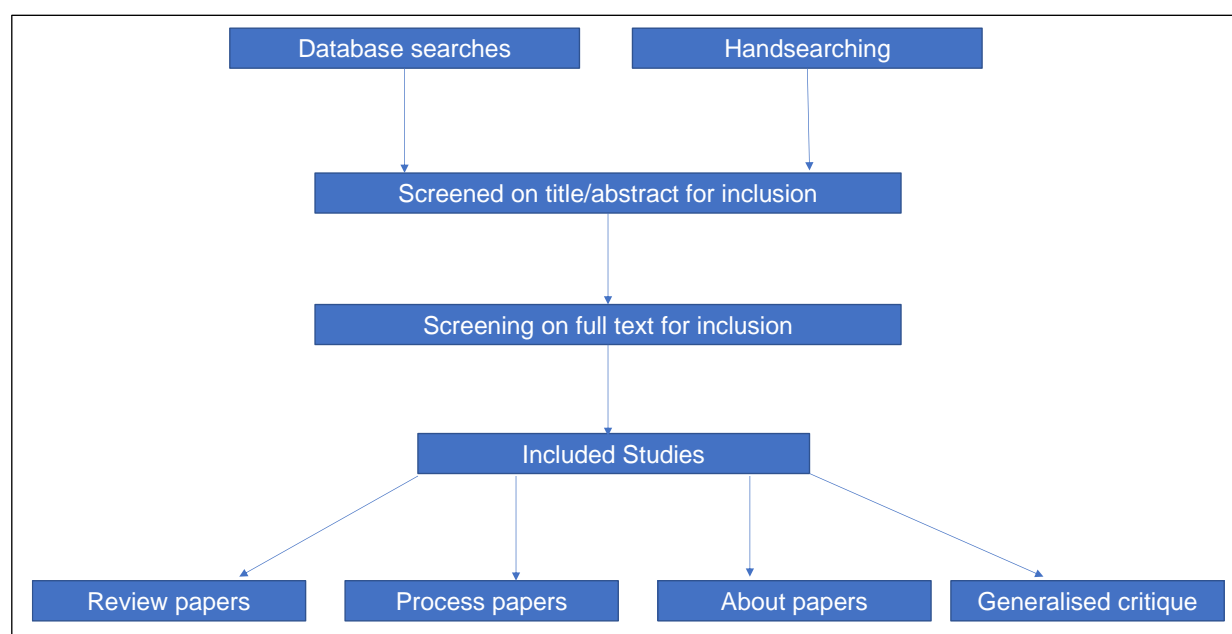


Empirical papers only including findings of the studies were not included. We also excluded dissertations, editorials, opinion pieces, commentaries, book or movie reviews, protocols, case studies and erratum. Only studies written in English were included and those published after 2000.

2.3 Literature included and sampled for this report

Figure 1 displays a schematic of the flow of included articles in the review process. Searches resulted in 22,521 potentially relevant articles after duplicates were removed. Given the volume of the data and the timeframe of the report we screened articles in order of publication, including articles from 2011 in this report, resulting in 1414 articles being sourced for full text screening. All relevant review articles were included in this report, other article types were sampled (see below).

Figure 1 Schematic of included articles



Review of Review Papers

Twenty-four relevant systematic and scoping review papers were identified that met our inclusion criteria for the review (see list of review papers at Appendix 1). The review papers cover a range of different approaches to peer research, including youth participatory action research, community-based participatory research across health and social sciences.

Descriptive information about the selected review papers are displayed in Appendix 2 Table 2.3.

Process Papers

As modes and mechanisms of research are specific to contexts and topics (see e.g. Montreuil et al., 2021), to cater to the needs of the YEF programme, through full text searching by hand and within NVivo, 72 process papers were sampled that touched on topics related to violence in the years 2017-2021 (Appendix 1b). This resulted in the exclusion of papers where, for example, the focus was researching, designing or evaluating health interventions (92) and school curricula (14) where these did not relate to topics of violence. These broader topic areas are covered by the review of reviews, (see e.g. Wilson, 2020, Montreuil et al., 2021)

Papers were also sampled to complement the data that was already synthesised through the review of reviews. For example, only four review papers addressed ethics in detail and some children and young people with protected characteristics were not included in any of the sampled violence papers. Therefore, eight additional articles and grey literature were sourced to fill this gap.

Similar to the review papers, the process papers cover a range of different approaches to peer research, including youth participatory action research, community-based participatory research across health and social sciences.

Descriptive information about the selected process papers are given in Appendix 2 Data Tables 4 - 5.

About Papers

From the database, 38 about papers (see list at Appendix 1c) selected from publication dates from 2017-2021 were extracted and critically reviewed to complement and extend the information gathered from the review of reviews. Combined, this provides the content for section seven. One of these papers, which had extensive content about process of peer research, was also included as a process paper. Descriptive information about the selected *about* papers are displayed in Table 7.

Generalised Critique Papers

From the database, 62 general critique papers (see list at Appendix 1d) were extracted and critically reviewed to deepen and broaden the answer that we could provide to the questions raised by the hackathon regarding challenges, cushions, collaboration and credibility and change. Together these provided the content for section eight. Some content from these papers also contributed to the approach to ethics outlined in section six. Descriptive information about the selected general critique papers are displayed in Table 8.

3. What is peer research, where is it taking place, who with and on what?

This section is primarily drawn from the *review of review papers* and from *process papers*. It outlines:

- 3.1 The definitions (see also Table 3.1 page 120)
- 3.2 The contexts of peer research
- 3.3 Who is involved in peer research
- 3.4 The topics explored.

Accompanying tables can be found in Appendix 2 part 3.

3.1 Summary of definitions of peer research

Given the broad definition of peer research used for this review a range of different approaches to conducting peer research were examined across the review papers. Some of the review papers focussed on synthesising literature using a particular approach or methodology (e.g. community-based participatory research, YPAR). Table 3.1 displays the approaches and definitions used across the review papers.

Although the levels of involvement/participation vary across the different approaches to peer research, the definitions stress that peer research describes research conducted with or by children and young people rather than research done on them, going beyond providing data. Collaboration is then an important element of peer research. Equally the importance of the research focus being chosen by children and young people is highlighted across the different definitions. Some definitions include an asset-based or strength-based approach, focussing research work on strengths, resources, and assets of children and young people. Others highlight the importance of a transformative approach to research, supporting children and young people to influence social change and adults facilitating conditions that promote change.

In this review we are using the cocreated definition – see page 6

3.2 Context of peer research

Montreuil et al.'s (2021) review shows that participatory research with children and young people (which included examples of peer research by our definition) are taking place in wide ranging contexts. (See Figure 2)

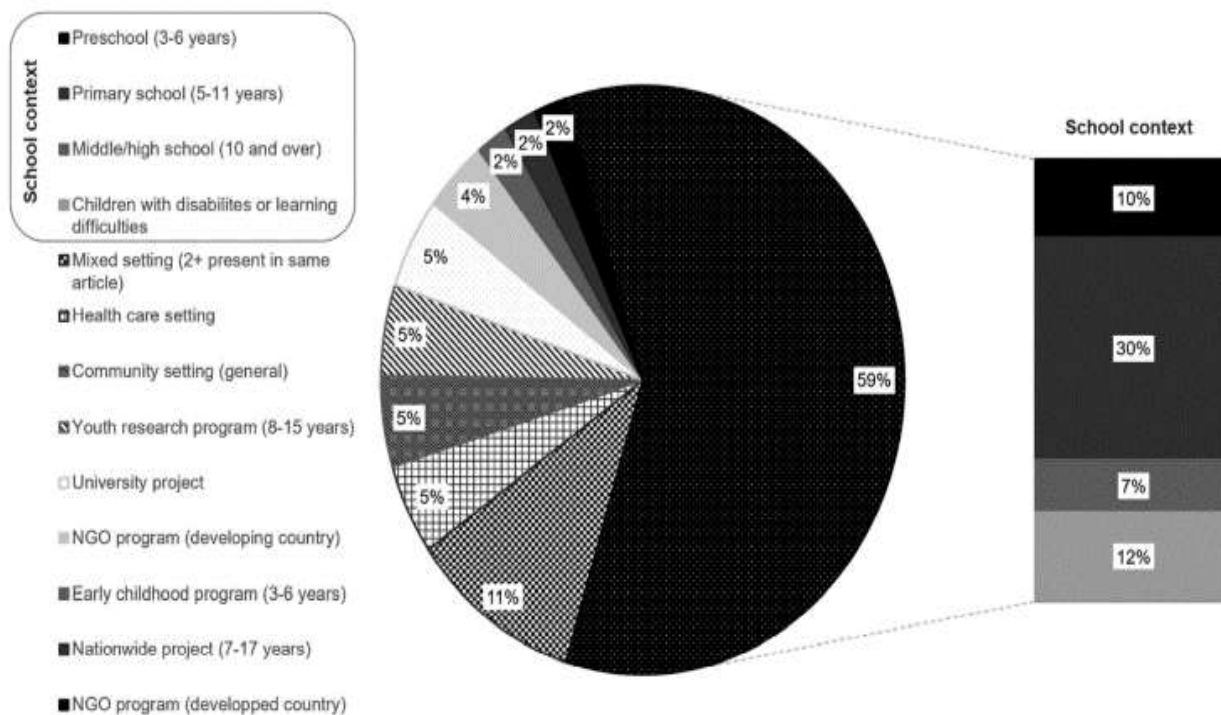
Some of the review papers (9) also noted that peer research is resource intensive and often takes place with limited time and funding. The two were often linked together in that funding gave more researcher time. Funding is often tied to a particular organisational or government agenda which can make it hard for children and young people to set the agenda for the research (Agdal et al., 2019; Grace et al., 2019).

The 72 violence related process papers reported accounts of peer research in a variety of geopolitical, economic, social, cultural and organisational contexts (see Appendix 2 Table 3.2).

In terms of geopolitical context, 17 papers reported findings from majority world contexts (including Brazil, Zanzibar and Uganda). The remaining papers reported findings from minority world contexts (including the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and European Countries). These distinctions give a guide to

the kinds of economic and social conditions that some of the young people may have been experiencing. However, this division is a little artificial as within the UK, Europe and North American contexts, and beyond, the specific groups of children and young people who took part in 62 of the studies were living in economically disadvantaged conditions or experiencing significant health inequalities.

Figure 2 – Contexts in which studies occurred (Montreuil et al 2021)



Some studies focused on small, isolated or rural communities, some on urban and metropolitan areas, townships and favelas. In addition to these national and community level contexts, although settings were not always defined, some authors also described the variety of institutional contexts including schools and alternative education settings (19 studies), community venues (22), homes (2) and health and youth justice settings (5) where research activities took place. These contexts were important, along with the experiences of the children and young people involved and the topics explored, because they influenced the strategies used to engage with and support peer researchers and participants and the approach to ethics.

Fox (2019:348) provides an extract showing how research contexts were described.

"Red Hook is an island within an island, geographically isolated from the rest of Brooklyn. It is further isolated because it is a largely Black and Latinx community living in public housing surrounded by the majority white, affluent neighborhoods of Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill, and Park Slope.

Red Hook - at least the parts that haven't been gentrified - is a small, close-knit community that as one community member described ... 'feels like a village or a place to escape from'. The feeling of community was strengthened when Red Hook was devastated by Super Storm Sandy in 2012. Red Hook rallied and has since felt a simultaneous resurgence of community organizing and support as well as ongoing neglect and abandonment by the City and State. For instance, in some buildings, boilers haven't been replaced and rampant mold is making residents sick (Red

Hook Initiative, 2016). The neighborhood includes about 11,000 residents, 8000 of whom live in public housing projects known as the Red Hook Houses.

The Red Hook Houses were built in the late 1930s as part of a Federal Works Program under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and they are one of the largest public housing projects in New York City. Originally built to house the longshoremen who worked the docks in Red Hook, in the 1960s, the shipping industry moved to New Jersey, and the longshoremen were leaving for the suburbs. Red Hook ceased to be a thriving port, unemployment rates were high, and the demographics of the projects in Red Hook shifted.

By the 1980s, the Red Hook Houses were populated with majority Black and Latinx people, still with high rates of unemployment and bearing the brunt of the City's civic neglect"

As this extract shows, some of the economic, housing and health disadvantages that this community had been experiencing was long term.

3.3 People involved in peer research

The included articles spanned the whole age range from 5 to 25 years: 11 articles included 5-12 year olds, 62 included teenagers and 23 included 20-25 year olds. Twenty-six articles focused on two of these age ranges but only one article included children and young people aged 5-25 (Heykoop, 2017). The identities and experiences of the young people in these studies was not always described in detail, but they included children and young people of Black, Asian, Latino or other minoritised ethnicity (18), children and young people with experience of migration (6), disabled young people (4), care experienced young people (2) and LGBTQ (1). Some studies specified that they only included people identified as female (10) or male (1). (See Appendix 2 Table 3.3).

Within these studies children and young people of all ages were described as having a variety of research roles including as participants, self-researchers investigating their own lives and contexts, peer researchers investigating the views of other children, peer leaders initiating and leading research that other people carried out and as young advisors. These terms were not widely used. For example, the term peer researcher was only used in two studies. Almost always, children and young people were conducting research alongside adults in similar or supervisory roles. The term used most frequently was co-researcher (25) (see section 5.1).

3.4 Topics of peer research

The violence focus within the papers included a) abuse and child sexual exploitation (family violence, violence against children, sexual violence and intimate partner violence) (13); b) violence or resistance to violence within education and bullying (including cyberbullying) (19); c) "offending" or "anti-social" behaviour (including gun violence, crime, riots and conflict) (10); d) patterns of inequality potentially contributing to violence (described as structural violence) including gender violence, homophobia, poverty and homelessness, media violence and racism (26); and health related violence (violence understood as a public health problem, suicide or violence when in contact with health systems) (12). The health papers included three related to the Covid-19 pandemic (see Appendix 2 Table 3.4).

4. What is the thinking behind how children, young people and adults do peer research?

This section focuses on content from the *process papers* and a little data from the *review of reviews* revealed where they continued information about the underlying the ways of thinking. The section outlines ways of thinking which guides peer research in terms of:

- 4.1 thinking about the world and children and young people
- 4.2 thinking about the research process
- 4.3 thinking about learning together

These ways of thinking are important, just as like economic and social contexts, as they influence what actually happens in practice (see section 5 and 6).

4.1 Ways of thinking about the world, research and children and young people

In the review of process papers, authors described their approach to adults and children or young people thinking together about the world. This often connected to ideas of critical pedagogy, dialogue and the writing of Paola Freire and sometimes Henry Giroux. This approach to thinking about the world together through dialogue, action and reflection was described as important because it helps everyone pick apart and understand the root causes of long term patterns of inequality; it also helps strengthen children and young people in their roles as change makers.

Taking a critical approach to thinking about youth, childhood, race, gender, post-colonialism and disability was also important for many authors. A critical thinking approach is important because it helps challenge the idea that there is something natural or inevitable about the cultural contexts in which peer research is taking place. And learning about critical thinking, for example, the social model of disability, can help children and young people challenge some of the discrimination they face. The critical thinking authors that were referred to often also use a critical pedagogy approach. They included bell hooks and Patricia Hill Collins (see Rombalski p.24) writing on black feminist thought, David Harvey writing about capitalism, neoliberalism and 'accumulation by dispossession' and an introduction to critical race theory from Delgado and Stefancic.

Shiller (2018:27)

"Critical Race Theory (CRT) provides a theoretical framework that can help explain why urban districts, particularly ones with large Black and Brown populations like Baltimore, Detroit, Chicago, and New Orleans, are the target of reform efforts like school closures. CRT uses race as an analytical tool to critically examine structural inequalities and their intersections with race. At its core, CRT has four basic tenets that serve as a framework:

- 1. Race and racism are defining characteristics of American society.*
- 2. Dominant ideologies and narratives serve as a cover for self-interest, power, and privilege of dominant groups in American society.*
- 3. The experiential knowledge of people of color is appropriate, legitimate, and integral to analyzing and understanding racial inequality.*
- 4. Race is a social construct, and cannot be essentialized. No group has a single identity. Rather, identities are complex and intersectional, complex and contextual (Delgado and*

Stefanic 2012)."

NB Critical Race Theory is also applied to the UK.

The review of reviews identified that children need to be viewed by adult facilitators as competent knowledge producers, as Bovarnick et al. (2018) point out "if the ethos of power sharing and the principles of participation are not well understood, the specific dynamics of participatory research can easily turn exploitative, rather than being an 'empowering' experience for young people." Review papers commonly pointed out that this was often difficult for adult researchers and seeing children as competent was a *thorny* issue, meaning that there is a bias in literature for peer research with older and/or more articulate children and young people (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2018; Shamrova & Cummings, 2017). The emphasis on critical thinking was also present in the generalised critique papers.

Other aspects of theoretical and community wisdom were also valuable to peer researchers. Valuing community wisdom (often called indigenous thinking) also connects to the idea of post-colonialism and critical approaches to childhood and youth because they all challenge the idea that academic knowledge can give the strongest account of truth. Communities, children and young people all have perspectives on the world that give valuable insights and understanding the world from multiple perspectives helps generate stronger knowledge. Valuing indigenous thinking also strengthens the relationships between outside researchers and the communities and environments they work with.

Wood et al. (2020: 394)

"Inuit resilience resources are reflected in Inuit Quajimajatuqangit (i.e. Inuit world view or traditional knowledge; Tagalik, 2015). This philosophical model emphasises the interconnectedness of the individual and the importance of relationship with one's community (including ancestors) and environment (including land, language and culture) in these interactive processes. As Tagalik (2015) explains, "Wellness can be framed through interconnectivity and relational supports" (p. 30). The learning that takes place through this type of community engagement encompasses non-verbal cultural transmissions that go beyond western conceptualizations of knowledge. This imparts a sense of cultural belonging and personhood, essential to psychosocial wellbeing."

Other authors stressed the value of thinking about the world in terms of complexity (Crook 2020) and taking a step back from our usual ways of thinking by making the familiar strange or engaging with radical imagination.

Fox (2019: 357)

Working in the Red Hook community described in 3.2, Fox also wrote about how Hartman and Ginwright provided useful ways of thinking about the world peer researchers were exploring.

*"In Saiyda Hartman's (1997) book *Scenes of Subjection*, she re-examines various scenes of racial subjugation during and since slavery to point out that there's pain and also resistance in mundane everyday experiences that don't always get noticed. Hartman's book takes up powerful ideas about the limits and trickiness of empathy, about spectacle, about treacheries of othering, and about the ways slavery and freedom are intertwined. But, a foundational idea in the book is that if we want to deeply understand racial oppression in our context, we need to defamiliarize the familiar."*

...

The importance of imagination in PAR projects is well established. ... Shawn Ginwright's writings on collective radical imagination emphasizes how this part of the work fosters hope, vision, and action. We noted that a collective radical imagination is not automatic. To access a community's desires and radical imagination takes careful work, deliberate design, and creative methodologies....

We 'defamiliarized the familiar' through looking at our own mundane experiences anew as well as excavating history and building an understanding of context. Thus we were able to think in complex ways about the ways pain, injustice, liberation, collectivity, and resistance can all be wrapped up and implicated together. Further, we could articulate out loud how the problems we were witnessing were not the fault of individuals in Red Hook, but produced by structural forces."

Cutting across all of these ways of thinking was an understanding of intersectionality (how different oppression connected to different identities and experiences cut across and layer over each other).

Pech et al. (2020:305)

"In this study, we take a socio-ecological approach rooted in multiracial feminist frameworks to approach a YPAR project designed to build resilience and critical hope of youth in the face of systemic oppression. Multiracial feminism, first of all, assumes positions of equality between all individuals rather than a hierarchy. It is focused on relational aspects of how people of all backgrounds come together. ... A multiracial feminist perspective also makes conscious the intersections where power and privilege shape gender, race, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status....A multiracial feminist framework argues for complex, continuous, and multidimensional views of gender that are experienced by individuals in ways that are agentic and creative.

Adultism is rooted in systems of patriarchy that position women and youth in inferior relations to men; moreover, this system assumes a hierarchy of positionality that is accompanied by the privilege to resources, access, and decision making (hooks, 2004)."

To step into these ways of thinking with children and young people, many authors of the process papers stressed the importance of reflexivity and reflection. Reflexivity means thinking about how where we stand and how our past experiences affect what and how we see things when we look out into the world. In peer research, reflexivity and engaging with critical ways of thinking outlined in this section was ongoing and started in practice, at the moment of planning projects and continued throughout. As shown in sections 5.2.12 and 6.2.4 it was a way of ensuring that recruitment and methods worked well, that data was fully understood and that risks were managed.

Norton and Sliep (2019: 876)

"Critical Reflexive Model (Sliep and Norton 2016) provided the backbone of this research, both as a framework for facilitating reflexivity and agency among participants and for a critical examination of the data gathered during the workshops. Reflexivity in this sense refers to an increased ability to understand how meaning is shaped and how our actions are formed by and from the world (Gilbert and Sliep 2009). This is important for both researchers and participants. The model centres on the importance of creating a dialogical space in which participants are able to safely share their stories; and a continuous and open dialogue are

facilitated among participants and between the researchers and participants. Telling and witnessing stories in such a space aids in both self-appraisal and an appraisal of the self as a participant of collective action (Gilbert and Sliep 2009). Deconstructing individual and collective stories, in turn, can lead to the development of self and relational reflexivity, increased critical consciousness, contextual savvy, agency and social performativity (Sliep 2010). Such a process is aided when viewed as an iterative and continuous process that focuses on four aspects outlined by the model: understanding power and breaking down the effect of dominant discourses in your life; identifying values and building a positive identity; facilitating agency by focusing on personal strengths; and accountable social performance (Sliep and Norton 2016)."

Finally, a strength-based approach to thinking was important in many studies. This involved recognising and building on the strengths, assets, competences, agency and aspirations that individuals and communities have. This way of thinking helped ensure that children and young people were seen as competent to lead research, that the communities and individuals they researched were not portrayed in terms of deficits or blame, and that strengths were pulled together to build coalitions for action.

4.2 Ways of thinking about peer research

As mentioned in section 3.3., these sampled process papers, children and young people of all ages were described as having a variety of research roles. These terms connected to the ways of thinking about research in the studies. The majority of papers (44) used a Youth Participatory Action Research (PAR or YPAR) approach, often (24) connecting back to the work of Cammarota and Fine (2008) or Cahill (2007). In **YPAR**, children or young people reflected on and investigated their own lives, investigated contexts or the perspectives of other children, young people and adults or both. At other times (10) children and young people were advisors as part of a young people's advisory group (YAPG) or intergenerational advisory group (IAG) alongside adults. In some **YPAG** studies young people were involved in generating data. YPAR and YPAG ways of thinking about research both agree that children and young people have valuable understandings of the world which are important sources of knowledge. Both approaches contained references to children and young people's involvement in research being a means of democratising knowledge production and the importance of removing the hierarchies between adult/child or academic/community co-researchers. In YPAR there tended to be a stronger focus on action, but as with YPAG research, this action did not always involve children and young people (see Templeton box below).

Ritterbusch et al.'s (2020:2) YPAR on violence against children explains YPAR in this way.

"In this paper, we address the ongoing call for child participation and the democratization of the research process (Aitken, 2001; Cahill, 2007; Qvortrup, 1997; Valentine, 2004; Van Beers, 1996), reflecting on the lessons learned from our methodological exploration and use of child- and youth-driven participatory action research (hereafter, YPAR) on violence against children in Uganda. As Cahill reminds us, " ... '[d]eep' participatory research with, rather than on participants requires that we take seriously the processes of collaboration and building a

community of researchers, and that requires the development of research proficiency among all participants” (Cahill, 2007, p. 301).

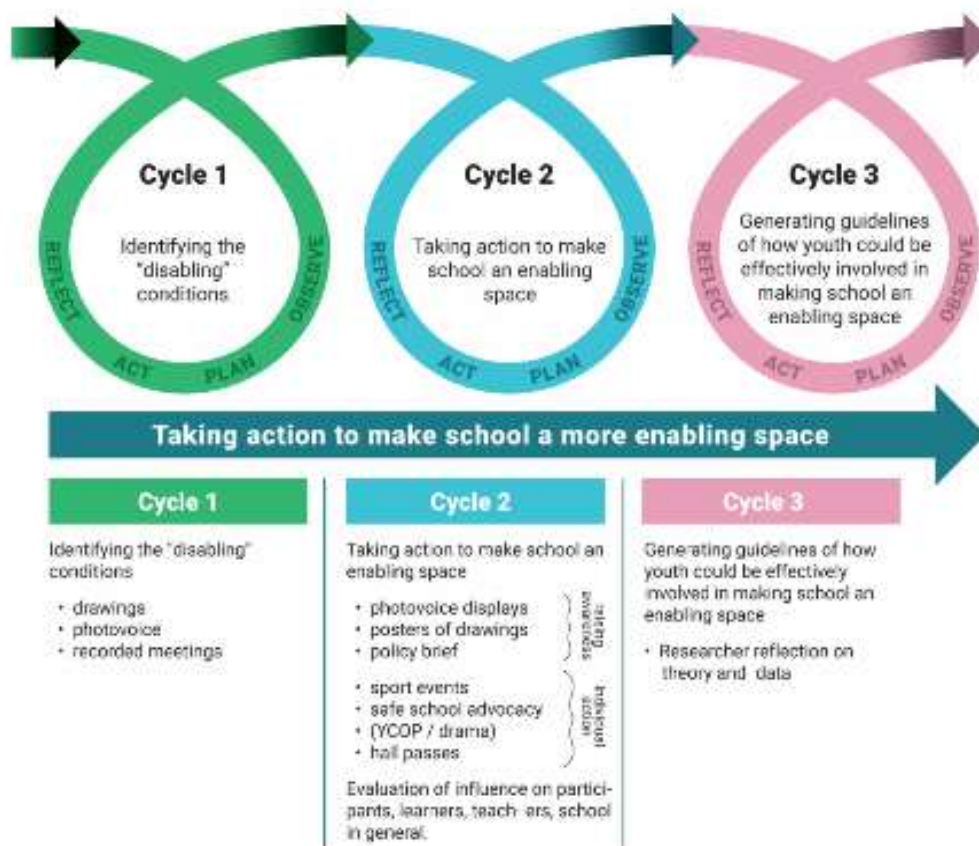
In this sense, Cahill’s NYC-based YPAR collective sets an example for youth-driven research teams as to how to frame “[child/youth] participation as an approach (as opposed to a method) which takes seriously young people’s agency and capacity. It is crucial to ask what domains of research and action are young people involved in (or excluded from) and what is the purpose of their involvement?” (Cahill, 2007, p. 299). Moving forward, therefore, we must constantly reflect on the domains in which children and young people participate and actively carve out spaces in which their agency and transformative, collective energy can be catalysed for long-term action and youth-driven contributions to the evidence base on their lives and futures.”

Templeton et al’s (2020:989) study on sexual health described working with a YPAG.

“A core group of six members [the YPAG] attended the majority of meetings and activities throughout. At each stage, group members received capacity-building support to prepare and support them to engage effectively with the research activities. They designed youth-friendly ethical procedures and research documents and suggested specific prompts to include in the interview schedule for the researcher to use when interviewing 20 heterosexual participants for the substantive phase of the study. The YPAG also carried out an independent analysis of the data,¹ which was compared with the researchers’ analysis to inform the overall interpretation and findings.”

In YPAR in particular, but also in other ways of thinking about research, it was common (in 27) to write about **cycles or loops of reflection**, action and dialogue. This reflects the ways of thinking about the world that have already been described, which show that knowledge is strengthened if surface understandings are reflected upon to unpick less obvious meanings, and if these new meanings are tested in action – perhaps through further investigation of other people’s perspectives and contexts or through social action (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 – Thinking of YPAR as loops (Mathikithela 2019: 81)



As the review papers highlight, time was a significant enabler or barrier to peer research teams being able to complete these repeated loops. But the length of time needed to complete any one loop varied from days to years, depending on the sorts of actions that were involved. For example, action was sometimes dialogue with a community of people at a two day event, at other times it was a large scale interview study over a wide geographical area. (see 5.3 for more about these range of methods)

4.3 Ways of learning about research

In line with the ways of thinking about the world and about research outlined above, where ways of learning together were described in the sampled process papers, there was a strong emphasis on dialogue and group process and reflecting on experiences and sharing power (see Aldana 2016 below). Research and knowledge creation is seen as an ongoing process of learning from experience and other sources of knowledge. Appreciating that learning together requires flexibility about process and timing and providing multiple opportunities for engagement was also mentioned. This informed the approach to practices of research orientation and training and reflexivity subsequently used by and with peer researchers (see 5.2.3).

Aldana et al (2016: 350) describe creating spaces of dialogic learning through paying attention to group process.

“To develop and maintain an environment of mutual learning and collective support (Jacobson & Rugeley, 2007), we had to pay close attention to group dynamics during this stage. Intergroup dialogue pedagogy recognizes that individuals have multiple, intersecting social group identities. These identities may potentially be in conflict with one another, as well as with the social identities of others (Cole, 2008).

This pedagogical approach encourages inquiry that engages rather than ignores differences in social power, to build collective consciousness and coalitions for change (Dessel, Rogge, & Garlington, 2006; Zúñiga, Nagda, & Sevig, 2002). To cultivate equal status in critical-dialogic learning, intergroup dialogue pedagogy recommends the use of multipartiality when facilitating dialogues. Multipartiality is a facilitation practice that balances social power within intergroup interactions by attending to the identities and experiences of all group members. Particular attention is paid to challenging hegemonic ideology, norms, and narratives in society (Maxwell, Nagda, Thompson, & Gurin, 2011; Rifkin, Millen, & Cobb, 1991).

The use of multipartiality was essential at this stage, because it was important that our urban youth with marginalized experiences were not being tokenized for the learning benefit of their more privileged suburban peers. We tried to facilitate discussions that paid equal attention to the experiences of all participants and surfaced counternarratives.

Thus, we encouraged team members with privileged identities—who at times believed that race had not affected their lives—to share personal experiences as beneficiaries of racial privilege, bystanders, or perpetrators of racial injustice. White youth were also asked to consider why they did not notice issues of race on a day-to-day basis. Asian American youth from the suburbs were encouraged to think of ways their socioeconomic background and notions of the model minority may have shaped their experiences.”

Learning is informed by contexts and intentions as well as relationships and therefore brought theoretical perspectives into moments of learning together, to understand how a youth led research collective learned together about context, power, assets and intention. Rombalski (2020:35) therefore included Patricia Hill Collins’s (2009) domains of-power framework (see Figure 4) to help think about the external relationships and networks of power that might have an impact.

Figure 4- Domains of power framework from Patricia Hill Collins (2009)

STRUCTURAL DOMAIN Institutional structures	CULTURAL DOMAIN Ideas and ideologies
DISCIPLINARY DOMAIN Organizational practices	INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN Relationships and communities

Rombalski (2020: 41 & 48)

"Social movements sculpted the frames that youth activists brought to their pedagogy, from levelling to the collectivity....

"They [the youth led collective] utilized two main concepts, critical pedagogy and asset based pedagogies of care and affection. They supported a relational pedagogy of love with the power to disrupt, especially when used in collective ways. In anti-racist education work, many of us are working within and against systems of oppression. We need more than one frame. We can refuse a reductive approach to pedagogy and instead amplify pedagogies as collective."

5. How do children, young people and adults put peer research into practice?

This section draws on the *review of reviews* and from the *process papers* as follows:

- 5.1 How children and young people's involvement in different research stages and levels of influence within these were reported *in the review of review papers*
- 5.2 How children and young people lead and engage in mechanisms of research and action identified *in the process papers* (with blue box examples of peer leadership in each)
- 5.3 How and when different data generation methods are used (5.3).

Accompanying tables are in section 5 of Appendix 2.

5.1 Involvement and influence in different aspects of peer research

Level of participation or involvement of youth in different stages of the research process in peer research was assessed by 18 of the *review papers*. There was no consistency in the way that stages of research were described. There was also rarely sufficient detail to judge the extent to which children, young people's and adults involvement influenced what actually happened. This made it impossible to use a common measure of whether different stages of the research were participant-, peer- or adult coresearcher- led. Most commonly review papers used Shier's Participation Matrix to assess participation of children and young people in the studies, with some using Hart's ladder of participation or Lansdown and O'Kane's (2015) 'participation continuum'. Although other reviews developed their own frameworks for assessment (see Appendix 2 Table 5.1).

Full participation and/or including youth as co-researchers was rare across the reviews of studies. For some reviews the greatest involvement was at the dissemination stage (Shamova & Cummings, 2017), but for others greatest involvement was found in the delivery of sessions (Gavine et al. 2017) or data collection (Grace & Knight, 2019) and in priority setting/research design (Jacques et al., 2012; Sellars et al., 2020). In contrast, other reviews found the least participation in data analysis and dissemination (Jacques et al., 2012) and or at the agenda or research priority stage (Wilson et al., 2020; Valdez et al., 2020). The inconsistency in the levels of participation may be reflected by the wide range of different approaches to peer research in the reviews. Review authors also highlighted that it was not always the case that when research teams followed a particular peer research approach, such as community-based participatory research, that the researchers follow all the principles of that research approach (e.g. Agdal et al., 2019) resulting in those studies lacking in youth participation in some stage of the research design. Youth participatory action research was often shown to be an approach that had the highest levels of involvement of children and young people.

In their review, Samova and Cummings (2017) concluded that "children and youth tend to be involved at the latest stages of research and are under-included at early and data analysis stages". They felt that "this trend could create a situation in which children can be used as decoration or their voices can be manipulated". Wilson et al. (2020) highlighted that "when young people are involved earlier in the research process, they have more influence over the direction of the research

rather than just how it is conducted. Therefore, young people can see that their contribution has a more profound impact on research outcomes”.

Figure 5- Strategies used to involve children in key stages of research (Montreuil et al 2021: 6)

Key Step	Number of Studies ^{1,2}	Strategies Used (Number of Studies)	Children's Age Range (in Years)	Context and Type of Project Where Available
Identifying or refining the research question	25 (44%)	Group meetings; focus groups; advisory groups, group discussions, etc. (16)	3–25; peak from 7 to 14	Early childhood programs; preschool; primary, middle, or high school; nationwide project; community; university project; NGO in developing countries; Mixed contexts
		Capacity-building, training (4)	7–13	Primary school; child research program; NGO program in developed countries
		Survey (picture) (1)	4–5	Preschool
		Mosaic approach (1)	3–4	Preschool
		Sensory tour (video-recall, drawings) (1)	3–6	Early childhood programs
Choosing the most appropriate research design and data collection methods	26 (46%)	Notebooking (1)	10	Primary school
		Focus groups, advisory groups, reference groups (8)	3–25; peak from 7 to 13	Preschool; primary, middle, or high school; nationwide project; university project; mixed contexts
		Capacity-building, training, workshops (6)	6–18; peak from 10 to 13	Primary, middle, or high school; child research program
Children as data collectors	20 (35%)	Mosaic approach (2)	3–4; 6–7	Preschool, primary school
		Interview conducted by children (14)	5–19 years old; higher peak from 10 to 12	Preschool; primary, middle, or high school; children with disabilities or learning difficulties; community; mixed contexts
		Field observation by children (9)	5–18 years old; peak from 9 to 12	Preschool; primary, middle, or high school; child research program; healthcare; mixed contexts
		Questionnaires, surveys (8)	7–14 years old; peak from 10 to 12	Primary, middle, or high school; NGO program in developed or developing countries
Data interpretation and analysis ³	37 (65%)	Focus groups, advisory groups, reference groups; group discussions, etc. (12)	5–25; peak from 5 to 12	Early childhood program; preschool; primary school; nationwide project; university project; mixed contexts
		Capacity-building, training, workshops (5)	6–18; peak from 7 to 11	Primary, middle, or high school; child research; NGO program in developed countries
		Sorting exercises (4)	4–13; peak from 7 to 11	Preschool; primary school; child research program
		Photovoice, photo-elicitation, photography ⁴ (6)	3–5; 8–15	Preschool; primary, middle, or high school; community
		Mosaic approach (1)	6–7	Primary school
		Sensory tour (video-recall, drawing) (1)	3–6	Early childhood program
		Presentation, PowerPoint (6)	9–14	Preschool, primary, middle, or high school; child research program
Identifying to whom to disseminate the research results or dissemination of data	19 (33%)	Exhibit, collage (7)	3–12	Preschool, primary, middle, or high school; child research program; community; mixed contexts
		DVD, film (3)	6–19; peak from 9 to 12	Primary school; community
		School dissemination (2)	10–18	Preschool, primary, middle, or high school
		Guide, article (2)	7–8; 12	Primary school; child research program
		Drama (1)	7–13	NGO program in developed countries
		Time capsule (1)	10–12	Primary school
		Meeting with policy makers (1)	10–18	Middle and high school

Studies that had the highest level of youth participation were those that were willing to share power with children and young people, willing to consider and address power imbalances and had skilled adult facilitators who spent time supporting and training peer researchers.

5.2 Engagement in aspects of peer research and action related to violence

As shown in Figure 6, in topics related to violence, there examples of children and young people exercising leadership in relation to 12 aspects of research. This occurred as part of ongoing cycles of planning, acting and reflecting. There were often multiple loops of data collection and analysis, sometimes returning to refocus topics before proceeding again to collect data and eventually share findings. Or, findings were sometime shared mid-way through a project. We call these the 12 mechanisms of research.

Figure 6 – Twelve mechanisms of peer research in which children and young people lead



In practice, in the sampled papers, the extent to which children and young people led or were involved within each mechanism varied. Peer researchers more often than not had a role in 1-5 (connecting, training, choosing topics, deciding methods, investigating and data analysis). In about half of the papers, peer researchers were described as being involved in 0 and 7-9 (planning and taking action and sharing findings). Reports of peer researcher's involvement in preparation and planning were rare. Mention of peer researchers involvement in evaluating the results of their work and rolling processes of reflection were even rarer, however this can in part be explained by the fact that the *about* papers included reflections about these activities (see section 7.2) and may have been conducted but not written about in the process papers.

Where research initiated and led by peers or communities was reported, this was often due to established connections between adult researchers and communities or groups of young people. It is however not possible to quantify this across the papers due to variability in how stages and dynamics are reported. For example, in any one study, children and young people could move from a position of being involved towards taking leadership:

Sawyer (2018:86)

"Throughout the process from design to dissemination, this project moved from youth engagement to youth participation to being youth led (alongside mentors) in the data analysis and dissemination phases. The action component of the project included educational performance as a dissemination tool, dialogue with community partner organizations, and direct engagement with audience members on how to best address youth depression in the local community."

Factors that enable peer leadership, and **blue box examples** of this, are given in the subsections below (5.2.1 - 12)

Factors that promoted ethical practice, positive outcomes and credible knowledge are integrated into later sections of this report (sections 6.2, 7.1 and 8.4)

5.2.1 Prepare and Plan

Preparation and planning involved understanding the contexts in which research was taking place and building connections to organisations and individuals within the community. These were also conditions that facilitated change as a result of social action (see section 8.4). To prepare and plan, research teams also needed to gain access to and distribute resources. For example, buying and distributing equipment, providing venues, finding time to think through possibilities and adult facilitators thinking through their own relationship to the project and their facilitation style:

Schiller (2018:30)

"Prompted by calls from community groups to understand the school closings, this researcher worked with representatives from two local community-based organizations, the Baltimore Algebra Project and New Lens2 to launch a research project that would help make sense of the closings, and that would surface the perspectives of the people most affected by them. These two organizations are both youth-led activist groups working on issues of educational injustice. The young people are all from Baltimore and have gone through public schools there. Based on a pre-existing relationship, they approached the researcher in an effort to understand the issue of school closing more deeply and to use research to fight the policy of closing schools in Baltimore."

5.2.2 Connect Engage Recruit

Recruiting peer researchers was helped by providing:

- time and consideration to building relationships amongst the group
- existing connections (between young people or between young people and the adults and organisations involved in research or supporting the development of a feeling of a shared network among the participants)
- checking in at the beginning of each session on things they were struggling with and strengths they were bringing to group



- relaxed, playful and welcoming environments
- opportunities for paid employment
- routines that helped establish safe spaces
- residential events (with risk assessment and management strategies in place)

A neighbourhood based systematic approach to reaching out to participants promoted inclusion of participants (see box below). Direct conversations between peer researchers and potential participants also increased recruitment. This happened both informally and through information sharing meetings (sometimes also attended by parents). Ongoing barriers were identified to engagement with children and young people who do not have digital access or who do not have strong reading skills and refusal of parental consent.

Gardner et al (2019: 8)

“Youth Hub collected surveys using a door-to-door approach, where the youth research team canvassed every household to determine where youth of age (initially 15-24, later expanded to 14-24) lived, and attempted to give each youth within the household several chances to complete a survey. Youth Hub chose to first focus on a specific sub-neighbourhood of Codman Square, with a total population of about 2,000.

This particular sub-neighbourhood is known for its rich community involvement and high social capital, which the team hoped would contribute to higher trust and a greater response rate. The survey team used a spreadsheet to keep track of which households were approached and when, how many youth of age lived there, what the response was, and how many surveys were completed. This helped the team identify which houses they needed to return to and which houses were completed. The youth were accompanied in the community by an adult supervisor at all times and conducted surveys in pairs for added safety.”

5.2.3 Training-Orientation

Only 11 of the review papers discussed training for peer researchers and information discussed was mostly descriptive noting elements of peer training. Figure 7 displays a summary of the elements discussed relating to peer training identified by the synthesis of the review papers.



The synthesis of review papers highlights some things to consider when designing peer training:

- Viewing CYP as competent to form their own views and learn research skills
- Need for a shift from deficit to strength-based approach
- Involving a shift in power from adult researchers to peer researchers
- Importance of training of adult facilitators

Examination of the process papers revealed that training could be anything from one session to 16 weeks long. Formal training was often given on methods and ethics. It also included training to listen and to be empathetic.

Figure 7 - Summary of elements of peer training from review papers



In some of the process papers, the word orientation might be a clearer description of this “training” stage. Orientation was about starting to develop a critical consciousness about the issues being studied and peer researchers directing the range and flow of issues discussed.

This was achieved by:

- Reflecting on personal experiences to surface power differentials
- Engaging with videos or summary texts and discussions on critical thinking
- Learning relevant terminology and listening to presentations
- Building openness and desire for change
- Taking time for fun too
- Peer led activities

Bertrand et al (2017:146) describes the kind of critical thinking that might be involved:

Engagement with critical texts presented possible doorways for indirect forms of role re-mediation and opportunities to explore the self as related to others within larger power structures. ... Instead, engagement with the texts helped to disrupt mainstream, oppressive ideas about identity and power relationships. In this way, the texts opened up possibilities for a critical

Together the group synthesized their collective knowledge and understanding of best practices to develop a shared logic model of youth employment, contextualized for the Codman Square neighbourhood. ...This process was critical not only for better understanding the broader issue and desired outcomes, but also for developing trust and collaboration amongst local stakeholders. Each person and organization involved was able to identify where their work fit in the broader context, while the group as a whole recognized where gaps in resources existed”.

“Peer Researchers worked with the project manager to develop multiple focus group guides – one to assess Peer Leaders’ perceptions of the program and a second to assess middle school-aged youth’s perceptions of dating, relationships, and dating violence.

*Peer Researchers were instrumental in developing the specific aims and items included in the focus group guides. ...
Finally, Peer Researchers helped develop the quantitative survey instrument that was used as a pre-test and post-test for the program. ...
Peer Researchers combined and consolidated items and under the supervision of the project manager, piloted the instrument twice with youth who did not participate in the Start Strong program."*

5.2.6 Investigate Data Generation

In some situations, a peer led approach to data collection made participants feel more comfortable in speaking about their experiences, including in relation to violence.

Ritterbusch et al (2020: 5)

"Our youth-driven research process involved child-led interviewing techniques ... peer-led interviewing is a strategy that helps convert spaces of potential revictimization, fear and shame into safe spaces of rapport and empathy between peers who hold a deep understanding of the stories and experiences shared. This peer- and child-led process reframes the research environment as a space for collective reflection on the past, present and future and creates contexts for self-empowerment where young people recognize the strength implicit in their survival strategies and resilience."



But in other situations, there was less comfort between peers. It was important therefore to think through the topic and relationships between peer and participant (see section 6).

Peer leadership in data collection occurred when peers:

- Had a clear cocreated guide to follow
- Felt confident in negotiating consent
- Conducted group and individual discussions and activities with support when needed (see section 8.3)
- Had opportunities to reflect with other people after the research interaction

It was also important to ensure that:

- Participants felt comfortable to participate – including cafes
- Adults provided logistical support where needed
- Data collection was an iterative process, so findings from one round of data collection fed into another, rather than data collection being a one-off event
- Peer researchers can maintain contact with their coresearchers through regular face to face or online means

Starting data collection by investigating peer researchers' own experiences was a frequent strategy. The use of multiple methods was also frequent and beneficial (see section 5.3)

5.2.7 Data analysis

Peer-led data analysis is facilitated when:

- Peer researchers take fieldnotes
- Analysis discussions are led by someone with group dialogue facilitation skills
- Youth are continually encouraged to see themselves as experts in their own communities, and to draw expertise from their own experiences and activism
- Peer and adult coresearchers engage in ongoing reflexivity (see section 5.2.12)
- Peer researchers develop a group identity, giving them confidence in their capacity for analysis
- Peer researchers develop a framework for analysis from a sample of the data (even if subsequent data analysis is conducted with technical support (IT or personnel))
- Peer researchers are encouraged to ‘think backwards’ from the data and consider their interpretation of potential causes of the situations being described
- There are cycles of data analysis and collection and long enough timescales to reflect – in some projects waiting a year was recommended
- Captioning images and artefacts with written interpretations
- Using analysis frameworks and questions – e.g. SHOWED (see Mathikithela & Wood 2019 box below)
- Peer researchers present emerging findings to participants and communities to deepen analysis
- Not limiting definitions of conceptual categories - conceptualizations of each analytical category were not limited to academic definitions or typologies of violence and resilience



Bristow & Atkinson (2020: 121)

"There were two stages to the data analysis:

- 1. After each focus group the co-researchers facilitated a collaborative data analysis, by asking the participants to write down the main things that had been discussed and then group them together (to provide 'codes').*
- 2. The co-researchers then collected the 'codes' from each focus group and grouped them into sub-themes and themes using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). They used data from their playground observations to cross reference with the themes. At a later date, the co-researchers then read through the transcripts (that had been transcribed) and selected quotes to reflect the themes and sub-themes. They had previously practised this with an arbitrary topic during the research methods training. ... The child co-researchers used their observation data to triangulate the findings from the participatory thematic analysis".*

Mathikithela & Wood (2019: 82)

They gave each visual artefact a caption and wrote a short narrative explaining it. To aid with analysis of the visual images and narratives, the teacher-researcher provided them with the questions devised by Wang and Burris (1997), which make up the acronym, SHOWED—what do you See in this picture? what is really Happening? how does it affect Our lives? Why is it happening? what can we Do about it?

Templeton et al (2020: 990)

The YPAG ...analysis was conducted during a one-day workshop facilitated by the first author (MT) who was there primarily to take notes and document how the group interpreted the data. The group was provided with a selection of individual quotations (217 data units) which ranged from a few words to more sizeable chunks of text, approximately 15 per transcript. Their preferred method was to read extracts aloud, discuss and agree on coding as a group.

5.2.8 Plan Action

Often the plan for action with research findings was preformulated. Participants were equally involved in this stage as peer researchers.

Action was planned by peer researchers and participants when:

- They were prompted to consider how and where they could use these powerful messages to have the most social impact.
- They worked with internationally renowned disabled activists, graphic design students, an actor coach and graphic illustrator.
- (peer) Researchers returned to groups of (peer) participants to feedback and plan action with them



Irby et al (2018: 1030)

"The group also began planning how, when, and where they would present their photos and narratives in the community. Some photos included content that would allow for one or more individuals to be recognizable, and the group agreed to exclude those photos from the community forum...."

Participants and study staff worked together to develop the invitation list for the forum, which included friends and family members and influential advocates from the community such as school personnel, representatives from local government and law enforcement, and researchers and staff"

5.2.9 Take Action

Peer researchers and participants took a range of actions using the findings from their research. Some of these actions were in relation to their own understandings of themselves and their contexts. The nature of the social actions they pursued related to the pre-existing opportunities and networks available to them and their ally individuals and organisations and the relationships and outputs/artefacts they created during the research. (Conditions which enabled change to sometimes occur as a result of these actions are also discussed in 7.3 and 8.4).



Examples of outputs, artefacts, events and activities used to take action were:

- Written research reports, summaries, fact sheets, elevator speeches, letters and presentations
- Exhibitions of art, photography and writing
- Live performance, screenings and presentations with question and answer sessions, round tables and post-performance discussions
- Fictional, provocative, research summary and documentary films
- Poems

- Community forums, meetings with decision makers (teachers, community workers, policy makers politicians at community, local, national and international levels) and joining decision-making committees
- Social media campaigns, street protests and acts of resistance
- Tour guides – to locations and through exhibitions
- Creating curricula and educational materials
- Building solidarities and understandings between peers
- Gathering around tables with decision makers to discuss findings

Key challenges were:

- How to maintain momentum towards social change beyond the project lifetime in the face of long enduring structural constraints
- How to ensure that children and young people's critical views are not silenced when they disrupt existing alliances between adults
- How to resist dominant ways of being in the spaces that they were stepping into – to continue to facilitate dialogue and opportunities for change

Gilhooly & Lee (2017: 144)

"Action!. ... Each of the brothers responded in ways that they selected. For example, Chit Poe began actively sharing what he had learned with peers, family members, and newly resettled families. Narko also began self-advocating by writing letters to state education officials about his inability to pass state mandated graduation exams. This campaign led to his being granted a variance allowing him to graduate despite not fulfilling state requirements. Gola wrote a letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in advance of the then Secretary of State's impending trip to Burma in 2011"

Sarti et al. (2018: 409)

"the photo stories table as a means for communicating children's stories turned out to be an extremely powerful tool in facilitating dialogue. The children had the opportunity to literally gather round the table with policymakers, show them their photographs and tell their stories. This caused a change in the mind-set of individual policymakers who were drawn into children's stories and felt the urgency for action. This led them to evaluate their own policies critically and define a new strategy for the future better fitting the daily realities of children".

5.2.10 Evaluate

Evaluation as part of the research process was rarely discussed in the process papers (although different ways of evaluating the success and outcomes of peer research is covered more substantially in section 7). In this section we therefore highlight just one example which highlights how peer can lead evaluation, and the importance of thinking of evaluation as an ongoing process:

Lugueti et al (2018: 8) described coevaluation between peers

"Carla [peer researcher] also organised six one-hour collaborative meetings with Loy [peer researcher] every fortnight. The collaborative meeting between Loy and Carla provided insights into the co-creation of knowledge with young women addressed in this paper. Carla debriefed

with Loy and planned to the upcoming sessions. All collaborative group meetings were audio-recorded and transcribed (166 pages in total)."

5.2.11 Share Disseminate

The process papers described how outputs created from peer research were sometimes created and shared without an explicit account of how they related to action. Additional dissemination activities included co-authoring articles, giving conference presentations, recording podcasts and street events. Behind these sharing activities there may have been intentions to promote or evoke action, but these were not described in process papers. Adult authors frequently described sharing research findings without any account of how peer researchers and participants were involved in this. Conversely involvement in dissemination was described, with an intention of action without an account of involvement in action (see below).



McClure (2017: 255)

"The third and last phase of the project led to another shift in the relationship between the youth and ourselves, one that required collaboration in organizing the presentations of youth narratives in the communities where they lived. We two researchers provided some technical assistance (e.g., temporary provision of photo projectors and megaphones) and, because of the community publicity that was generated prior to the presentations, funds for celebratory food and drink. Presentations were undertaken in a variety of venues—in two community halls, outdoors under a broad canvas cover in one village (due to the threat of rain), an open-air courtyard, and—in the case of the four urban cohorts who presented their narrations at one scheduled event—in a neighbourhood street blocked off for the occasion.

Taken together the narrative presentations centered on a host of serious social issues: family violence, corruption, illicit drug trafficking, forced marriage, sexual harassment of female workers, truncated educational and employment opportunities, and maltreatment of the poor. Underlying all of these issues were the themes of power, specifically the ways in which it is customarily abused, and the corresponding struggle for the rights of children, women, and other vulnerable groups. Several of the narratives included music, song, and dance, and all the dramatized stories and simulated radio interviews were video-taped as had been agreed by the participants. Indeed, the youth were uniformly keen to be video-taped so that there would not only be a record of their collective presentations, but there would be opportunities for dissemination of their perspectives on key social problems among a broader public audience, especially among governmental and nongovernmental officials having an interest in youth issues. In two villages, photos taken by several youth depicting daily village life were also presented with the use of a digital projector."

5.2.12 Rolling reflection

The rolling process of reflection at the heart of these mechanisms is described in section 6.2.4. Below we just give one example of how this worked in practice.

Ritterbusch et al. (2020:4)

"As part of the qualitative data collection training process, our team engaged in an exploration of researcher positionality that we call the "Window on the World." This exercise was developed by one of the authors as a visual training exercise to think through the research team members' personality strengths and weaknesses as data collectors, the connection of their life histories to the research agenda and the possible prejudices, stigmas or preconceived notions that may affect relationship-building and ethical data collection during fieldwork. The exercise entails drawing a window on large poster paper. Each section of the window contains information about the researcher's interpretive lens regarding personality, life history and prejudice or stigma surrounding the research community. Team members are asked to imagine children living in contexts of violence standing on the other side of the window. The objective is for each member of the YPAR team to return to this image of their window or interpretive lens on the world of violence against children after each day of fieldwork and reflect on ways to improve their relationship-building with other members of the research community in street spaces".

Reflective spaces for adult allies were also important. Some of this was achieved in writing together and stepping back to look at relationships, positions and interpretations and engaging in conversations and journaling.

Gardner 2018

"Just as we had learned to move beyond constructions which separate 'youth' and 'adult' as a team, writing together for publication disrupted the divide between us as 'academic' and 'non-academic' team member. This did not mean my team-mates considered themselves academics, nor was this identification something they desired. However, our capacity to be joint knowledge constructors became greatly enhanced due to the continuous rigor, depth and layers of reflection required of academic writing combined with our ongoing commitment to stay true to ourselves, individually, and as a team."

Chou (2015:440)

"Throughout the project, I ... negotiated both outsider and insider positions. As an outsider, I was not from the community: I was a graduate student ... and experienced social status as a researcher with relative success in education. This contrasts with the participants who were considered at risk from an educational standpoint. As an insider, I previously worked with and alongside marginalized youth, I have experienced marginalization as a second-generation immigrant and as an individual with a hearing impairment. Throughout the period of the PAR project, I also engaged in multiple formal roles within the community, which represent social power and intrinsic potential for oppression. On the other hand, these roles afforded credibility to advocate on the youths' behalf. To negotiate these positions, I regularly examined the dynamic connections between these various roles through reflection and journaling in order to uphold the priority to benefit the youth voice."

5.3 How and when different data generation methods are used

The methods used for data generation varied across the review papers. A common method of data collection was interviews and focus groups and most studies used creative methods to engage children and young people. Across the reviews, authors stress the need to be flexible during data

generation with children and young people and to offer multiple methods. Choice about methods is related to context and topic.

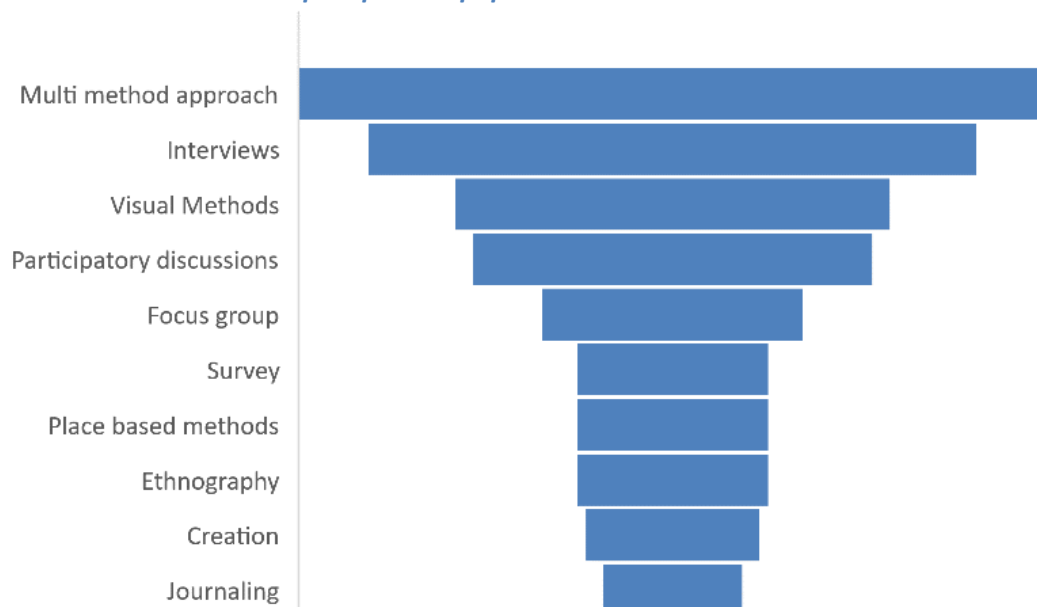
Montreuil et al (2021:11) in their review of studies note:

“The application and outcomes of strategies to foster children’s participation can vary based on context, for example if the strategies are applied in a classroom with neurotypical children, in a healthcare context or in a context with children with special needs (Frauenberger et al., 2011). While we noted that a certain participatory strategy, participatory design, was more often used in school contexts with children with disabilities and learning difficulties, we did not identify other trends that were context-specific and how they affected the implementation of the strategies....

Consistent with the views of Groundwater-Smith et al., (2014) and Gallacher and Gallagher (2008), we consider that the best approach should be tailored to the aims of the particular study, and that there is no hierarchy of the best way for children to participate (if at all). We agree with the statement by Palaiologou (2013) who posited that “how we can achieve participatory research with young children should be moderated to how we can achieve ethical research with young children where children are encouraged to take responsibility and ownership, while at the same time autonomy and shared responsibility is encouraged” (p. 692)

Figure 8 shows the range of methods used in the sampled process papers. Most often multiple methods were used (43). Interviews, visual, participatory discussion and focus groups, and place-based methods were the next most common activities. At least one in ten studies used each of the other methods identified in the review (focus groups, survey, place-based methods, ethnography, digital methods, performance and journaling).

Figure 8 - Methods used in sampled process papers

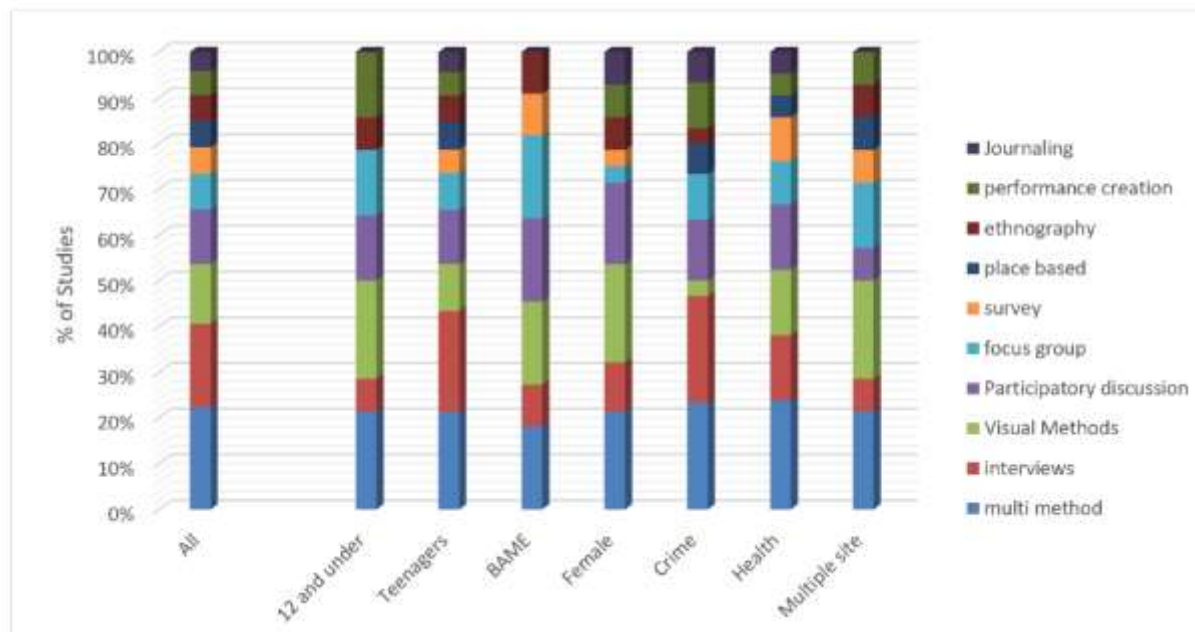


The multiple method studies often involved combinations of interviews (25), visual methods (16), participatory discussions (9), performance (8) and/or place-based approaches (7).

There was no consistent difference in methods used according to different contexts. However, age and experiences of participants and the nature of the topics discussed appeared to influence choice

of methods. Interviews, journaling, surveys and place-based methods were less used with children under 12 years while visual methods were more common. With teenagers, of the 62 studies, 30 used interviews and 29 used multiple methods. In studies involving BAME children and young people, place-based, digital, performance and journaling methods were under-represented. In studies involving just girls, visual and participatory discussion methods were particularly present. In research on issues related to criminalised behaviour, visual, survey and digital methods were also less present. In research on issues related to health, ethnography was largely absent, whereas this was a relatively common approach to research on structural violence (see Figure 9).

Figure 9 – Methods used according to populations, topics and scale



Where multiple and varied methods were successfully used, these were determined both by the time available, and the commitment to enabling participants to select methods that suited their communication styles.

Whittington (2019: 208) innovative two-year participatory action research study exploring sexual consent with young people through embedded and participatory research across seven sites. Participants chose the methods they would use to generate data.

“The ways in which data were captured throughout the work were negotiated with participants according to their interest ...In the early stages of research encounters, activities were captured with reflective field notes or by photographing group outputs (such as spider diagrams and definitions) to maintain anonymity before consent was more formally negotiated. As relationships with participants developed and a clearer sense of their interests and consent to the process emerged, data that would allow individual comments and views to be attributed were co-produced and recorded.”

Methods used included interactive workshops, discussion groups, film projects, the co-development of educational tools and resources and ethnographic methods.

Examples of how and when these methods were put into practice can be provided from our indexed database. Please do ask!

6. How is an ethical approach followed in peer research on violence related topics?

This section contains information from the *review of reviews* and *process papers*. It provides an overview of

6.1 Frameworks for Ethics in peer research

6.2 Additional insight on ethics from violence related papers

These two sections should be read together.

6.1 Existing Frameworks for Ethics

Only four of the reviews extensively address issues around ethics and safety of young people involved in YPAR (Bovarnick et al., 2018; Bradbury-Jones et al., 2018; Montreuil et al., 2021; Wilson et al., 2020). Several of the reviews highlight a lack of detail on ethical considerations in papers on YPAR as a gap in the literature, particularly relating to vulnerable and marginalised groups of children and young people (Brown et al., 2020; Wilson et al., 2020). How young people should be compensated for their involvement in research is another key gap (Wilson et al., 2020).

The review of review papers suggests that there is general alignment relating to consent:

- Researchers should collect written consent from young people and their parents when minors are involved, as well as evaluate risks and compare against potential benefits (Wilson et al., 2020).
- Ethical and legal considerations tend to be more complicated the younger the children are, which might explain why very few research initiatives that engaged children under the age of 14 were identified.

Wilson et al. (2020), in their rapid evidence review of young people's involvement in health research, found some researchers are discouraged by the burden of ethics approval processes that must go with collaborating with young people. But, they identify a range of ethical issues to be considered:

- how to recruit young people to be involved in health research;
- how to overcome challenges caused by unequal power dynamics;
- how to ensure child safeguarding practices protect young people without restricting their agency;
- the ethics of paying children for their involvement in research; and
- how to provide the right amount of mentoring and guidance throughout the process without restricting their freedom of choice.

Other ethical and safety considerations identified from a synthesis of the review papers include protecting children and young people's privacy and confidentiality, particularly regarding sensitive issues (e.g. trauma, abuse) and protecting children from risk of harm (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2018; Montreuil et al., 2021). Montreuil et al. (2021, p. 11) state participatory research studies with children and young people should be underpinned by "an increased awareness of the potential ethical considerations" through a reflexive approach, guided by the particular research project and context (e.g. addressing issues of confidentiality and disclosure of sensitive information by child participants when using child-led interviews). YPAR projects should include ensuring peer researchers



are aware of research ethics principles and that they are not overwhelmed by any information disclosed in interviewing (or other methods). Children should be involved in discussing specific approaches to addressing these issues (Montreuil et al., 2021). Bradbury-Jones et al.'s (2018) also highlight strategies to promote safety and protection including debriefing and the presence of a known and trusted support worker.

Bovarnick et al.'s (2018) review of young people's involvement in participatory research on sexual violence highlights key ethical and safety considerations. Their synthesis of existing evidence identifies additional factors that need to be taken into consideration in research activity involving children and young people involving vulnerable groups. They recommend strategies for engaged consent, risk and safety, confidentiality and completion of a project as well as providing tools for reflection.

Bovarnick et al., (2018)

This review highlights guidance for thinking about ethical research with children and young people. In addition to existing guidance (see section 6.1), they suggest there are at least four additional considerations specific to research involving children:

“1. children's competencies, perceptions and frameworks of reference may differ from those of adults, according to factors including – but not only – their age, – and may evolve over time;

2. children's potential vulnerability to exploitation in interaction with adults, and adults' specific responsibilities towards children;

3. power differentials between adult researchers and child participants; and

4. the role of adult gatekeepers in mediating access to children, with concomitant ethical implications in relation to informed consent. “

The review also provides (p 40) a checklist of questions for researchers adopting YPAR involving young people regarding safety and ethical considerations.

Existing ethics frameworks (including the ESRC (2015) Framework for Research Ethics; the Research Ethics Guidebook (Boddy et al., 2010), a resource funded by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), American Psychological Association (2010) ethical code, World Vision guidelines and the UNCRC General Comment on Children's Participation, Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC) (www.childethics.com)) were all valued by some process paper authors. Some authors (eg. Nguyen, 2019, Gilhooly 2017) also highlighted the need for additional ethical considerations to be collaboratively developed with communities and partners.

As Whittington et al. (2019) cite Weston (2010) in their reflecting on findings from a two-year, seven site participatory action research programme “ethics is not about providing rules and uncertainty is part of life”. Others argued that ethics should be a reflexive and ongoing process (Beckett & Warrington, 2015) considering governance, safeguarding and risk management.

6.2 Ethics in violence related peer research

In addition to these frameworks, additional challenges and strategies for ethical co-research with children and young people on violence related themes were identified across the review of review and process papers. This is comprised of 12 elements: 1) informed fluid engaged consent; 2) flexible inclusive methods; 3) transparency about power and governance; 4) provision of reflective space, 5) promotion of safety and safeguarding, 6) appropriate confidentiality and anonymity, 7) understanding risks and benefits, 8) being trauma informed, 9) costs, incentives and recognition, 10) ownership, power and respect; 11) feedback, accountability and closure; and 12) coproduction of ethical guidelines relevant to specific contexts and questions.

6.2.1 Informed fluid engaged consent

The review of reviews established that strategies for gaining informed, engaged consent include age-appropriate, arts-based, creative and interactive methods, for example using 'consent games', drawing, or video or audio tools can be used successfully with younger children to obtain and maintain informed consent. There is broad agreement that consent should be a fully informed, continuous and active process and therefore, it is important to build in multiple opportunities and ways for children and young people to opt out of a

participatory research process. Participants should be reminded of their right to withdraw consent at any stage of the research process and (if relevant) to have an option to have all, or part of, any personal data they have provided removed from transcripts and interview notes. Maintaining consent may entail checking in with young researchers and respondents at regular intervals in a friendly and supportive manner to make sure that they are still happy with their level of involvement and contribution to the research.



Principles in the process papers include:

- Consent should be an **iterative and ongoing process**
- **Responsibility of research team to ensure understanding**, including through piloting of consent materials and provision of information about rights
- **Attention to language and meanings** is needed in culturally diverse settings
- Capacity to give iterative, ongoing and informed consent should **not be based on age-related assumptions** – young children can give and withdraw informed consent if they are given adequate time and information to ensure their understanding
- **Children and young people's consent should be put at the fore**, particularly for young people who have had experiences of not being in control
- **Vulnerability should be understood at individual and community levels**
- **Consider how to approach** children to inquire about their potential interest in a project
- **Consider whose consent might be needed**, in addition to that of any interested children – this may vary according to context, topics covered, methods used, data storage, intentions for data use and the risks and benefits to individuals and communities as a consequence of any of this
- **Provide information** (to children, institutions, communities, leaders of any groups/setting hosting research activities) in culturally appropriate ways and cocreate this

- **Provide opportunities** to ask questions
- **Explain** risks and benefits, anonymity, confidentiality and privacy, and how expenses may be covered or incentives will be provided (if any)
- **Seek additional consents** with minor children where necessary (e.g. sending information home)
- **Review information at first meeting** with children and remind them of opportunities to stop at any time without having to state why
- **Make the roles clear** (e.g. of Peer Researchers, Peer Leaders, student participants, support persons and services) before sessions began
- **Continuously reflect** on whether consent is on-going or whether verbal or non-verbal signs indicate that a participant does not wish to continue
- **Alternative activities alongside research activities** can help children feel comfortable to drop in and out of engagement with the research
- **Open invitations to join into** research can also enable decisions to freely return to research activities (e.g. via posters displayed in venues where research is taking place)
- **Consider different forms of consent and anonymity for different outputs**, and the need for appropriate timescales on this. For example, regarding films which may reveal the identity of peers. Leave time to reflect before going public.
- **Provide a comprehension checklist** to researchers, to help them check that participants truly understand
- **Work on building rapport** with potential participants and spend time obtaining assent and consent ahead of the first workshop
- **If consent is given for some children and not others** in a group setting strategies can be used to avoid stigmatisation including not noting down any observations regarding the children who do not have consent to provide data

Strategies for securing gatekeeper consent included:

- Careful attention to ‘the approach’ and open dialogue with relevant gatekeepers can help secure access. This may mean repeated meetings with community leaders to build rapport and understanding before working with the young people
- On some issues, some institutions (e.g. schools) may be able to **provide guardian consent** if they are acting in loco parentis or if activities are educational opportunities
- **Head teachers or managers** usually have the responsibility of agreeing or not to research on their premises. Additional higher management agreement may be needed in some settings (e.g. with care experienced children). Once permission is obtained, it can help if the responsible manager identifies a day to day contact person to act as a link between the adult research team and the school or other institutional setting
- **Meetings with parents** may be necessary to ensure their informed consent and to highlight potential benefits

- Design decolonised process to enable marginalised, younger and disabled children to communicate in methods that they choose
- Encourage researchers to deeply listen to children in the ways that they choose to tell their stories
- Ensure that methods are flexibly timed to enable shorter or longer engagement
- Provide choice about methods
- Provide interpretation and reading aloud
- Use settings which maximise individual children's comfort (e.g. by enabling participants to choose venues)

‘A key factor here was including a diversity of forms of creative expression, which offered a range of verbal (acting, singing, discussion) and non-verbal (drawing, image theatre, creative writing, mapping) techniques for articulating lived experiences ... This inclusive approach was critical to building trust and confidence in both the most reserved girls and those whose disabilities would ordinarily occlude them from narrative-led activities. ... Through dramatic techniques and characters girls could experiment with different forms of expression and voice, exploring and considering relationships and conflicts from a variety of different angles in their daily lives. Girls could thus bring to the fore hidden dimensions of everyday life, reflecting on the emotions they generated, and then try out new ways to negotiate difficult situations and conflicts.’

[illegible]

43

what power they have, what power they have the responsibility to retain and how other power differences (between adults and young people and between children or young people) can be mitigated.

Strategies in the process papers

- Clarity about:
 - what level of decision making is available to which children or young people in each aspect of a research project
 - how research topics have been specified and by whom
 - what choices remain available
 - possibilities and potential limitations of change
 - employment and training opportunities
- Emphasise transparent communication between investigators, project managers and peer researchers
- Listen to resistance and recognising this as power rather than non-compliance
- Regularly revisit the landscape of power you are working in, the politics and vested interests.
- Reflect on whose knowledges are being reported and represented – in particular, by whom, from whom and for whom

6.2.4 Reflective space

Spaces and processes for safe reflection and reflexivity support:

- Naming and management of ethical challenges that arise (e.g., ethical precautions, ongoing consent, participant voice and power, member-checking of data, disclosure of the research process)
- Understanding and care for peer researchers who may be impacted hearing some of the content from participants
- Understanding of what methods are and are not inclusive and how researchers can fulfil their responsibilities to provide methods that enable all voices to be fully heard
- Flexibility to respond to individuals and contexts
- Movement towards greater credibility, by being transparent about what may have influenced data generation
- Confidence building
- Young people's individual and group awareness of how they may perpetuate oppression at the same time as experiencing it



Strategies for reflection include:

- **Providing stability and consistency in relationships** to foster a sense of safety and trust.
- **Accommodating young people's lack of availability**, so that they feel their other needs and obligations are understood
- **Holding workshops and activities, sometimes residential**, to build relationships that enable people to feel comfortable with each other and built a sense of togetherness

- **Providing a safe space** considering the safety of the physical locations in which shared reflection occurs
- **Manage tensions through an honest approach** – not avoiding conflict, but identifying it and seeking to create solutions together
- **Use participatory techniques to facilitate** such spaces to enable the naming of reflexive critical observations
- **Reflecting on research experiences** individually and in groups
- After any session capturing details and overall feelings/impressions, and asking questions of self, participants, and the research process
- Listening back to interviews and considering how they might have been conducted differently
- **Reflecting on relationships to long-term patterns of inequality** to understand their own life experiences and the data they were gathering in greater depth, specifically in relation to race and class inequity

Burke et al (2017:594)

“Through the journals and I-poems, we managed to capture what makes it difficult ... to be engaged as peer researchers, both in terms of collecting quality data as well as negotiating ethical challenges that arose during the research. When peer researchers encountered difficult topics, these were discussed with the Research Supervisor during daily debriefing sessions, enabling the peer researchers to share their concerns and seek advice on managing the situation.

For example, ... two cases of rape were reported. The peer researcher approached the informants individually to provide the informants with a listening ear and encourage them to seek support from a range of ...referral points. The informants were wary of seeking support from these referral points out of fear of disclosure about the rapes to their parents. ... Journals, questionnaires and i-Poems provided insights on peer researchers' roles, the emotional impact of being a peer researcher, the challenge of not sleeping after hearing stories of sexual violence, and their pride in being able to offer understanding and empathy”

In a **largescale study** by peer researchers across five US cities, **Sprague-Martinez et al (2020: 713)** describes how reflection was achieved in practice:

“Data collection varied by site dependent on the final protocol developed. Sites held weekly meetings with youth which the adult research facilitators joined remotely and sometimes in person. During meetings, youth provided updates on their assignments. Teams also reflected on their experiences and challenges with data collection and data entry, and they also discussed solutions. Adult research facilitators and site coordinators addressed questions and concerns related to both project logistics and field experiences.”

6.2.5 Safeguarding

The review papers, in particular Bovernick et al. (2018) stress the need to promote safety. They found that a central issue when involving children in research (participatory or otherwise) is to ensure that child protection obligations, including those arising from potential disclosures, are met. Specifically, they state that it is crucial to acknowledge the potential for “re-traumatisation” when involving children and young people affected by sexual violence as dealing with sensitive and abuse-related information can trigger bad memories and prompt individuals to relive historical trauma. Consideration about how projects are described, both internally to stakeholders and externally to wider audiences, may be one means of addressing some of the issues relating to safety and unsafety arising from stigma. This also requires careful planning about how young people explain their own relationship to the project in ways that feel safe.



Responsibilities also include:

- a duty of care to keep young researchers safe when attending training meetings, fieldwork visits and conferences. This includes safety from intrusive questions
- to draw an ethical or moral ‘line’ over certain behaviours and comments regarding, for example, violence against women, racist attack, xenophobic comments and homophobic remarks
- to not extract and use information from participants who may not realise the implications of what they are saying for themselves, and their communities

Strategies for responding to safeguarding challenges

- **Responsibilities** of meeting the ethical and legal obligations of child protection **must lie with the professionals** who are facilitating or supporting participatory initiatives, even if research initiatives are child/youth-led
- **Full risk assessments** of topics and methods and that adequate support structures, mentoring, child protection protocols, and referral mechanisms need to be in place to safeguard the well-being of young researchers and respondents
- Realise that risk assessment can be highly complex and requires **careful and diligent negotiation** with all stakeholders concerned regarding prior existing relationships, travel, safeguards and securing appropriate staff attendance from supporting organisations.
- **Agree which protection policy and standards** are operating in each setting
- **Provide support** on any issues arising and that child protection concerns are handled in a timely and appropriate manner. **Accompany** any participants who wish to seek and access support. **Ensure there is a dedicated support person** known to the young people if any sensitive issues may arise from the topic being studied
- **Beware** of peer researchers taking on too much responsibility
- **Don’t assume** that schools are safe spaces to conduct research, as they can be the site of disciplinary violence
- Provide children with **debrief information**, information about their rights and information on sources of support. The responsible researcher’s contact details and relevant helplines should be provided

6.2.6 Appropriate confidentiality and anonymity

Kia Keating et al (2017: 377)

“confidentiality and anonymity are similar constructs but differ in distinct ways; confidentiality refers to protecting the privacy of participants’ information, and anonymity indicates that participants’ identity is not tied to the information they share”



Bovarnick et al. (2018) highlights the need to focus on confidentiality in group work and data analysis, managing the limitation of confidentiality in child protection disclosures and establishing effective referral mechanisms.

Strategies for promoting and understanding the limits of confidentiality include:

- Group-based processes, which often form a central part of participatory research, need to be carefully planned and managed. Give participants anonymous opportunities to choose which adults are in the room. Negotiate agreements that everyone in the room signs up to and realise that these may be broken
- Ensure that researchers only have names or contact details of participants if necessary.
- Consider participatory research as a public space and do not offer confidentiality.
- Create and use group names rather than individual names where there is need to protect individual identities
- Nominate a spokesperson to present on the group's behalf. Make it clear at the public screening and exhibition that all visual material (and follow-up recommendations) came out of the work of the group as a whole and did not represent the views of any one participant

Strategies for negotiating degrees of anonymity include:

- Negotiate anonymity for each output after it has been seen and with time allowed to consider decisions (some studies waited months or years before going public, others put limits on how long outputs would be available)
- Screen digital stories and films individually and then hold a group discussion and ask participants to select either yes or no in response to questions about where, when, and how their visual products could be shared or screened
- Ownership and anonymity can be protected by creating composite fictionalised stories which represent young people's truths but do not expose individuals to scrutiny

6.2.7 Risks and benefits

Bovarnick et al's (2018) suggests that risk management strategies are at the heart of promoting safety in peer research. Undertaking risk assessment exercises collectively provides opportunities to draw on multiple perspectives and use group problem solving to develop risk management strategies. Decisions as to whether their safe and positive involvement is possible should be assessed on an individual case-by-case basis and should engage the child/young person concerned. Where possible (and commensurate with age and capacity, children and young people should be involved in conversations about the risks associated with their engagement in the research and about whether these can be managed. These conversations should focus on what needs to be in place to enable their safe participation. The primary concern should always be that participatory research does not put the child/young person, or any of the adults involved, at risk of harm, while the potential benefits (and hence risks and negative implications of excluding individuals from such opportunities) should also be taken into consideration.



Possible risks include:

- Marginalised communities and community organisers are more exposed to risk than researchers
- Repressive and violent contexts (national, organisational and familial) can increase the likelihood of harm arising for people engaged in research that challenges that repression.
- Hearing people's stories and learning about the systemic nature of some injustices may be upsetting
- Participation in action-oriented research can raise false hopes regarding the potential for social change
- Requesting parental consent might expose some children to risk if the research relates to issues where there is conflict between parent and child, e.g. in the context of familial homophobia

Benefits of participation in research are detailed in the next section of this report, but in relation to the issue of ethically managing the risk, three potential benefits were mentioned:

- Good research can result in social benefits and protection from long term risk requires social and political action and good participatory research can support this
- Pursuing risk managed ways to challenge repressive and violent situations can enable systems and social change
- Being heard and taken seriously when voicing a concern or wish for change can increase personal and community confidence, knowledge of rights and self-realisation. Talking about personal and social injustices can be cathartic

Suggested Strategies

- Think about cushions – see section 8.3 for what this means
- Focus on quality of knowledge generation and care rather than quantity
- Through ongoing conversations with children and young people, their allies and personal reflection, assess any potential personal and community risks
- Ensure that any "risk" described is contextualised, rather than locating risk in an individual young person or inherent "vulnerability", risk relates to specific circumstances
- Assess the supportive relationships and contexts that may be available to coresearchers and

- Dynamically assess the potential risks and benefits in the context of changing local, national and global conditions, including pandemics
- Consider the potential of the research to contribute to positive outcomes
- Give clear information about these contextualised risks and the likelihood (or not) of any benefits and social change
- Ensure that staffing and support levels are sufficient to cater to the potential concerns that may arise from any activity
- In ongoing research processes, ahead of any new shared activities, ask children and young people about any concerns or change of circumstances they may have
- It may also be appropriate to ask supportive adults about current circumstances for children or young people who are in crisis or post-traumatic situations, but assess the need to do this (related to the context and topic) and the competence of any gatekeeper to give an informed view of children's circumstances
- Enable children and young people's informed decision-making about whether and how to take part
- Use lower risk methods in higher risk circumstances (see trauma-informed approach below and confidentiality above)
- Consider the balance of group versus individual activities. Individual sharing of stories can promote confidentiality but group sharing can increase feelings that someone else understands and group member can provide advice
- Provide participants with possibilities to speak with trained counsellors and advocates who can provide emotional and practical support
- Where there is potential for shared findings to exacerbate risk for individuals or communities and use, for example, composite storytelling to share findings (e.g. in small communities risk could be heightened by sharing personal accounts of experiences that could identify individuals)
- Channel feelings of injustice into opportunities for activism
- Be aware of the potential for conflict between coresearchers wishes to share evidence and organisational concerns about what truths can be comfortably told, and what authorities can be comfortably challenged

Bovarnick et al. (2018) found that given the centrality of 'risk' in debates around children and young people who are affected by sexual violence in research, in the papers they reviewed there was surprisingly little discussion of secondary and vicarious trauma. The need for a trauma-informed approach, particularly in the context of state, institutional and intimate relationship violence, is highlighted.



"There were times throughout the process when the [Latina Peer Researcher Girls] were triggered as they were conducting research on Latinas & girls in the juvenile justice system. The information that they gathered was essentially about them and/or someone they were close to. The facilitators had to be attentive that young people bring their entire selves and may be living in trauma in the moment that might need attention.

This work must maintain a central focus that when working with Latina youth who are system involved, the likelihood of trauma responses being expressed and present in círculo group is very high. Facilitators must center the youth and their emotional and spiritual needs, including making space for trauma responses to show up and to support them."

There is little evidence of what a trauma-informed approach involves, but below we give some initial insights taken from process and additional papers (11).

Suggested strategies for reducing the risk of traumatic responses in participants:

- Begin group events by checking in
- Create a safe, positive, home topic (e.g. leisure activities and likes) that discussions can be directed back towards and return to this at the end of any emotionally challenging encounter
- Attend to body language, silences and any non verbal signs of discomfort.
- Focus on positive experiences and solutions
- Provide care and opportunities for time out
- Not using drama data collection methods where traumatic emotions and memories may be embodied
- Asking about place, fictional vignettes, violence witnessed, strengths and strategies for improvements rather than personal accounts of harms experienced or perpetrated
- Build partnerships with expert agencies able to support participants and accurately assess risks
- Remind participants that they can stop or change topics at any time

Strategies for reducing the risk of traumatic responses in peer researchers:

- Carefully consider what topics are suitable given available capacity to support
- Recognise the emotionally supportive role that the research group may be playing in peer researchers lives
- Recognise the potential for trauma to be triggered in peer researchers when hearing the stories of other young people during data collection and data analysis
- Ensure regular debriefing and appropriate cushioning is provided to peer researchers (see section 8.1)
- Build peer researchers capacity for ‘compassionate neutrality’ (Pk 2018) including the capacity to provide quiet listening, be affirming, maintain appropriate boundaries and to signpost to relevant support services
- Support the people supporting peer researchers through provision of reflective spaces for adult coresearchers and ‘non-managerial’ supervision
- People supporting peer researchers on sensitive issues should have training in trauma

6.2.9 Costs, incentives and recognition

Commonly mentioned in the review papers was the importance of payments for youth peer researchers. This was considered important to ensure that equality in the research process was conveyed. This was a particular challenge in school settings where payments were not considered appropriate when children and young people took part in the research during the school day as part of their academic studies (Anderson, 2019).



Whilst there are legal limitations (related to employment and social security law) on how participants and peer researchers can be compensated for their time spent on research activities, there are ethical concerns (whether to pay participants when opportunities to participate are not open to all e.g. not all children in a year group are invited to take part in a school-based activity) and also ethical obligations highlighted in the violence related process papers (19).

Cullen et al. (2020) highlight that remuneration is a contentious issue, payment for time and costs is particularly important for low income individuals, communities and nations but may not be possible. Other recognition and rewards may be appropriate for some, but may cause risk in situations where young people are trying to retain anonymity regarding their relationship to a study.

Strategies for incentives, recompense, recognition and rewards suggested are:

- Payment in employment, a stipend, cash or vouchers
- Payment of transportation and childcare costs
- Promoting opportunities to build positive relationships
- Creation of opportunities for remuneration through paid public speaking and presenting
- Building resumes/CVs
- Providing certificates, credits/accreditation and qualifications
- Making research activities as internally rewarding as possible (with young people's guidance about what this means for them)
- Providing food/drink (if possible individualized to each child based on their likes)
- Providing objects (e.g. T-shirts) and opportunities (e.g. Travel) (if possible individualized to each child based on their likes/interests), but being careful here to 'under-promise and over-deliver'
- Provide verbal praise and milestone recognition events which acknowledge the value of participants and peer researcher's participation
- Provide mentoring and career progression opportunities
- Raffles/ prize draws for items but also for opportunities e.g. *the winning children's home in a network would gain use of the youth home's vehicle for a day trip of their choice. (see Schmidt)*

6.2.10 Ownership, power and respect

Cullen et al. (2020) highlight the importance of empowerment, respect and ownership. In their review Montreuil et al. (2021) cautions against the word empowerment however, because power is not in the hands of adults to give to children. McGlaughlin (2020) instead suggests thinking about situated agency but noted that "situational dynamics can include silencing and marginalisation. In working in those spaces it is important that research does not replicate such dynamics.



The process papers suggested these strategies:

- Communicating where possible only with the young person, not their parents, respects their autonomy
- Prepare youth for leadership and ownership through creating safe spaces for reflection and providing care

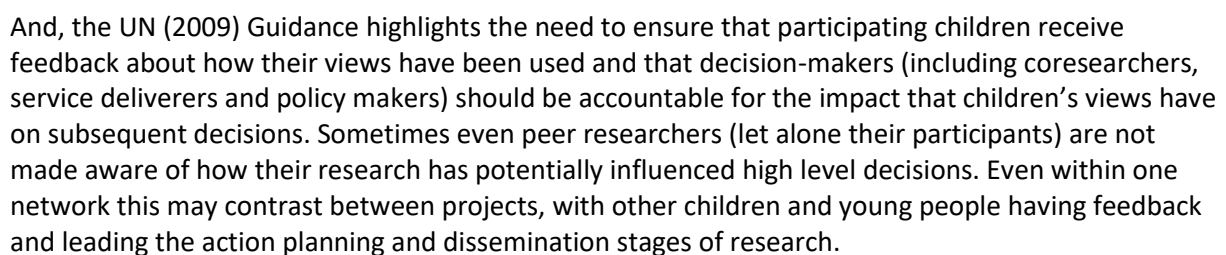
- Community ownership protocol may already exist and should be followed.

"OCAPTM principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession of Indigenous data, the Canadian Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans ...and Barnhardt's(1991) Four R's of respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility.

Ethics approval for these applications was obtained from the host university as well as the community sanctioned research advisory review board that held oversight of research conducted within each of the communities."

- Maclure (2017) cautions, however, that ownership can stimulate competition between groups of young researchers in large scale research programmes which may have positive or negative consequences, for example encouraging peers to outshine each other by masking the difference in circumstances that different groups and individuals may be encountering.

Bovarnick et al. (2018) note that considering what happens to young researchers after a research project ends necessitates thinking through how support can be phased out ethically and responsibly. Whilst feeding back activities (community forums, performances, research summaries and presentations) were frequent, relatively few papers (6) focused on accountability and fewer addressed closure. Bovarnick et al. (2018) also raise questions about the ongoing ethical obligations towards those who have contributed to the research project, particularly if they are v



Cuevas Parras & Tisdall (2019: 10)

"For instance, in Bangladesh, the young researchers developed their own knowledge exchange strategy to identify and reach relevant decision makers, including a media action plan targeting editors and journalists to promote their findings. ...The young researchers were able to take such knowledge exchange activities forward because both adult facilitators and the organisation provided the community contacts so that the young researchers could tap into decision makers, often local ones, and have clear commitments and plans for change. The prior and background work of the adults and supporting organisation assisted the young researchers to take forward their knowledge exchange strategy, but the young researchers felt ownership of the strategy and it was for them to carry out. ...

[whereas] In Jordan and Lebanon, concerns about the young researchers' vulnerability and the organisation's focus on international impact resulted in the young researchers being less involved in deciding on the knowledge exchange strategy and less aware of what impacts their research had made."

Strategies for feedback and accountability in the violence related process papers included:

- **Cocreate an accessible summary first** to acknowledge the young people's involvement and ownership
- Provide summaries and full reports to each site to facilitate local dissemination
- Class meetings at schools with research participants and student researchers
- **Create ongoing feedback loops between peers** (in person, via outputs through online platforms) so that research groups can share their own stories and highlight the good stuff happening and so that peer researchers can feedback to participants
- **Create ongoing feedback loops between decision makers and peer researchers and participants.** This can involve meetings, emails or opportunities for children and young people to be involved in commissioning and evaluation of activities that arise from research informed social action

Strategies for Closure

- Assistance to transition into independence after their active contribution to a participatory project
- Protocols and procedures for closing projects and consider how to resource this when developing bids
- Brady et al. (2019) also highlight that safeguarding the well-being of the young people within the training and research process involved the questions of:
 - What would happen when the project was over
 - Managing expectations
 - Thinking about the end at the beginning
 - Planning an exit strategy and process for closure
 - Not over-promising were key to the success of this project

6.2.12 Coproduction of relevant ethical guidelines

The need to coproduce contextualised ethical guidelines was emphasised in process papers: authors argued that this is what made it possible to adapt to rapidly changing environments and sensitive topics. It also enabled smoother community and organisational relationships. In some situations it could increase the possibilities for “social media use within the context of participatory research+ efforts.” And this in turn could increase avenues for social change.



Suggested strategies for coproducing additional and specific ethical guidelines were:

- Continuous dialogue and negotiation of ethical practice throughout the course of the project, as specific and nuanced issues arise.
- Committees assisting in the review process for micro-projects which would be funded as an outcome of action-oriented research.
- Adopting communities' own approaches to having conversations about ethics
- Developing research protocols through informal conversations (known as 'Tapotaethakot' in some communities (see Chou 2011)), that set out agreed approaches and build rapport and understanding.

7. How are successes (benefits, impacts, outcomes and change) in peer research recorded and understood?

This section draws on the *review of review papers* and the *about papers* with summary content from the *process papers* explores the markers of success and the perceived benefits of peer research in terms of:

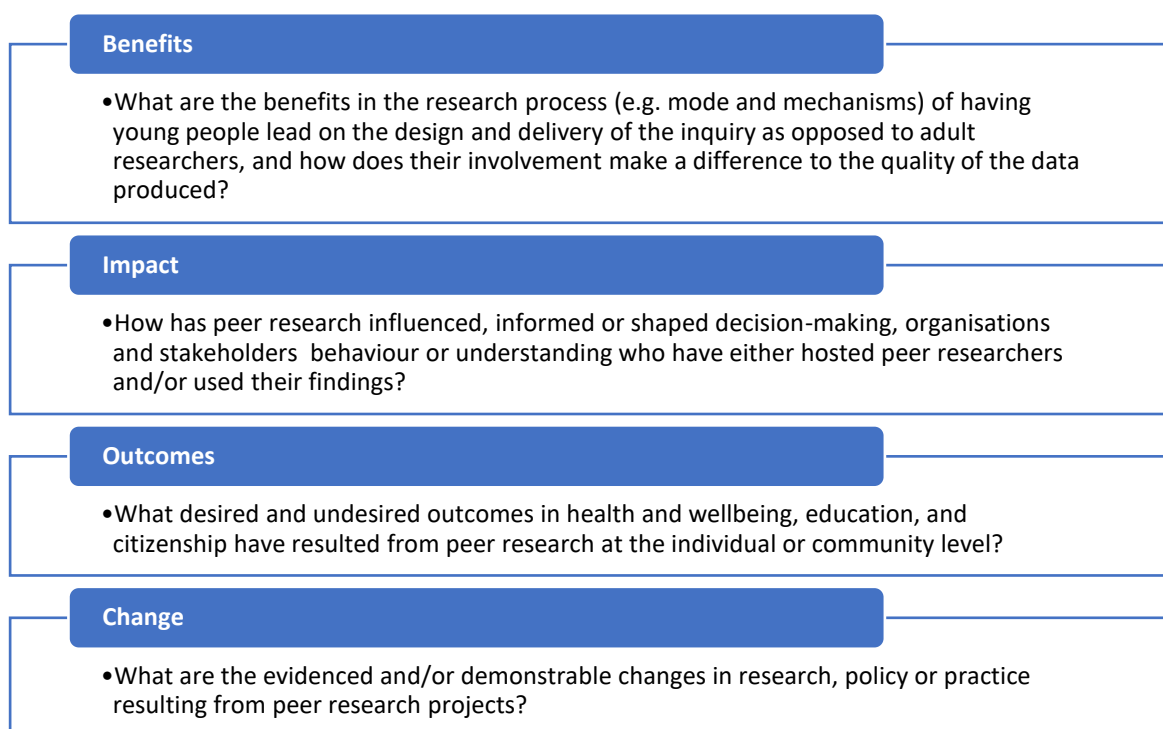
- 7.1 how benefits were understood
- 7.2 approaches to evaluating success within research processes
- 7.3 approaches to evaluating change resulting from peer research.

A summary of the *about papers*, which provided most of the content for this section, is in Appendix 2 Table 7.0.

7.1 Understanding benefits, outcomes, impact and change in peer research

Figure 10 highlights how benefits, impacts, outcomes and change were searched for data to extract in the review of reviews.

Figure 10 – Searching for success



A review of the *about papers* indicates that the relationship between impact, change and success is multi-layered and complex, each factor serving as a potential catalyst for individual and community or social outcomes as well as enhancing the research process.

Overlaying this individual and collective lens onto the notion of benefits, impact, outcomes and change the following subsections provide the findings of the *review of reviews* in relation to benefits to the research process, outcomes for peer researcher and social impact (7.1.1) understanding of these issues from the review of about papers (7.1.2), and implications (7.1.3).

7.1.1 Understanding success from the review of review papers

7.1.1.1 Benefits to the research process

The review of reviews identified benefits in terms of engagement with participants and quality of outputs.

Wilson et al.'s (2018) review of young people's involvement in health research found that involving young people in health research improves recruitment and retention of participants and that young people suggest effective methods of collecting data from their peers. Wilson et al.'s (2018) review also demonstrates benefits regarding data collection and analysis; data is likely to be of a higher quality and more credible due to trust in young peer researchers and young people also bring new skills and attributes to data analysis.

Bovarnick et al.'s (2018) review of involvement of children and young people on research on sexual violence summarises the perceived benefits/identified value of engaging children and young people in participatory research across the research process.

Evidence shows that participatory research with young people enhances the evidence base through improving the quality of data and relevance of research messages and strengthens dissemination through adding authenticity and credibility to research findings (Bovarnick et al., 2018).

Although children and young people are less often involved in research after the data analysis phase (see section 5.2) the review of review papers shows that children and young people's involvement in action can or should strengthen the impact of research.

Evidence from Bovarnick et al.'s (2018) review demonstrates that children and young people's involvement can lend impact to dissemination and 'transformative action'.

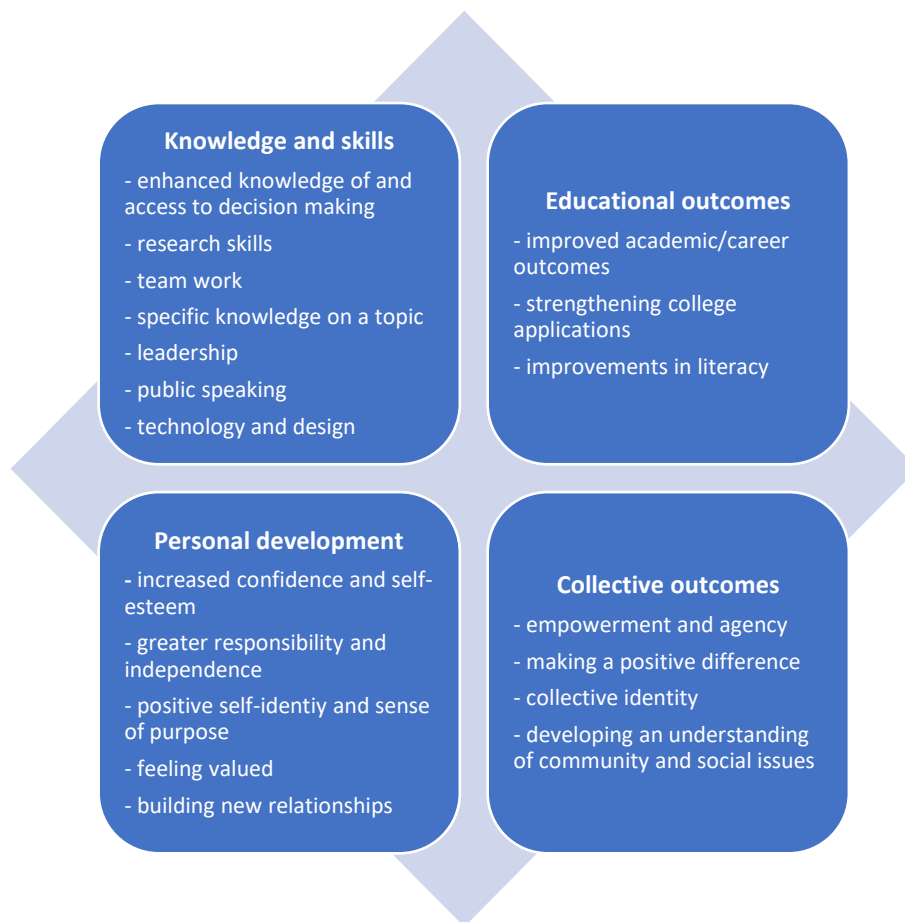
Wilson et al.'s (2018) review also found that when young people have a role in the dissemination of research it can be more memorable to policy makers. In the community, there is evidence that young people's ideas and access to networks leads to greater impact.

7.1.1.2 Demonstrated outcomes for young people

Findings from the review of reviews suggest that projects with extensive levels of participation demonstrate more evidence for positive youth outcomes (see Agdal et al., 2019; Anyon et al., 2018; Vaughn et al., 2013). Findings also suggest that outcomes for young people are likely to be greater for vulnerable young people than for the general population (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2018).

Fifteen of the review papers discussed outcomes for young people. Demonstrated outcomes for young people discussed across the review papers have been categorised into four key areas and are synthesised in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Outcomes of peer led research for young people



Knowledge and skills

Development of research, leadership and communication skills are the most commonly reported outcomes across the review papers. There is also evidence of more specific skills development, dependent on the type of projects, for example, presentation, photography and video production skills (Valdez et al., 2020). Where young people are involved in dissemination specifically, findings also indicate that children and young people develop increased communication and facilitation skills (Anderson, 2019).

Youth involvement in peer research leads to increased awareness and knowledge of community or social issues (e.g. health, poverty etc.) (Agdal et al., 2019; Valdez et al., 2020). For example, Valdez et al.'s (2020) review of YPAR for youth substance use prevention reveals how involvement of young people affected by substance use can lead to outcomes on a range of substance use indications (e.g. increased knowledge about substances and decreased approval of drug use).

Personal development

Many of the review papers (6) report positive outcomes relating to children and young people's confidence and self-esteem, as well as a positive sense of self-identity and purpose. Young people

also report feeling valued and positive outcomes from knowing that their views and opinions are respected as well as feeling that they can make a difference (Bailey et al., 2014).

Across the review papers there was little mention on whether peer research improved peer researchers' wellbeing or mental health. However, Raanaas et al.'s (2020) review found an increasing trend of using PAR amongst youth to promote mental health resilience and Wilson et al.'s (2020) review found that being involved in mental health research increases young people's awareness of causes and symptoms of poor mental health.

For marginalised and vulnerable groups of young people, opportunities to have their voices heard, 'to exert choice, experience influence and control' (Bovarnick et al., 2018, p. 23) is an important outcome.

Bovarnick et al., (2018: 23)

"Establishing a new strength-based or 'professional' identity (as a researcher or advocate) that is not primarily defined by deficit or victim-hood can be particularly valuable when young people/adults are trying to move away from situations of violence and abuse and into continued education or formal employment."

Two of the review papers also highlight potential negative outcomes regarding personal development for young people. Examples include learning about other's lives and risk-taking behaviours causing distress or losing confidence or interest if faced with difficult challenges as well as experiencing additional pressure with peer research on top of existing schoolwork demands (Bailey et al., 2014; Gavine et al., 2017).

Educational outcomes

Education outcomes are less frequently reported in the review papers. This may be due to the lack of follow-up on youth outcomes after participating in youth peer research projects in studies.

But, a few reviews reference outcomes related to education.

In Agdal et al.'s (2019) review of asset-based community development with children and young people, there is some evidence to suggest that projects led to increased literacy.

In Gavine et al.'s (2017) review of the involvement of young people in the development and implementation of health programmes, strengthening college applications and practicing English were reported.

Wilson et al. (2020) also report that there is some evidence on career/academic benefits (e.g. they provide examples of YPAR projects that provided opportunities for young people to develop their studies or gain work experience).

Social/collective

Increased empowerment is one of the most frequently reported outcomes in the review of reviews (7) of youth peer led research.

Involvement in peer research has been shown to increase feelings of empowerment through the co-creation of knowledge and involvement in actions affecting young people. However, and as discussed in section 8.2, youth participatory research has often been critiqued for limited evidence of genuine empowerment in initiatives purporting to be participatory (Bovarnick et al., 2018).

Anyon et al. (2018) found that studies of YPAR programs that described concrete and specific examples of transformative action involving young people were more likely to report an increase in agency in youth participants.

Anyon et al.'s (2018) review also found that YPAR programs in school settings were less likely to report outcomes relating to agency and leadership than programs in other settings.

Despite the challenges of involving and bringing together vulnerable or marginalised groups of young people in research, peer research with these groups of young people can foster peer support and a sense of solidarity as well as a sense of belonging and community among participants creating what Coser et al. (2014) define as a "collective identity" (cited by Bovarnick et al., 2018). Relationships with peers and community and increased awareness of community issues are key reported outcomes.

7.1.1.3 Potential successes for communities, organisations, policy and practice

The review of reviews papers (5) revealed that peer research offers a range of positive **outcomes for organisations and the community**. However, in comparison to evidence on youth outcomes, there are fewer examples of direct outcomes on the community and little mention of who in the community is impacted in the review papers.

Key benefits for community stakeholders identified in review papers (3) include increased awareness of problems, positive shifts in community perceptions of young people and the building of relationships between community stakeholders and between communities and young people. Shamrova and Cummings (2017, p. 403) focused on PAR outcomes for organisations and communities developing a taxonomy of possible PAR outcomes (see section 7.3).

The impact of peer research can include enhanced relationships between young people and adults, a key theme across the reviews (6). Findings also reflect on the barriers to shared decision-making.

Involvement in peer led research can give children and young people an opportunity to become agents of change within their own communities and share decision-making with adults.

But, in their review of participation of children and young people in criminal justice research, Clark and Laing (2012) highlight that staff can lack skills and knowledge to engage children and young people effectively.

A key theme across the review papers is that peer research can include enhanced relationships between young people and adults. Involvement in peer led research can give children and young people an opportunity to become agents of change within their own communities and share decision-making with adults.

There are few specific examples of how peer research has directly influenced, informed or shaped either decision-making, whether at organisational or community level, or affected organisational practice across the review papers. Some review papers (3) highlight mechanisms for involvement in planning and taking action (e.g. young people presenting findings to decision-makers) but there is a lack of reflection on how peer research has influenced organisations and decision making. There are some indications of steps towards this level of change being made.

Shamrova and Cummings' (2017:406) review suggests that peer research has the potential to drive cultural and programmatic shifts within organisations:

- Peer led research has led to the “infusion of participatory values into organisational culture”.
- Children and youth have engaged in additional trainings for organisational staff or helped to develop job descriptions for the future hiring process based on study findings.
- Some organisations are designing and implementing programs that address the needs of children and youth as a result of PAR.
- Peer led research has influenced community decision-making through creating platforms for intergenerational dialogue and outlets for children’s voices, facilitating infrastructural and policy changes, and raising community awareness of children’s issues.

Six of the review papers focus on evidence and/or demonstrated **changes in policy or practice** resulting from peer research. There is minimal reference on impacts on further research.

For peer researchers, changes in policy and practice are often a key goal. Where participation does not lead to changes in policy and practice, or children and young people are not kept informed, Haijes and van Thiel (2016) suggest that this can cause disillusion and may even result in a lack of trust, impacting on future collaboration in research. Montreuil et al. (2021:11) recommend that “Potential limitations as to the outreach of the project could also be discussed directly with children, to prevent disappointments in terms of potential outcomes”.

Several of the reviews highlighted that where peer research projects actively involve working with policy and practice stakeholders, on topics that are ‘palatable to outside stakeholder groups’ (Anderson, 2019, p. 253), there is evidence of different forms of resulting action.

In Raanaas et al.’s (2020) review, six of the reviewed 54 studies described actions or use of knowledge implemented in the community as part of a translation phase. Examples included development of a wellness policy and career exploration programs.

In three studies, youth participated in the development of standards, frameworks or measuring instruments. Valdez et al. (2020) also highlight a range of examples of policy and advocacy change in substance use prevention as a result of YPAR. Shamrova and Cumming’s (2017) review of PAR outcomes on organisations and communities reported changes in organisation culture and power dynamics between care providers and children and youth, facilitated through opportunities created for children and youth to participate in dissemination through a range of platforms.

7.1.2 Understanding success, impact, outcomes and change from the about papers

Evidence drawn from the *about papers* have highlighted a number of common benefits for the young researcher who stands at the centre of the research process, and is arguably the most important research instrument. Their input adds value to the research process (e.g. theme/topic, research design, ethics, fieldwork, analysis, write-up & dissemination) arguably serving to strengthen the integrity of the study and the robustness of research findings.

For example, the manuscripts illustrate how through their respective studies young researchers have been able to:

- increase interaction between young people;
- build and enhance skills and knowledge;
- improved academic skills;
- independent learning skills;
- building meaningful relationships and interpersonal skills;
- greater self-awareness;
- career achievement;
- teamwork;
- improved communication skills;
- the feeling of empowerment, a greater sense of agency and having confidence in their own views and perspectives;
- develop an awareness of the importance of different perspectives;
- develop critical civic empathy and cultural competencies and build and develop their own identities;
- improve levels of confidence;
- be activated and mobilised to lead on civic action;
- breakdown stereotypes and preconceptions about young people;
- elicit information from peers - which adults often cannot access – to build a better understanding of young people's needs;
- enhance the quality of information and awareness raising of young people's needs; use evidence to further services improvements;
- secure senior level buy-in;
- function within transparent processes that have helped to reduce the risk of tokenism.

The selected *about papers* detailed below show how benefits to research and outcomes for young people intertwine. These dual benefits enhance both the scientific inquiry, whilst simultaneously enhancing the young researcher's knowledge and skills.

Enhanced Research Process AND Knowledge and skills: Kerawalla and Messer (2018).

Thematic analysis of the interviews identified three themes and eight subthemes suggesting that the young researchers were aware of the need to **demonstrate researcher/research integrity** (be thorough, truthful, orderly, and have a good understanding of research process); **the need for good interpersonal skills and standards, and good self-management skills** (be resilient, agentic, committed and good at time management).

Enhanced Research Process AND Knowledge and skills: Frasquilho et al (2018)

The project aimed to enhance young people's participation and citizenship through thematic research and social action activities. Young people wanted the network to continue to grow, disseminate their findings, **involve more public figures, raise awareness of its actions** and events within the community and promote opportunities for projects. **Young people reported that they gained skills in debate, communication, negotiation and individual and group decision making.**

Enhanced Research Process AND Knowledge and skills: Dovey-Pearce et al (2019)

In the beginning of the programme there were uncertainties on how to encourage non-tokenistic engagement from young people and how young people could contribute to the scientific framework. **Understanding the different forms of involvement helped in**

developing appropriate tasks and facilitate interactive and task-oriented sessions. The programme was a process of learning - values and attitudes have changed over time and the group thinking gravitated towards preferring higher levels of engagement from young people (i.e., those adult organisational members who were not advocating young people's input and co-producers and co-creators, changed their views). **Enabling collaborative working required managing expectations and anxieties.** YP motivation for involvement was that they hoped to improve services for others and develop their own skills. **Young people reported embracing having freedom within the overall aim and structure of the programme and found participation in the research exciting and fun.** Young people's visible involvement in the launch of the programme informed the direction of the event and ensure non-tokenistic engagement. **They were able to decide how they complete tasks and were increasingly involved in research management meetings with the development of the project.** Young people represented an authentic voice through their real-life experiences that led to **multidimensional narratives.** The young people contributed to clarifying messages and their engagement went beyond consultation.

Some articles evidenced the interlinked enhancement of research processes and the young researcher's personal development.

Enhanced Research Process AND Personal development: Bertrand (2018).

The author argues that **the lack of students of colour in leadership roles can be overcome by using youth participatory action research** as an approach. **The findings of the study indicated that students who were part of the YPAR program saw themselves as leaders.** The author suggested that YPAR can be added to the educational leadership field as well as YPAR as an approach where students and adults form a partnership to examine system racism and other forms of oppression. **The study has elements of diversity and inclusion because the author recruited students with intersecting identities.** Students of colour deals with harassment related to sexuality, gender identity and racism. After the program, most students who participated in the study reported in interviews that they position themselves as capable of acting on issues that negatively affect them such as racism, more knowledgeable and more willing to speak out about issues.

Enhanced Research Process AND Personal development: Pearce et al (2019)

The study examined the experiences of young people involved in a large-scale health research programme in the UK. **Group formation and everyone finding their tasks and identities with the group was an iterative process.** Over time young people were increasingly involved in research management meetings with the development of the project. **YP contributed to research tool design and initiated the development of an interactive learning resource for voluntary sector organisation partners. They also participated in dissemination of the findings to experts and politicians and felt that their views were valued by the audience.**

Enhanced Research Process and Personal development: Cluver et al (2020)

The paper reported on ten years of experience of conducting adolescent advisory groups that focused on identifying the needs of and finding solutions for families affected by AIDS.

Adolescents initiated regular contact (annual meetings) with researchers after a single consultation which led to the programme establishment. In the early stage's adolescents **highlighted the power imbalance of storytelling/sharing between researchers and young people**, that changed the way staff introduced themselves but still did not achieve real equity. Based on their research findings, adolescent advisory group members co-designed training for fieldwork staff to ensure empathy, sensitivity and non-judgemental, reciprocal approaches. **The advisory groups gradually increased involvement in co-leading knowledge exchange and policy development activities and collaborated with the government on youth health policy, led consultations** with an AIDS council and informed UNAIDS documents. They also produced a film about their experiences and included advice to policy makers. Their short videos were used by large organisation (e.g. UNICEF) with significant policy impact. **Adolescents got linked with NGOs for tangible support and advice and occasionally researchers intervened in emergency situations.**

Other articles reported more exclusively on the benefits for young people in terms of personal development. For example:

Personal development: Wood (2020)

Wood (2020) argued that **Participatory Action Learning Activity Research (PALAR) can be used to empower young people to act leading to an improvement of their own circumstances**. Evidence from the study revealed that participants benefited from their involvement in the PALAR research project. Some of these **individual benefits included increased sense of purpose and self-esteem as well as improved technical and communication skills**. The author indicated that marginalized groups are often the focus of symbolic or cultural injustices. PALAR is also 'political and emancipatory in nature, as PALAR aims to **free people from mental colonization** and help them to reconstruct existing policies and processes to enable them to improve their quality of life as they see fit' p.4.

In some articles a combination of personal development and collective outcomes were reported.

Collective outcomes AND Personal development: Goodnough (2014)

The aim of the study was to examine that in a school based action research project that aimed to eliminate smoking and alcohol consumption on school grounds, what is the value of implementing a community of practice, what processes support mutual engagement and learning, and what type of partnerships can be formed between young people and adults. Over time, the student council developed into a strong and productive community, that encouraged participation from all members and took ownership over the discussed issues both in a group and individual level. **The understanding that the council activities were valuable for themselves, and the school/peers as well contributed to fostering a sense of community**. Youth researchers also reported increased problem-solving skills, inclusive thinking, better understanding of school related issues, and transferrable skills for later in life and employment. Youth researchers viewed gaining insights into other's perspective as a primary benefit. **They appreciated the opportunity to develop research skills, that could be transferrable to other areas of life**. Participation in the project also gave them voice and allowed them to effect change and take ownership over issues that were important to them. **Researchers' decision making and leadership skills improved through the programme and they gained understanding on how to effect change.**

In other articles there was a stronger focus on relationships to community.

Collective outcomes: Trott et al (2020).

The paper summarised two case studies of art-science integration in sustainability education. The first project was US based and focused on climate change related topics and community-based sustainability action. Photovoice became a tool for communicating and increasing climate change awareness with adults including local policy makers. The second project was based in Haiti and focused on water literacy education, including water testing, water management and clean water access. The project activities (photos, documentary and water-testing analysis) aimed to **communicate awareness with local community members, stakeholders on current problems and encourage further sustainability action locally**. Students communicated potential problem areas with community water sources towards the local community and aimed to generate a community resources for finding clear water access points and polluted sites. In both projects' student researchers were **acting as change agents** through their **collaborative action work and advocacy**.

In the *about papers*, echoing findings from the review of review papers, there were also some examples of broader impact on communities, organisations, policy and practice. But reports of these were scarce.

These are some examples of positive change for community-university partnerships,

Impact on CYP practitioners and professional services: Ardoin et al (2014)

The authors used interviews and artefact data with young researchers to learn how the young people's interactions with adult community leaders shifted adult perceptions of youths' abilities and roles in the community; and how the initiatives affected youth and adult participants' perspectives of the university. **The involvement of young researchers was shown to improve the integrity of the study by providing more robust data and facilitating stronger community-university partnerships**. In turn, community-based organizations perceived the university's involvement with the community through these projects to be more **authentic**, due, in part, to the work of the youth researchers.

increased participatory community level planning, and influencing government

Impacts on CYP understanding, learning and participation AND Practice: Frasilho et al (2018)

The project aimed to enhance young people's participation and citizenship through thematic research and social action activities. **Participants designed and delivered a set of youth well-being policy recommendations drawn from the research work to the National Secretary of Health that was disseminated on the government website**. The use of online tools throughout the programme was beneficial for reaching a nationwide audience and gaining visibility among stakeholders as well.

and, increased awareness of young people's capacity, with potential future benefits for health.

Impacts on CYP practitioners and professional services: Tsang et al (2020)

The authors argue that there are many benefits to the creation of YPAGs. Some of their benefits included feedback on hospital administration, advising on research protocol as well

as a point of information for many around the world that do not have access to a legal group. The authors used mixed research methodology in the form of individual face to face interviews and a peer-reviewed survey. The sample size was 17. **The authors argued that inviting children and youth to participate in paediatric trials and clinical research enable patient representation in future decision making and can lead to better health care and outcomes.** One limitation of the study is that it was only available in English, so participants had to speak and read English. This may have constrained the range of answers collected.

In addition, the *process papers* indicated that the results of some of the research they described included changes in:

- parental attitudes
- community networks of understanding
- peer relationships
- school curriculum, teacher behaviour and policy
- service provision
- spaces for civic participation and resistance

7.1.3 Implications for understanding success

In summary, by far the most impactful area evidenced on young people's involvement in peer research is upon their personal development, specifically as it relates to building robustness into the research process. In this category, the *about papers* emphasise learning outcomes for: socio-emotional and character development, critical thinking skills to scrutinize data and exercising good project management, and addressing disparities in 'race', ethnicity, inclusion and empowerment both inside and outside the research process; the value attached to finding an identity and sense of belonging in the research process; the valuable role of panel and advisory membership; the importance of role-modelling (i.e. to bridge research into social action), and the importance of interpersonal skills and relationships, especially between young people and adults as research facilitators.

Most importantly, the evidence stresses the added value between young researchers' knowledge and skills to produce research integrity, research management and trustworthiness in the studies. There is limited evidence of social impact on individuals, communities, organisations and practice in the *about papers* but this may simply mean that outcomes have not been systematically captured and recorded. The areas of impact where peer research has the greatest influence on are on:

- Children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Children and young people's understanding, learning and participation
- Child and youth social welfare
- Child and youth public policy, law and services
- Child and youth practitioner practice and professional services

Implications for further research and evaluation are that there is a need to capture both soft and hard skills, framed in an on-going learning by doing approach. This is in recognition that developmental outcomes are often performative and need time to be practiced and mastered before they are consciously realised by the young researcher and by other children, young people and adults in the wider avenues of change they are trying to influence.

7.2 Approaches to evaluating the processes of peer research

This subsection focuses on the research process; a successful process is a factor promoting benefits for young people, for communities and beyond. Again, findings from the *review of review papers* are presented first followed by exemplars from the *about papers*.

In the hackathon, one contributor noted:

I feel strongly that projects should be judged more on HOW MUCH IMPACT CYP's involvement has on a study than HOW INVOLVED they are. If we ask young people to be heavily involved but their participation doesn't impact, it's pretty dodgy. If they, we and the project all change as a result ++

7.2.1 Approaches to evaluating the processes of peer research from the *review of reviews*

Across the review papers, a range of appraisal tools/frameworks were adopted to evaluate levels of children and young people's involvement or leadership in research. Most reviews adopted an existing framework (e.g. Shier's (2001, 2019) and Hart (1992)). Two reviews created a framework for assessing participation (Anyon et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2018) and eleven reviews did not reference using any tools to assess levels of participation.

Shier's (2001) pathways to participation model was valued for its adaptiveness and simplicity and clarity of separation between levels of participation. Similarly to Hart's (1992) model, this framework provides a sequential framework of levels of power sharing. However, reviews that have adopted Shier's typology note drawbacks including that it does not include the influence of young people's background (e.g. gender, ethnicity) and how that affects the balance of power (see Wilson et al. (2018) for a critique of frameworks used to assess young people's involvement in health research).

Shier (2019), in line with Larkins et al. (2014) Lattice of Participation, proposed a participation matrix to analyse levels of decision-making power and control at nine stages of the research process. The participation matrix is adopted by Gibbs et al. (2020) and Grace et al. (2019). Gal's (2017) Ecological Model of Participation, adopted in Shamrova and Cumming's review, also evaluates outcomes of PAR on children and youth, organisations and communities.

Lansdown and O'Kane's (2015) continuum model of participation, adopted by Bovarnick et al. (2018) provides a simpler tool to categorise variation in how research projects involve children and young people, recognising that the nature of involvement can vary or fluctuate at different times (e.g. depending on capacity). Wilson et al. (2018) propose a model incorporating five dimensions of young people's involvement in health research (geography, inclusiveness, stage of research, health topic and levels of involvement). Their framework goes beyond existing frameworks by considering who is conducting the research, including their background and their geographical context. The inclusiveness dimension involves examining documented aspects of young people's backgrounds (e.g. gender, ethnicity) to assess how this can affect individual power and status within a research context and therefore is particularly useful for peer research with marginalised groups.

7.2.2 Approaches to evaluating the processes of peer research from *about papers*

There is little available evidence on validated tools and measurements to assess the research processes. As outlined in the *review of review papers*, evaluation of the research process tends to focus on the extent of influence that children or young people exercise in different stages of the research. This subsection therefore focuses on approaches to evaluating how other aspects of

research dynamics and activities have an impact on the integrity of research process and robustness of the findings.

The earlier sections of this report (3-6) stress that levels of influence within peer research are not the only significant factor that promote success. Inclusivity is key, as peer research tends to be underpinned by critical understandings of the intersecting patterns of discrimination that children and young people encounter and the need to ensure a process that creates spaces of open communication and reflection. Ethics and ongoing management of challenges throughout the research process (see section 8) are also key.

Most interestingly, in the *about papers*, the process of designing and applying creative and innovative methods to conduct youth-led research and studies have turned the methods inwards, that is, used creative methods to explore research practice itself. This provides valuable insights into how and where young researchers see themselves in and evaluate the process.

The best practice examples illustrated below focus by and large on tools and techniques used to assess the integrity of the research process and some of these overlap with assessing outcomes for young people (which will be addressed in section 7.3.1).

Creative and innovative methods: Batsleer2011

This article is relevant in the sense that the author provides means of studying practices of exclusion and marginalisation. The author argues for an **arts-based methodology** – photography and drama – can give these **young men's voices** and the author aims to find out connections and overlaps between these voices.

Co-creation of knowledge: Van Mechelen et al 2019

Creative methodologies such as drama, drawing and storytelling emerged in the 1990s in child research. Moreover, the authors indicated that **co-design is a type of collaborative creativity** – various people promote discussion and increase the range of options.

Reflexive appraisal with learning cycles: Dovey-Pearce et al 2019

The study examined the experiences of young people involved in a large-scale health research programme in the UK. Group formation and everyone finding their tasks and identities within the group was an iterative process. **Reflexive appraisal with learning cycles was essential for facilitating instrumental**, rather than purely communicational involvement through the iterative process.

Makhoul et al 2012.

The trainings attended provided children with skills that they applied. In addition, the individual sessions provided them with actual experiences and **enhanced their ability to interact with children**, which they perceived as great benefit to them in the future. Because of this increase in self-confidence, they said they felt they were now able to **voice their opinion and express themselves** anywhere. The young people also stated that they had become calmer and learned to be more patient. Reasons mentioned for this include the **training they have received in preparation for their role**, such as **anger management**

techniques; the importance of being role models for children, which requires preparing themselves to do so; changes in temperament affected their interaction with family members, friends, as well *as children generally*.

7.2.3 Implications for approaches to evaluating process

In summary, approaches used to measure and support young people's involvement in peer research fall under three distinct categories of 'creative', 'traditional' or 'validated' methods.

Creative methods have typically measured: the peer researcher's involvement in and experience of the co-creation of knowledge; utilizing spaces for self-reflection; engaging in reflexive appraisal as part of learning cycles, participation in spaces to undertake in-depth discussions and debates; and spaces to provide individual feedback.

Cocreated creative and reflexive methods that explore the research process in terms of individual journeys and group appraisals are needed as the factors to explore include: inclusivity, training and orientation, reflective practice, ethics, cushioning, and collaboration. (see other sections of this report for details).

7.3 Approaches to evaluating outcomes and change in peer research

From the review of review papers, only Gavine et al. (2017) and Valdez et al. (2020) specifically examined approaches to evaluating outcomes of peer led research, mainly in relation to outcomes for young people. Valdez et al. (2020) identified outcome evaluation as an area for improvement within YPAR for youth substance use prevention noting that most articles did not report if and how outcome data were collected or analysed, the data limitations, or how other researchers might replicate or confirm findings. None of the articles included in their review reported long-term outcomes for youth.

Gavine et al. (2017) also found considerable heterogeneity in how outcomes for young people are measured in health peer led research including differences in the concepts measured and scales used. Also, most studies adopted their own measurements rather than using pre-existing validated scales. Outcomes measured mainly include those that measure actual health behaviours and those that measure predictors of behaviour (e.g. attitudes). Outcome measurement also included non-specific measures grouped around positive youth development; community engagement/sense of belonging; presentation and peer education skills; and team/leadership skills (Gavine et al., 2017).

This section therefore draws on the *about papers* to look at how outcomes and impact might be evidenced for individual peer researchers and more broadly.

There is limited evidence available on systematic ways in which to measure both the impact of young people's involvement in youth led research, or how the young researchers research findings have changed society. However, the absence of evidence does not mean that youth-led research over the last two decades has not made an impact on individuals, communities and organisations but simply that outcomes have not been systematically captured and recorded.

Whilst some approaches to monitoring the scope, quality and outcomes of children and young people's participation (e.g. Landsdown and O'Kane 2014) are being increasingly used to reflect on practice, these have not been applied in the sampled papers and therefore lie outside the scope of this research.

7.3.1 Evaluating outcomes for individuals involved in peer research

The review of about papers show that traditional methods have been used to elicit assessment information about outcomes for peer researchers, and the tools have often been interviews and surveys (e.g. to measure hard and soft skills). These are undertaken at entrance and exit points and used alongside monitoring/audit data detailing payments and incentives given to young researchers. Validated methods/frameworks that have been cited include the 7S framework, sampling a (control) group of young researchers to measure knowledge, behaviour and Ecological Evaluation, which takes a holistic approach to assess young researchers learning and the space/place in which they are undertaking research.

Interviews and surveys: Tavecchio et al (2019)

The authors conducted a participatory peer research (PPR) with ten young adults with severe behavioural issues and with mild intellectual disabilities. **Before and after the participatory peer research project, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were performed by the authors.** The authors suggested that PPR is an approach that service users conduct a research themselves leading to the study's findings to be implemented into clinical practice. Some of the outcomes that the participants reported about the project were that it was educational and invited them to become aware, responsible and active agents of their own situations. A limitation however is that participants were not randomly selected.

Ecological Evaluation: Odera (2021)

The authors argue that participatory evaluation can be used as an approach to program evaluation, especially Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE) which involves young people in the design, data collection, interpretation, and reporting of the program in which they are involved. The author also pointed out that YPE and YPAR have individual and community outcomes. Some of the individual **outcomes include critical thinking and professional skills as well as confidence and self-expression.** Some of the community outcomes include increased teen engagement, interaction, and voice in community life. **The aim of YPAR is to empower youth to create their own narratives and become agents of change and knowledge producers within their communities. The main aim of the evaluation was to see if there were any changes in participants after participants were taught how to conduct youth-led community action research.** The author reported that deeper learning and reflection took place across relational and individual levels. Each group member prioritised **ecological validity.** Some areas for improvement, recommended by the author include changing timing of the training, extension of the length of the program and staff should assist with logistical arrangements of student meeting.

Civic engagement and exit survey: Koudelka (2021)

The author argues that **building critical civic empathy** engenders the critical analysis of position, power, and privilege from a **culturally responsive stance** and fosters the discourse needed to create socially just civic action, **a greater sense of agency,** and **relevant critical literacy skills.** The students' **civic engagement and exit survey** responses illuminated the third component of critical consciousness: critical action. The formation of civic identity often begins with group membership and volunteerism. Most of the students reported that they were currently, or had been, a member of a group, such as a sports team, youth group, or

other association, and that they had been involved in volunteer work. Their age at the time of taking this survey may have affected their reporting. Therefore, their understanding of activism may have been focused on large-scale behaviours and protests as seen on television rather than the types of civic actions in their everyday life, such as personal advocacy, working with communities, or engaging in critical discourse.

Individual feedback: van Schelven et al (2021)

The study aimed to explore the experiences of **youth panel involvement** in the Care and Futures Programme among young people living with chronic conditions. The **motivations for youth panel engagement** included doing something for others and improve the social position of those living with chronic conditions, aspiring to raise awareness and recognising that their voices are important as they are familiar with the problems young people with chronic conditions experience. Although YP's involvement **did not lead to sufficient change in the social position of young people** with chronic illness, they initiated **engagement in political activities including consultations with parliament and ministers and political parties** that eventually led to **perceived changes in social position**.

Quasi-RCT: Amber et al (2019)

The study explored the usefulness of involving students in a participatory action **research to implement a positive educational strategy** (PERMA+: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, accomplishment) in Australia. Ten PAR students and ten control students participated in the evaluation. PAR students showed increased engagement, increased confidence and self-efficacy, increased perceived agency and control in school affairs, improved communication skills, better problem solving, research and critical thinking skills as a result of PAR participation. **Some PAR students talked about increased autonomy and feelings of empowerment, better relatedness and forming new networks.** The comparison group reported higher number of undesirable changes on a few measurements. **The comparison group also expresses decline in mental health and well-being over the school year** while the PAR group did not show this. **PAR students highlighted the need of letting everyone participate in the workshops and defining student's role better from the beginning of the project.** More engaging activities (producing a video for assembly, presentation) increased student's motivation for workshop participation.

Cocreated creative methods may also be beneficial as the range of outcomes that may arise are extensive (see section 7.1). And there may be a need to provide space in which young people can name and explain outcomes in relation to micro-aggressions, stereotypes and unforeseen negative effects:

Impacts on CYP understanding, learning and participation: Keddle (2019)

The difficulties of 'action' in Youth Participatory Action Research: schoolifying YPAR in two **elite settings**, Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education. The authors provide the reader with an overview of two YPAR projects on topics such as **girl-boy relationships and microaggressions**. Keddle argues that YPAR can be used as tool to challenge injustices in their own lives such as normalised practices of masculinity and gender that led to violence. Keddle's results highlighted that microaggressions were being perpetrated in one of the elite schools by white students towards **minority students**. The use of discourses such as 'being

too sensitive', 'the logic of meritocracy' and 'politically correct' as defence mechanisms. Keddie also reported the **objectification of girls in the form of harassment and sexual conquests**. The author concludes with an affirmation that racialised and class privilege hinder the recognition of micro-aggressions towards minority students.

A longer-term approach to understanding impact was also beneficial:

Impacts on CYP understanding, learning and participation: Hampshire et al (2012).

Children researcher's found the work interesting and enjoyable and reported improved confidence that lead to **better communication skills, better interactions with and learning experiences** from adult academics, new personal (in their community) and professional networks as a result of participation. They thought the project was important in providing a view of possibilities and widening their horizon and **appreciated being paid for their work**. The demands of conducting research included negative reception from participants, the **difficulties of fieldwork**, and **unforeseen research expenses** that had to be paid out of pocket, posed challenges for the young age group.

The long-term benefits of participation (2-3 years after the study) included increased self-confidence and pride about their achievements, better communication skills, better status in their communities, new personal and professional networks that were maintained long term, transferable skills gained for university studies, academic work, and employment.

In summary, highlighted in the studies are a comprehensive picture of learnings, successes and challenges young researchers report on has a consequence of getting involved in research projects and/or research skills training.

Each study has recognised that young researchers have valued the spaces in which research projects skills training takes place, unambiguously encouraging them to engage in: in-depth discussions and debates; which has prepared them to think critically; the efforts made to reduce power discrepancies to create playful, fun and safe environments; that has welcomed diversity and encouraged vulnerable young people to engage; helped by the availability of youth-friendly mechanisms and platforms. There have nonetheless been challenges encountered along the way.

Resulting from these inclusive and innovative practices there is commonality in the set of learning outcomes they have been able to achieve by getting involved in research as indicated in the *review of review* and *about papers* (see section 7.1).

The implications for future research and evaluation is clear. There is a need to use a co-produced mix of methods - standardised and validated measures alongside those co-designed with children and young people that reflect their own desires for benefits and outcomes of their involvement - and timed to capture both the baseline and incremental outcomes in the young researchers predicted growth and development in a range of soft and hard skills as well as resilience and wellbeing. This should be complimented by a longitudinal design capturing change over time, or at least a retrospective measurement tool to capture post-study gains experienced by young researchers.

To restate, the young researchers credit their personal development to a better leaning experience, which has important lessons for how future research and evaluation should be co-designed and co-delivered in order to activate and mobilise the young researchers' assets using a strengths-based approach. Cocreated and creative methods are likely to enable young people to name and explore a greater diversity of experiences. Given the emphasis on adult coresearcher skills and the conditions

for collaboration (see section 8), more attention is needed to assessing development of adult skills and capacities for peer research.

7.3.2 Evaluating community outcomes and steps towards conditions for social impact and change

As indicated by the review of review and about papers in section 7.1, success in peer research can also be understood in terms of changes in children and young people's collective welfare, communities and organisations, public policy, law and services and child and youth practitioner practice and professional services.

Recording of impact and achievement of change is superficial at best and sometimes entirely lacking. Nonetheless, there are notable examples of attempting to develop frameworks for conceptualising steps towards social change.

From the review of reviews, Shamrova and Cumming (2017) offer this taxonomy (see Figure 12) but it has not been used in practice.

Figure 12: Taxonomy of PAR outcomes for children, organizations and community

-
- Themes: PAR outcomes for children and youth
- Knowledge gain and formation of social justice awareness (n = 8)
 - Social-emotional and cognitive development (n = 12)
 - Relationship with adults (n = 5)
 - Connectedness with community (n = 6)
 - Child as an agent of social change (n = 11)
- Themes: PAR outcomes for organizations
- Changing organizational culture to more participatory and child-inclusive (n = 14)
 - Sensitizing of existing programs to the needs of children and youth (n = 12)
 - Utilizing results for advocacy projects and public campaign (n = 4)
 - Applying for funding based on the PAR results (n = 3)
- Themes: PAR outcomes for communities
- Creation of platform for intergenerational dialogue (n = 4)
 - Formation of new outlets for children and youth voices (n = 10)
 - Advocacy for policy change (n = 9)
 - Raising community awareness (n = 11)
 - Promotion of infrastructural change within community (n = 13)
-

Some case examples have however applied existing frameworks and developed community-based assessments.

Impacts on CYP understanding, learning and participation: Fleming (2013),

The paper discussed young people's participation in the voluntary and public sector by summarising the results of three research evaluations and focusing on young people's experiences. Young people were involved in decision making in different settings and forms: elected authority forums and groups, trustees and board members, specialist forums, local and community-based panels and groups, national groups, advisory, groups, management committees and being responsible for particular tasks or events. **In terms of their influence on the organisations, they felt that they were listened to and supported to develop ideas,**

and through representation everyone had the chance to be heard. They contributed to decision making through involvement in recruiting staff and grant giving, strategic planning, and influencing organisational and national policies and local work. However, there were factors that **hindered participation such as local authorities discouraging young people's involvement in local authority structures and dismissive attitudes from staff, too much adult control, slow pace of change and lack of action on issues reported by YP, lack of accountability and feedback.** There was a measurable progress in hard elements of the seven S Framework (strategy, structure, systems), for example YPs suggestions for structures to inform decision making, systems to support participation such as budgets for participation activities and evaluation, and strategies for meeting the obligation of demonstratable youth involvement. However, more work is needed to improve the soft elements (shared values, staff, skills, style of leadership), especially in local authority settings.

Impact on CYP public policy, law and services: Anselma et al (2019)

An important success factor in the Kids in Action study was that the study collaborated with a multidisciplinary planning group consisting of a community-based organization familiar with the neighbourhood and working with school-based young researchers they co-design community-level interventions to tackle childhood obesity. **Using a participatory needs assessment and as part of the effect evaluation young people identified that their voices were heard in formal spaces underpinning the continued involvement and support of partner organizations.**

By exploring the pathways to impact and change that young researchers are pursuing it is also possible to expand understandings of how to conceive of contributing factors to change, so that incremental progress may be recorded. For example, shifts in understandings of civic praxis may be a step towards greater possibilities for social change.

Impact on CYP public policy, law and services: Koudelka (2021).

Through their engagement in action research, the participants utilized critical civic empathy and discourse to reflect on social positions and power structures to mediate action addressing the issue of bullying. **By reimagining their experiences as civic praxis, the participants were able to widen their view of what counts as civic participation** and reflected on their roles and positioning from within a traditional classroom environment.

Impacts on CYP practitioners and professional services: Zeylikman (2019).

The Museum Teen Summit is regularly quoted as a pivotal player in making a difference on how museums started to offer more **teens-centred programming via social and political events, drop-in programs teen nights and increased outreach. Some of the successes included summer research projects chosen by members and new modes of community building.** Teens were also exposed to activities and exhibitions related to **queer narratives and about the values of empathy.**

Impacts on CYP practitioners and professional services: Kornbluh (2019)

This study connected students in three high school classrooms involved in youth-led social change initiatives through an SNS (a private Facebook group). The three classrooms were located in separate, **racially diverse urban high schools**. Each classroom was engaged in a distinct Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) project.

Other articles emphasise again the need to focus on relationships of change, utilising longer timeframes of measurement to understand the nature of evolving change.

Impact on CYP social welfare: Wagaman (2015)

The study aimed to explore the value of PAR as an empowerment-based approach among LGBTQ youth with a focus on youth perspectives on in what way the process was impactful and empowering. **Over time the group learned to appreciate the differences within the groups and seeing them as a resource rather than challenge, a value to their research and community work that was also reflective of the wider LGBTQ youth community. The group became increasingly more inclusive** and sensitive to potential challenges arising from individual situations/differences and designed strategies to facilitate equal contribution from all members. Researchers identified strategies that have the scope to strengthen the community such as reflective listening, inclusivity, and providing a safe space for discussions.

The need for methods that can enable understanding of multimedia and performance methods for achieving and pursuing impact are also needed.

Impact on CYP social welfare: Castro (2016)

As youth artist-activists, the authors' work could stand on its own, but they believe that they are stronger together. **They have created a conversation of images and voices that represent the strength they have when they can be themselves. They work together to make a world one deserves to live in.** The authors' work originates from within and is influenced by their experiences in the world, by the communities surrounding them, by those **who love them, by those who have come before them and by the challenges that are thrown at them.** They believe that their **words and images have value** because they do.

This section has set out examples of good and emerging practice which research groups and their partners have implemented to pursue impact and change in response to local research challenges.

Some of the solutions evidenced by the studies are the advancement in partnership and networks that has arisen through the studies - most notably with local communities and public body stakeholders who have taken comfort from working with young researchers leading to collective action on specific social issues and/or a commitment to future collaboration.

A limitation to the studies has been gap in measurements tools to systematically capture the views, insights and experiences of collaborators working with young researchers on achieving impact in research, policy or practice. This is due to 1. the timeframes between findings being produced and acted upon, 2. the iterative and discursive nature of most of the reported interactions between young researchers and collaborators, and 3. the absence and/or underuse of measurement tools - away from the 7S Framework and ecological evaluation approach - to capture changes at agential and structural levels.

In the latter case, the implications for future research and evaluation is to explore how best to establish and embed a outcomes framework to systematically measure external perspectives on the impact of peer research bearing in mind the bottom-up multi-stakeholder multi-modal approaches being applied.

In summary, the central areas where individual and community outcomes have been reported have in order of frequency been on 1. peers understanding, learning and participation, 2. impacts on children and young people's public policy, law and services, 3. impacts on child and youth practitioners and professional services, 4. followed by impact on children' social welfare, and finally, 5. impacts on children and young people' health and wellbeing and community relationships. To reiterate, the studies do not present comprehensive evidence on what end users, beneficiaries or stakeholders think about how youth-led research findings have informed, influenced or shaped their work or life leaving a notable gap to bridge in future research and evaluation, to map pathways to impact.

8. What are key tensions in peer research and how are these dealt with?

This section draws on the generalised critique papers to give answers to key questions raised by the cocreation activities that guided this review, around:

- 8.1 negotiating commitments and challenges, and responses to the tensions in peer research
- 8.2 managing collaboration and capacity (ways of distributing power and being inclusive)
- 8.3 cushions (supportive structures, values and relationships in peer researchers)
- 8.4 credibility and achieving change (truth and power resulting from research)

Discussion relating to these important phases identified by experienced youth peer researchers was extracted from each review paper and then synthesised to explore common patterns and themes across the review papers. The general critique papers (see Table 8.0) were then explored to find additional content and depth. This section of the report therefore critically underpins the review as a whole and distils some key points for reflection.

8.1 Negotiating commitments and challenges

The potential for peer research to result in opportunities for personal and social change, including the production of powerful new knowledge is clear (see sections 7.1, 7.3, 8.4) but realising these benefits require commitments to doing things differently.

Lohmeyer (2020) argues that the movement towards participation is a **shift towards an understanding of young people as active subjects, rather than passive objects of research.**

Fleming (2011) suggests that it needs to be based on principles that recognise and articulate the relative powerless position of young people, that it should **embrace an emancipatory research paradigm and strive to generate research with young people that will create change in their own lives and contexts.**

Enacting these principles inevitably challenges many of the traditional assumptions about the purpose, principles, processes, practices and underpinning structures of research (that is, the underpinning philosophy, epistemology, methodology, and methods of research).

But is peer research that new and different?

Thomas (2020) argues that there has been too much research that proclaims children's 'agency' as if it were a new discovery, without examining the concept critically or reflecting enough on previous research and without recognising the importance of structure.

Kim (2016) argues that most research by children is still "initiated and conducted within an adult-dominated framework, with adult agendas, assumptions, methodologies" foregrounded.

Fleming (2011: 215) suggests that one of the hardest things for adults to do in collaborative research with CYP is to "recognise that it is no longer 'my' research" and to commit to working against the conventional adult-child hierarchy of knowledge that assumes that what adults know is more valuable.

Bird, Culley and Lakhanpaul (2013) argue that even in the context of collaborative research it can be hard to successfully encourage adults to take children's views seriously.

The upshot is that many of the potential benefits that might accrue for children and young people from peer research rely on the commitment, attitudes and actions of adults who take part, as well as of those in institutions connected to the research in other ways. To start thinking differently it is important to reflect on the commitments needed to respond to challenges related to rights and agency, assumptions about children's developmental ages and inclusion of marginalised groups.

8.1.1 Children's and young people's agency, rights and roles in peer research

Many critical writers position debates around the commitments and challenges for peer research in relation to aspects of the UNCRC, specifically Article 3 which demands that 'the best interests of the child' should be a primary consideration in all actions adults take concerning children.

McGlaughlin (2020), for example, describes how the political drive to redefine children as agents and citizens comes from an assertion that harm occurs to children because they are not allowed to have a say in their lives.

Thomas (2020) suggests that conducting research helps to fulfil children's rights to participation and that it can also empower children. He also argues that children are competent to conduct research and that they are epistemically better positioned to research about children.

However, Ergler (2017: 247) suggests we should be less romantic about the "employment of children as researchers and move away from the current idealised picture" and that even when children become researchers, "we cannot close our eyes to the structural constraints of conducting research with children."

Thinking about rights and agency is not therefore enough – it is important to also think about the contexts and relationships (between children and between children and adults) through which research is taking place.

Banks et al. (2013) Spriggs and Gillam (2019) points out that in YPAR and YPR both researcher and researched often have to consider whether and where to draw the lines between being a researcher, (school-)friend, neighbour and or some other role or relationship and hence peer researchers can easily find themselves with competing loyalties and obligations.

Bradbury-Jones and Taylor (2015) and Franks (2011) suggest that the issues of power in peer-to-peer relationships are also important, are often overlooked and seldom actively considered. Citing Conolly (2008) and Kellett, (2010) they argue that young people who are trained in and who conduct social research can be placed in an elevated position over other young people which has implications throughout the research process. They also warn that in some cases more articulate children can 'hi-jack research agendas' and these children may deliberately or unintentionally exclude the participation of other children.

8.1.2 Children's and young people's developmental status/stage

Various arguments are put forward in the critical literature about the implications of age and the necessary accommodations that might need to be instituted in YPAR and YPR to attend to the developmental issues of CYP of different ages who take part in different ways.

Makuch and Aczel (2020: 225) argue that citizen science projects can successfully be “adapted to fit the varying abilities and needs of individual children” allowing children of different ages (in their case children as young as 9 years old) to contribute in a meaningful way to research.

Also, Horgan (2017) draws on work with CYP from 7 to 17 years of age, arguing that there is value in developing quite different methods for exploring similar issues of participation and decision-making when a broad age range takes part in peer research.

Ackermann and Schubotz (2020: 4) argue that, in addition to the conventional ethical issues we face in any research project involving human participants (such as informed consent, confidentiality and data protection), the status of children as minors adds some legal and ethical barriers that need to be addressed. They argue ‘The first main issue is that additional layers of consent and permissions may be required from parents or guardians, but also from institutional gatekeepers, such as schools, care homes, youth projects’.

The point being made, is that children under the legal age of consent and those who are approached and recruited through institutions often cannot decide for themselves whether or not they want to take part in research.

But age-based distinctions about children, their capabilities and their responsibilities, are often misplaced – competence relates to context and experience, not simply age (see section 4.1).

Ackermann and Schubotz (2020: 4) suggest that one important limitation of age-based processes and protocols is that they are “sometimes quite artificial and contradictory” and fail to account for different contexts and different processes around involvement.

In some contexts, for example, young people are quite used to assuming roles and responsibilities often associated with adults (e.g. caring roles and other forms of employment). The implication is that in many YPAR and YPR contexts it is adult gatekeepers rather than CYP who get to decide who takes part (also see Gaillard et al 2018).

Lohmeyer (2020) argues that the net effect is that youth research continues to be regulated by adult-centric processes (i.e. ethics and risk management processes).

Fitzgerald and Stride and Enright (2020) that the involvement of adult gatekeepers in deciding which young people can be involved in YPAR and YPR negates the view of CYP as competent social actors (cite Prout and James, 1997).

This is an important challenge because current law, practice and guidelines are based on specific understandings of children and childhood, and although as researchers we may disagree with these, we also hold power and responsibilities (see section 6.2.1).

Banks et al. (2013) argue that most ethical codes and guidelines for research are concerned with the rights of individual ‘human subjects’ (to safety, privacy, freedom of choice to participate or withdraw).

McGlaughlin (2020: 205) suggests that the idea of individual agency and autonomy is problematic and fails to “acknowledge the reality of the differences in capacity between children and adults” and also between different CYP.

Banks et al. (2013) suggest that consent forms tend to be completed by individuals and are often premised on the assumption of a clear distinction between researchers and subjects of

research and can also make assumptions that an adult researcher has primary control over and responsibility for the research.

Peer research creates an additional series of issues, or at least not predictably and consistently, which creates a series of issues which need careful management.

Banks et al (ibid: 263) argue a need for “Relationship-based ethics, including the ethics of care” (also argued for by Carabello et al., 2019 and Woodgate, Zurba and Tennent, 2018). This is intended to focus attention on the ways in which responsibilities are attached to particular relationships and offers a necessary counterpoint to “principle-based ethics” which focuses on individual rights and duties independent of contexts (p. 274).

McGlaughlin (2020: 205) argues that “while it is a nice idea to think of children as being able to exercise rights, it is unfair to give them this burden”

Ergler (2017: 246) suggests that child researchers should not be expected to immediately follow the procedural and institutional guidelines adults have developed over years, arguing that it is more appropriate to place emphasis on a “learning process and the co-development of a meaningful ethical approach that takes the circumstances of projects into account”.

Hawke et al (2018) suggest that incorporating the perspectives of adult caregivers in peer research can be another valuable form of partnership and resource to support projects. However, they argue that approach needs be built on a clear understanding that youth and caregivers are fundamentally different groups, with different voices and needs.

Attempts to assess the competency and capability of children and young people in peer research are complicated and projects must tread the line between accusations of *paternalism* on the one hand, in which adults are the designers as well as the implementers of systems of control, and the *abdication* of responsibility on the other.

8.1.3 Engaging children who experience marginalisation in YPR and YPAR

Banks et al (2013: 265) observe that many forms of PR tend to be used to engage groups that are perceived as ‘hard to access’ by professional researchers and is seen as an important approach to knowledge mobilisation and exchange within this arena.

They make three important arguments:

1. that the experiences of marginalised children are often neglected in research and policies
2. that there are dangers in focussing on marginalisation through the use of categories which can essentialise inequalities and reify differences.
3. that the approach is also open to co-option by institutions and agencies for their own ends.

There are limits to what peer research can achieve but thinking about the best ways to create research that is easy to engage with is a good start.

Bradbury-Jones and Taylor (2015) argue that engaging with young people as researchers is not necessarily a solution to their marginalisation.

Spiel et al. (2020: 60) argue that adult “researchers have to be especially careful when aiming for child-led research design processes with marginalised children” (especially across

different age ranges) and that they must be committed to explicitly making space for the participation of the children on their own terms (Spiel et al. 2017).

King et al. (2021: 25) refer to this as “whiches conundrum”; that is, which approaches and forms of YPAR and YPR might be most relevant to which people of which ages, in which locations and under which sets of circumstances.

Some children and young people may be used to having their lives controlled and monitored by adults and might not want to be involved or to have the responsibility of leading research.

The equal footing may be difficult to accept (Bradley-Jones et al., 2018). The social distance between adults and children varies across cultures and settings, in patriarchal communities, children and youth might not be encouraged to be vocal about their opinions, especially, while in the presence of the adults (Shamrova & Cummings, 2017).

In their review Bradley-Jones et al. 2018 argue that the “the *raison d'être* for undertaking participatory research with vulnerable children and young people is to seek to equalise power relations and provide opportunity for empowerment and voice”. Peer research should create participatory spaces giving voices to those who are not typically heard, an awareness of this power imbalance is essential for enactment.

Bailey et al. (2014) reviewing peer research with disabled children and young people highlighted the need for researchers to balance their right to participate in research with a responsibility to protect them and ensure they are not overburdened, ensuring that on-going support is provided for children and young people after meetings.

Where children or young people feel intimidated by professionals, where they are working in unfamiliar environments, unrealistic expectations of involvement, not feeling routinely listened to, perceptions of tokenism or being unused to giving their opinion can prevent them from getting involved in research.

Faced with challenges they feel they cannot deal with, children and young people may lose confidence or interest in the project.

Liddiard et al. (2019: 164) whose research is with disabled CYP, argue that “what is required to democratise research (disabled or not) is a shift in what constitutes research ‘contribution’, ‘capability’ and ‘leadership’”. They propose the notion that.....enabling leadership and control of the research agenda by non-academics involves challenging the normative (and ableist) rubrics of research and its traditional methods to give better access to researchers with a wide range of skills, capabilities and knowledge.

This highlights a point made by service user academic Diane Rose (2014: 217) has argued in the field of mental health, the tendency to focus too exclusively on individuals can tend to “render unimportant the social relations in which we are embedded and which shape and form us.” “In a real sense” she suggests “we are those social relations”.

What this discussion indicates is that YPAR and YPR with marginalised CYP has the potential both to enable resistance and to reinforce biases and existing modes of exclusion. These issues and concerns need explicit attention and careful management throughout the peer research process and questions of intersectionality need careful exploration and consideration.

8.2 Managing collaboration and capacity

In the hackathon with experienced youth researchers we created the question that this section answers: **Which processes and structures ensure collaborative peer research is acceptable and accessible to the diversity of children and young people (age, identity, experience of discrimination, economic situations)?**

Eleven of the review papers discussed elements that are required to support collaborative peer research: Shifting power, relational thinking, building trust, comfortable space, investing time, flexibility, and reflection. The review of *general critique papers* indicated that these need to be underpinned by clarity about power lines, framing the challenges, valuing different levels of involvement, recognition, partnership with youth advisory groups and team building. A summary of these elements is displayed in Figure 13.



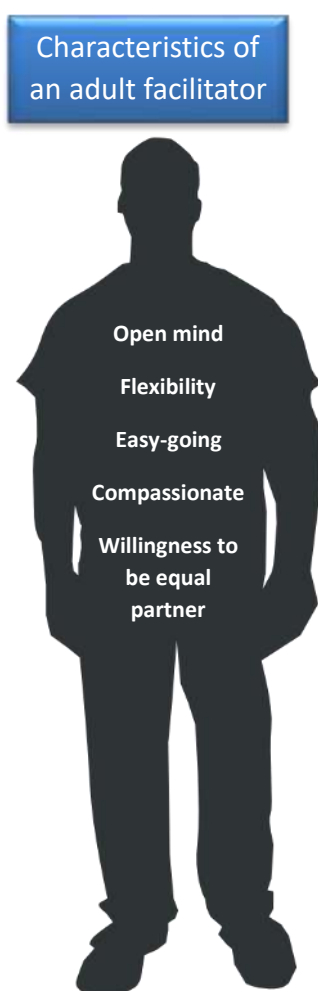
Figure 13. Summary of elements required to support collaborative peer research from review papers cross-cut with insights from the general critique papers.

8.2.1 The characteristics of adults

Across the *review papers* the characteristics of adult researchers were seen to enable (or limit) collaboration. Collaboration in the research process needed trained and experienced adult facilitators that are able to provide the elements of being together, in Figure 2, that enable collaboration and that time and investment is needed for this. The *review papers* highlighted that adults in peer research need an open mind and to be willing to be flexible/adaptable, kind and compassionate and willing to be an equal partner in the research process.

Involving young people is more than a tick-box exercise and a wide range of papers emphasised the importance of investing time and careful planning into adapting ways of working to facilitate the best input from young researchers. (Wilson et al., 2020)

Figure 14 – Enabling change in power dynamics in participation



Many peer research scholars have developed different ways of accounting for the complex problems of collaboration, some developing different models and languages for explaining the relational and power issues involved.

Many point out how thinking about YPAR and YPR has historically been guided by Arnstein's (1992) 'ladder of participation', with attempts focused on ways to illustrate varying degrees of collaboration when working with CYP.

Fitzgerald, Stride and Enright (2020) (and Hart himself 2008) suggest that this is now often seen as somewhat simplistic, because, for example, the ladder can imply that CYP operating at the higher rungs are involved in more superior projects, which may not be the case. They argue the ladder provides a crude measure of how much young people are enabled to participate and fails to acknowledge how other identity markers such as disability, ethnicity, gender and class may also influence engagement and participation.

Thomas (2017: 161) has categorised some of the dominant modes of collaboration as 'children as research assistants', 'children as research partners' and 'children as research leaders', reflecting different levels of involvement as well as different possible roles in the process.

Issues relating to power were commonly discussed across the review papers (14). A common theme was that working in collaboration with children and young people on a research project involves the *transfer or shifting of power from adult researcher to children or young people*. For some adult researchers this may take them out of their comfort zone, so adults need to be willing to consider imbalances and share power with young people.

Important aspects ensuring children have more power are:

Enabling them to set their own agenda and take an active role in decision-making (Agdal et al. 2019; Montreuil et al., 2021, Shamrova & Cummings, 2017,

Larkins 2016). This is important because, as Franks (2011) suggests, the advocacy potential of YPAR and YPR is tied up with its potential to help CYP 'further their [own] goals' (cites David, 2002:11) and hence that the absence of CYP in identifying research priorities at the outset of projects is a serious impediment to ensuring that the research questions asked are relevant to the lived experience of children and young people (also see Hawke et al. 2020).

Developing agreements about roles and shared aims to promote team work and convey equalisation of power are important to work through at the beginning of a project (Raanaas et al., 2020; Valdez et al., 2020).

Difficulties often arise due to when project participation begins and ends.

Hawke et al. (2020) suggest that involvement in project research design is the most common starting point for involvement, with involvement at the outset (e.g. initial planning) and endpoint (e.g. dissemination) being much rarer. They argue that high levels of full engagement as equal decision makers throughout the project is very rare. Fleming (2011: 215) observes that projects that are wholly young people-led are noticeable by their absence in the literature, arguing that we do not yet have the experience of young people coming to us and saying, 'help me with my research'.

Facilitating collaboration in peer research therefore requires children and young people's influence over a maximum range of aspects of research as possible (see section 5.2 for how) and where this is not possible, transparency about when, where and why (see section 6.2.3).

8.2.2 The invisible power lines attached to funding

Transparency about limitations related to funding is important. In many peer research projects the conditions of funding can mean that adults involved can easily be torn between their own commitment to empowerment in determining research conduct and attending to the priorities of the funding agency. The review of reviews revealed that pressure related to funding creates a power dynamic in the context in which peer research takes place (see section 3.2).

Franks (2011: 22) suggest that "much has been written about the power of the adult researcher in collaborative research with CYP but in many ways the researcher is in the middle position between the funder and those who collaborate, with the funder holding the reins of power in terms of their influence and its impact on how participative a project can actually can be". Franks (ibid) suggests that this "omission means there is often an incomplete picture of the power relations in which those things held in view - the power researcher versus research participants - is actually the tip of the iceberg". This underlines the importance of the ethical strategy of transparency about power (see section 6.2.3).

8.2.3 Reflecting on the difficulties of collaboration and capacity

Transparency about limitations (and possibilities for movement) related to time, values and expectations is also needed.

Tanang et al. (2021: 2) identify three useful differences which might be used to frame the difficulties of developing, supporting and evaluating collaboration and capacity in YPAR and YPR projects: *different timelines*, *different values* and *different expectations*. Each of these issues was also raised by young people in the Hackathon event run earlier in this project in March 2021.

Different timelines - young people argued that different stakeholders in YPAR and YPR can want things to happen at different speeds, at different moments and there are questions about whether it's possible to "press the pause button" sometimes and, if so, who gets to decide when and for how long? (issues with timelines are also reported by Abo-Zena et al. 2016; Bird, Culley and Lakhanpaul, 2013; Ergler, 2017; Dixon, Ward and Blower, 2019).

Different values - young people described how values can be discussed and even written down at the start of the project, but need to be revisited and renegotiated throughout as problems emerge, involvement changes and competing priorities must be considered (issues with values are also reported by Wilhelm et al. 2021 and Hawke et al. 2018 and Johnson et al. 2014).

Different expectations – it was noted in the discussions at the hackathon that the definition of the term collaboration includes the "action of working with someone to produce something" ("they wrote a report in collaboration with each other") and "the traitorous cooperation with an enemy" ("he faces charges of collaboration").

Hopefully peer research projects can avoid the second meaning of collaboration mentioned above. But as Anang et al. (2021: 2) suggest, projects which bring together adults (in their case academic)

and children and young people need to “bridge conflicting expectations and pressures” in ways which reflect and respect how partners often “march to very different beats”.

In navigating the complex layers of relations within communities which choose to collaborate (including in their case age-based ones predicated on respect for elders), that striving for *transparency, accountability, and trust*, are compelling guiding principles that must be framed by good quality communications among team members on expectations and pressures as they arise (Anang et al. 2021, Franks 2011; Fleming, 2011; Banks 2013; Bird, Culley and Lakhanpaul, 2013).

8.2.4 Valuing different levels of forms of involvement

All levels of collaboration from children and young people are valuable.

Duggan (2021) also argues that it can be important to ensure that projects can value different forms and levels of involvement including CYP who opt for temporary and peripheral encounters with the project.

Wilkinson and Wilkinson (2017) suggest that what is needed is to find “appropriate and desirable levels of involvement” (cite Flicker, 2008: 84), without burdening participants or diverting them from other duties and roles in their lives.

As Ergler (2017) argues there is a need to be cognisant of the time availability of different CYP researchers and that participating in research is only one activity besides school, sports, clubs and other leisure activities children are involved in; to which one might add family responsibilities. Hence there is a need to respect and formally recognise the reality that different CYP taking part in a project will have quite different demands on their time, situations in their lives and hence some may be unable to spend as much time participating as others.

Bettencourt (2020) makes a similar set of arguments, citing Tuck et al. (2008: 68) who argue “PAR isn’t synchronized swimming!”.

Children and young people often have busy lives with multiple commitments and obligations. Peer research may be something they can only drop in to.

Ergler (2017: 246) warns against forms of YPAR and YPR which expect all children to perform the role of an “adult mini-clone researcher” and be involved in all research stages, suggesting this leaves little room for CYP to explore their interests and capabilities. She argues that children need to be able to find a place in the research project that is meaningful and realistic for themselves. She argues that finding such a place also means finding ways around the currently conflicting temporalities between institutional or adult timelines which sometimes allow limited flexibility in when and how research is designed, conducted, analysed and disseminated. As suggested earlier, children’s motivations, interests and availability are likely to vary across the research cycle due to other commitments as well as how the current research task speaks to their capabilities and interests. In other words, children need to find a role that “easily allows them to move between ‘being’ (playing) in the moment and performing (an adult like) role in research” (Ergler *ibid*: 246).

Kidd et al (2018) observe that young people are very adept at engaging quickly and assertively in these windows of time when their circumstances make it possible. On the other hand, there are those who work at a different pace (both by disposition and by circumstance) and in these instances time can run more slowly. They argue that there is a clear need for an

artful maintenance and exploration of engagement for those CYP whose trust is difficult to earn but whose contributions can be extremely important. In these instances, adult researchers “must be nimble, accommodating and have a project focus that quickly delivers tangible benefit, and processes that tap creativity, humor, productive anger, and compassion” (p. 80).

Appreciation of the trust time and effort that all children and young people contribute is key.

8.2.5 Explicit forms, spaces and process for recognition

Recognition of children and young people’s contribution can take many forms (see also section 6.2.9).

Hawke et al. (2018) and Thabrew et al. (2018) argue that one way to authentically value youth expertise is to recognize and acknowledge CYPs contributions formally. Woodgate, Zurba and Tennent (2018) suggest that it is important to acknowledge the burden co-researchers take on and the risks associated with tokenistic participation.

Together they propose examples of ways to manage these issues by creating processes and procedures through which to explicitly value the commitments of CYP co-researchers. These include:

- *providing wages and/or remuneration* depending on context, specific research project, contributions, time commitments and role taken on
- *an honorarium* e.g., meals and transportation and conference attendance
- *references* for job or school applications
- *certificates* which recognise contribution and learning.
- the option to be a *co-investigator and/or consultant*

Franks (2011) suggests that to be non-exploitative the project has to be made to feel worthwhile and one of the ways in which this can happen is if there is a tangible acquisition of some skill or empowerment which can only ultimately be gauged if there is an appropriate evaluative process.

Johnson (2014: 63) argues that it is also important to consult young people in deciding how best to formally recognise and evaluate their contributions in ways that are meaningful to them, suggesting that ceremonies can provide important rituals through which contributions can be acknowledged and which contrast to the many rituals of contemporary culture that judge and degrade young people’s lives (cites White, 2007: 165).

By formally recognising CYPs contributions, researchers legitimise their contribution, strengthen engagement and help position youth as full participating members of the project team. Where possible, children and young people should decide for themselves on what form of recognition is appropriate.

8.2.6 Youth advisory groups

It is important to think of enabling collaboration with as wide a range of children and young people as possible, including those who do not take on peer researcher roles.

MacSweeney, Bowman and Clare (2019: 15) suggest that a young person’s advisory group - which acts as partners, guiding researchers on a range of research activities – can “yield valuable knowledge and can help change attitudes about the involvement of young people in research, also providing a medium through which young people can be empowered to shape research in

ways which address issues that they encounter in their everyday lives". In a similar vein Moore et al. (2015) propose the use of reference groups as an effective way to gain different perspectives to those of researchers, and to advise on how researchers interact with young participants. They developed a 'Youth Expert Panel' (YEP) facilitated by two research team members (including two meetings with the wider project team and representatives of the project funder, Lankelly Chase). The YEP considered the overall project aims, approach to content, ethical framework, how their ideas would be communicated to the young researchers and reflected in the pilot and offered constructive critique of progress.

The YEP emphasized several important themes throughout the project:

- *the importance of using creative approaches* including the stories of people from different backgrounds;
- *the creation of fictitious characters to ensure confidentiality;*
- *using visual methods and media that participants were familiar with;*
- *the use of age-appropriate language;*
- *making the sessions enjoyable;*
- *avoid being 'too serious', creating a 'victim mentality' or broaching 'overly sensitive' topics,*
- *the need to signpost further information to participants who we might identify as requiring support,*
- *to be highly flexible in approaches,*
- *to work in small groups and to make it clear that participants could withdraw at any time*
- *they pointed out that disadvantage may be hidden, comes in many forms– regardless of age – and that participants might be unaware of their own disadvantage.*

Working with an advisory group may be equally valuable in peer research and widening the range of children and young people whose perspectives are used to understand methods and information may result in a more appropriate offer to participants.

8.2.7 Four important facets of team building in YPAR and YPR

Team building, relationship development and interest sharing, centring on youth interests and perspectives should occur early on to reduce barriers to engagement and disrupt the traditional expert role of adult.

Activities should encourage children, young people and adult researchers to be seen as equal partners. This may be easier to achieve in some settings than others, for example, equalising power and promoting youth agency may be harder in school settings where there are hierarchical structures with adults as dominant authority figures (Anyon et al., 2018).

Wilhelm et al. (2020: 19-21) propose four important lessons learned in terms of collaboration in YPAR and YPR:

Lesson 1: *Experiential Learning Opportunities Strengthened PAR Researcher Skills and Maintained High Levels of Engagement – the authors argue that teams which progress more rapidly tend to create opportunities for CYP to model their work and to teach their co-researchers. These forums also provide another valuable form of experiential learning.*

Lesson 2: *Building a Sense of Community Supported the PAR Process - researchers' who had a burgeoning sense of community in their groups promoted engagement within teams. This supported them in moving their research projects forward and strengthened their self-*

confidence in disseminating their work. Good facilitators successfully cultivated a sense of community in two key ways:

First, they provided regular opportunities for researchers to explore how their individual identities, or their identities as a member of the larger group (i.e., their context), shaped their research topics, a process that strengthened engagement and their sense of solidarity with other researchers.

Second, regular community building activities, particularly for youth researchers, fostered group cohesion and a strong sense of camaraderie that supported them as they applied new skills.

Lesson 3: PAR Required Consistent Support from Facilitators with Diverse Skill Sets – these skill sets moved well beyond general research expertise and facilitators needed significant grounding in participatory research approaches and an orientation to community-driven application of research knowledge to support researchers effectively.

Lesson 4: Individuals in Bridging Roles Helped to Position PAR Researchers for Success within Institutions - these “bridging individuals” brought institutional knowledge, networks, and influence that enabled them to promote PAR in wider organisations and to support researchers in navigating specific contexts and potential research barriers (e.g. available resources, staff turnover, and values and culture).

Teamwork is at the heart of putting other aspects of collaboration into practice.

8.3 Cushions

In the hackathon with experienced youth researchers we created the question that this section answers: **How can we ensure that different CYP taking part in peer research have the *cushions* they need to feel safe, to actively take part on their own terms, to voice their opinions and to benefit from the process?**

One of the most interesting and complex bits of language developed within the hackathon to capture some of the critical issues pertaining to YPAR and YPR was the notion of cushions. In the dictionary definition a cushion is both a noun (a *bag of cloth stuffed with a mass of soft material, used as a comfortable support for sitting or leaning on*) and a verb (*something to soften the effect of an impact on something or something to mitigate the adverse effects of something "to cushion the blow"*). In this respect the term reflects important if ambivalent ideas about what sorts of structures, values and relationships might be necessary to manage difficult moments in a YPAR or YPR project, helping CYP to feel OK and to maintain a sense of connection to the project, to feel safe, and to ensure their own and other’s sense of protection.

Using the co-defined term of *cushions* we extracted any relevant information from review papers. In their synthesis of the literature only four of the review papers discussed information relating to the *cushioning* of young people during peer research.

8.3.1 Ethical questions around cushions

Kellett (2010) asks the question: *who takes responsibility for child-led research?* The answer, she proposes, is adults, arguing that engaging children as coresearchers does not absolve adult researchers

of their responsibilities, in fact it heightens them. The review papers (6) also highlighted the importance of having skilled and experienced adult researchers to support peer research.

Banks (2013) argues that ethical guidelines often stress the potential of harm to research participants, while assuming the invulnerability of researchers. Yet these clear distinctions between researcher and research participant become untenable in the context of 'peer research' – that is, research undertaken by people who have similar experiences or are part of the same peer group as those researched, and where researchers may be known to participants and do not always leave 'the research field' when the project is over.

Bradbury-Jones and Taylor (2015) also caution that children as researchers may have to analyse data that are sensitive and that being exposed to the distressing accounts from their peers may reinforce their own difficulties (citing Coad and Evans, 2008).

With this in mind, avoiding stress or distress cannot be guaranteed in YPAR and YPR but Bradbury-Jones and Taylor (ibid) propose a number of strategies to manage this potential.

- The *optional presence of an adult during interviews*
- The importance of *adequate time for reflection, reviewing and debrief*
- *Adult support* being available as part of the research
- The *support of other CYP* in the project (see also Hamilton et al. 2019)
- Sometimes *a separate support worker from a linked organisation*

Hamilton et al. (2019) also argue that in such discussions it's important to acknowledge CYP's own contributions in promoting safety for themselves and others and that in order for them and other young people to access experiences of safety, recognising their own agency is key.

They argue that this is a tough balance to get right and there is a need to balance two competing priorities:

- *promoting recognition of children's agency* on the one hand
- while *avoiding communicating messages that perpetuate self-blame or minimise the duties and roles of adults* and professionals to keep children safe (cites Beckett, forthcoming).

Duggan (2021) suggests that due to the ethical commitments in their project about mental health they wanted the young people to be able to access pastoral and counselling support within the project infrastructure and not signpost them to separate mental health services where there might be a significant wait for referral and service delivery. Hence they chose to locate the research in a youth mental health organisation to allow appropriate forms of support to be readily available to those who wanted them.

Overall, this can appear as a hard line to navigate. However, the different papers convey agreement that we must not confuse this with any sense that children and young people who experience abuse or maltreatment are victims, or inadvertently locate responsibility with them. Navigating this territory carefully can then highlight the legitimacy of children as partners in safeguarding and reposition them as central (both individually and collectively) in all endeavours to promote children's safe lives. Section 6 of this report provides some of the strategies for navigating these tensions used in previous studies.

8.3.2 Processes to develop cushions

As mentioned earlier due to the multiple roles children and young people have they can easily find themselves with competing loyalties and obligations (Banks et al., 2013; Spriggs Gillam, 2019) and this can leave them with a sense of ambivalence and conflict which need to be registered and resolved. Young people's participation in research can all too often be idealised by adults.

Pahl (2019: 36) suggests that when young people make statements, like, "I need privacy," "I need to feel safe," "I feel stamped on" these statements can remain hidden. Pahl (ibid) suggests that in order to become, in Ellsworth's (2005) words, a "pedagogical address" requires certain kinds, forms of and forums for support.

The appropriate form of cushions should be codeveloped.

Ackermann and Schubotz (2020) suggest that it is a good idea to discuss such things very early on in a project and to address co-researchers' own ambitions, assumptions, the contributions they are willing to make and what might be needed to offer support and care. They propose hosting discussions which use questions such as:

- why did you choose to participate?
- what changes would you like to see?
- why do you think we involve co-researchers in research studies?
- what do you feel young researchers can contribute to research that adult/academic researchers cannot offer?
- what expectations should adult researchers and co-researchers have from each other?

Codesigning cushions with research participants too.

Thabrew et al. (2018) suggest that in undertaking co-design can make participatory workshops engaging, safe and productive. Ways of doing so include:

- the use of comfortable and age-appropriate environments (ideally not a clinic or research office);
- meaningful ice-breakers and familiar games (don't reinvent the wheel);
- the use of naturally occurring groups (e.g., friends or classmates) to assist conversation
- the possible use of different groupings when sensitive topics are being discussed;
- the use of short activities, with clearly stated outputs, concrete examples and familiar situations;
- culturally-relevant concepts (such as metaphors connected with youth or particular contexts) and the use of settings and props to communicate cultural references which can improve engagement;
- consideration of the ideal duration of workshops for CYP (usually between 30 min and 2 h, depending on the age and abilities of the group);
- consideration of safety and wellbeing, including regular toilet breaks, the availability of snacks or "brain food" and sensitivity to participants' mental health issues);
- commitment to sourcing a representative range of CYP and not just those who are keen to participate in research;
- a useful (and potentially anxiety-provoking) mantra for running genuinely responsive co-design workshops is "make a plan, then throw it away".

8.3.3 Protection versus protectionism

In their review of young people's advisory groups Sellars, Pavarini, Michelson, Creswell and Fazel (2020) stressed the importance of each young person having a dedicated staff member who was responsible for supporting young people and answering researchers' questions about youth participation was seen as an important structural facilitator to involvement. This echoes the examples given by young people in the Hackathon who described people (adult researchers or peers) as their *cushions* during the research process.

However, one interesting strand in the literature engages with the ways in which, deliberately or otherwise, adult protectionism can be sneaked in through the back door in ways which reproduce existing power imbalances (Teixeira et al. 2021).

Teixeira et al. (ibid) argue that YPAR principles push us to value the unique forms of cultural capital that young people bring to the research enterprise and to legitimize their expertise. They argue that engaging with these challenges involves understanding the ways in which YPAR and YPR can merge together "radical possibilities" and "structural violence (citing Lac & Fine, 2018, p. 579).

As the earlier discussion on intersectionality argues there is no reason to assume that the cushions needed will always be the same for each child in a project, or even for one child at different moments (Garnett et al. 2019).

For example, Bailey et al. (2014) highlighted that for disabled children and young people gatekeepers (i.e. parents, carers, hospital and school staff) may discourage, prevent or forget about involvement, respond on behalf of their child if attending meetings, give their own view, interrupt the flow of communication or prevent disabled children and young people from feeling able to speak their minds. Parental anxiety around explaining or exploring their child's disability may hinder their child's authentic involvement. To overcome this, gatekeepers should be fully informed of their roles and responsibilities and disabled children and young people and in some cases there may be a need to provide a key person to advocate for them to prevent them from being excluded from involvement opportunities. On this basis Abo-Zena et al. (2016) also point to the need to manage a variety of power dynamics within peer research teams along intersectional lines of social positions of all members (e.g., academic rank, socioeconomic status, race, and gender), enabling participants to experience and produce various microaggressions even within the group (e.g. interrupting) (see also Hawke et al. 2018).

8.3.4 Going public

Anang et al. (2021) and Banks et al (2013) identify that one ethically complex aspect of YPR and YPAR emerges from the dangers of going on the record, going public and/or "standing out". (See also section 6.2.6)

Gaillaird et al (2018) suggest that when children and young people present research findings and share their own related experiences, this can have a greater impact on audiences and also assist bridging gaps between them and older adults.

Roy et al. (2020) have identified how even when the conditions for open dialogue are present in a YPAR and YRP projects that when young people begin to imagine how an outside public might engage with their stories/findings they can fear that their own experience will not sound right, seem plausible, be heard or trusted. This is especially the case when young people can

see and appreciate the ways in which their own experience can sit outside of dominant narratives about the issue being discussed (Frank, 2010).

Banks et al. (2013) suggest that whilst these matters are common concerns in all social research, the close relationships developed in CBPR preclude straightforward solutions. If community or peer researchers are involved, and wide dissemination is planned within the community, identities of research participants may be hard to conceal. Some participants may wish to be named and credited, others may not. Some may change their minds, sometimes close to the event. There may be matters that some representatives of a community or group wish not to be revealed, such as survival strategies of asylum seekers, sex workers or families in poverty (cites Dodson et al., 2007).

All these issues might influence young people's confidence and willingness to engage and share their voice as part of peer research and/or dissemination events. Cushions to sustain projects are also required when taking findings public and communicating findings to external audiences. Children, young people and communities may all need to be involved in decisions.

8.3.5 Acts of translation

We had a substantial discussion in the Hackathon events about the "acts of translation" involved in doing YPAR and YPR. Although it's easy to conceive these acts as occurring and/or required between adults and young people, it's also conceivable that they may be required within or between groups of young people. The formal definition of translation addresses both the *process of translating words* or text from one language to another and the *process of moving something from one place to another*.

Hawke et al. (2018) suggest that adults need to consider the ways in which concepts are explained and plan for the time to explain them in youth-friendly, jargon-free terms. If youth cannot understand the concepts being discussed, they will be unable to contribute fully to the project. However, while reducing the jargon they use, researchers should also avoid oversimplifying in a way that may be seen to be talking down to youth. By listening authentically, hearing the terminology the youth use and adapting to it, and asking questions to ensure comprehension, researchers can acknowledge the youth's experience and knowledge, while supporting optimal contributions. However, it is again important to remember that youth are not all the same. Some youth might consider the exposure to complex research terminology to be an exciting learning opportunity; this illustrates the importance of consulting with the youth to determine their goals, objectives and interests.

In riffing off the second meaning of translation Duggan (2021) and Dixon, Ward and Blower (2019) argue that space and location are also important factors and it may be necessary on YPR and YPAR to *move some things from one place to another* because this can influence young people's confidence, understanding, attention and willingness to engage and share their voice. For example, the informality of a residential can really help in some projects where people can do a variety of activities together in formal and less formal ways. Dixon, Ward and Blower (2019) suggest that it is important when selecting location to ensure the space is private enough to ensure confidentiality and has been risk assessed to ensure the comfort and safety of all parties to the discussions.

Thinking about acts of translation and cushions means thinking about what needs to happen to move towards shared understandings of words and concepts, and how can moving from one space to another increase opportunities for confidence and comfort.

8.4 Credibility and achieving change

In the hackathon with experienced youth researchers we created the questions that this section answers:

How can we ensure that peer research is maximised in terms of strengthening claims to knowledge and *credibility* and achieving social *change*, conveying convincing stories, linking to current opportunities and minimising risk of negative attention?

Which processes and/or structures help ensure productive relationships between stakeholders, allies, contexts and resources to support the use of evidence to make *change* possible?

Section 7 of this report shows, however, that these questions have not yet been systematically investigated.

In the hackathon young people highlighted the importance for them that their involvement has an impact and/or delivers some form of changes and discussed their frustration when it doesn't have the impact that they would have liked it to. This was also highlighted in the review of reviews:

"Transformative action and a commitment to social justice are at the heart of participatory research, and as such, participatory research projects can be a vehicle for social change." (Bovarnick et al., 2018)

We extracted any relevant discussion about credibility and change in peer research from the review papers and the generalised critique papers. In their synthesis of the literature only 5 of the review papers discussed information relating to credibility of peer research. A reoccurring theme across these reviews was of authenticity and trustworthiness. Review authors highlighted the authenticity of young people telling their own stories from their own perspectives, stressing that this improved the trustworthiness of the data collected in peer research.

Conditions for change and actions to promote change from peer research discussed in the review papers (12) suggested that change is promoted by:

*Addressing opportunities and barriers to change,
Being realistic about the possibilities of change,
Planning and doing dissemination,
Social action linked to youth agency*

These themes are also present in the general critique papers. But from the generalised critique and the process papers we identified a further theme, related to the credibility of research and the power of storytelling.

8.4.1 Credibility and storytelling

Stories rather than compelling evidence tend to lead to change.

It is often imagined that the process of achieving social change – including in practice and policy - is a rational activity in which, over time, strong empirical evidence builds and that this, in turn, informs the process of policy change (Roy and Buchanan, 2016). Many researchers operate in ways which suggest this is the case. However, Stevens (2011: 238) argues that "perhaps most especially at the level of government, it is *stories* rather than *evidence* that prove to be the most potent force in shaping change". The overriding point is

that if researcher's want their findings to be widely accepted and adopted, they must present an account of the relevant issues, which is both 'compelling', 'emotionally resonant', and persuasive (Needham, 2011: 54). That is, we must provide a new and convincing account which sounds right, and which seems plausible and credible.

In some of the process papers (22), some adult and peer coresearchers reflected on whether they were doing justice to the power in children and young people's voices in the data they had collected. Some were also concerned to make sure that the stories they told through research were grounded in critical inquiry, reflexivity and analysis grounded in contexts as well as children's perspectives.

Benjamin-Thomas et al., (2021) note that 'participatory methodologies need critical underpinning along with a commitment for enacting social transformation, and that these three interacting elements cannot be viewed as independent or utilized independently (Farias et al., 2017). For example, without grounding in a critical perspective, there is the potential even within PAR to reduce collective, socio-politically shaped issues of injustices to individual attributes, which in turn may lead to efforts of 'fixing' individuals rather than addressing systemic forces shaping such injustices (Farias et al., 2016). Additionally, a lack of commitment to enacting social transformation dilutes the promise of PAR to span the knowledge generation to action continuum (Benjamin-Thomas et al., 2018).

The process papers also show that to understand which stories told in which ways will be taken as credible it is important to understand different audiences.

8.4.2 Addressing opportunities and barriers to change

Many people express scepticism about the claims that active participation in research is either 'empowering' for children, or that it regularly leads to social change. Additionally, Thomas (2020) argues that what children themselves think of their research and what they think they gain from the experience may not always be what adult researchers anticipate and observe.

To establish conditions for change, the review papers highlight the need for work early on, prior to the start of the project, to focus on the potential for change, define the local development and challenge to focus on, and build community collectives or partnerships for capacity building and future sustainability of work.

Bovarnick et al. (2018) suggest that "It is useful to plan a key stakeholder analysis at an early stage and to devise strategies for political engagement at the stages of inception/planning, implementation and in the aftermath of research projects." Involving policy makers, local decision makers, youth advocates and other stakeholders early on can pave the way for change and/or investment in change to occur.

However, systemic barriers can affect how children and young people influence change.

Dan et al. (2019) argue that there is a need for commitment and honest information from decision-makers for child participation to be able to make a meaningful contribution. They argue that finding ways to make emotional connections with people who make decisions is very important, as is making it safe for people to share their experiences without having to be exposed.

However, the critical literature identifies many impediments to this. First and as mentioned earlier, is the problem of getting adults to take children's views and research findings seriously (Bird, Culley Lakhanpaul, 2013).

Bertrand (2019) documented decision makers' responses of *surprise* or *amazement* to Students of Color engaged in YPAR. The authors suggest that these responses—termed “the discourse of surprise”—may have constrained the transformative potential of the students' research. Rubin, Ayala and Zaal (2017) argue that YPAR can create opportunities in which CYP can explore, discuss and meaningfully address real-world problems. However, YPAR can also come into confrontation with the structures and practices of host institutions and here the tensions between research and action can be experienced as a frustration for all concerned. They observe that CYP can be concerned that action, and eventual change, will never occur. As one young person put it at the end of the project:

I think the research is definitely a really important aspect of it, especially since it was our first year doing this, and we needed to figure out what cause we wanted to work for, and how we could get involved. But I think that it's really frustrating if you do all this research and nothing really comes of it.

An acceptance of youth as experts and competent producers of knowledge, with important resources capable of real and specialised knowledge of their own problems is essential (Branquinho et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2020).

8.4.3 Being realistic about the possibilities of change

Martin et al. (2019) argue that it is important to be realistic about the possibilities of change and to avoid at all costs offering manufactured hope to CYP.

PAR often intends to dismantle unjust systems (such as education and immigration), however, what may happen is there are only incremental impacts to the system that result in little significance to the co-researchers who are living in a situation (cite Sukarieh and Tannock, 2013). Hence, managing children and young people's expectations of change is important to prevent disappointment. Feelings of frustration and powerlessness can arise in young people where their expectation of change is not met, resulting in disillusion with peer research and adults.

Selecting contexts where change is likely to be feasible and welcomed increases youth agency (Anyon et al., 2018) and should be an important part of the planning process in peer research.

Where a lack of change maintains existing power structures this risks marginalised children and young people becoming more vulnerable than they were before the peer research took place. Thus, it is essential that there is a consideration and planning for agency and social action to avoid harm of children and young people involved in the peer research.

Questions of what happens to young researchers after a project ends and whether their involvement will have a legacy are important to not only at the end but also at the planning stages of participatory research. It is important to consider strategies to ensure that potentially positive outcomes of involvement in participatory research are maintained beyond the duration of a given project and

offer lasting benefits to the children and young people involved. (Bovarnick et al., 2018) (see section 6.2.11)

8.4.4 Planning and doing dissemination

Change can take a long time, so thinking about the long term can be helpful.

Wilkinson and Wilkinson (2017) suggest that there are important issues related to temporality in YPAR and YPR, as some aspects of dissemination (e.g. publishing articles) can take months or years. They offer some recommendations for ways to facilitate the meaningful inclusion of CYP in the writing up of research that do not require their full participation up to the point of publication.

- First, to develop participatory guidelines pertaining to ownership, authorship, and dissemination of findings
- Second, to build participation into the writing activity from the outset;
- Third, show participants verbatim transcripts of their data and *encourage* them to make suggestions and amendments, as opposed to asking them if there is anything they are 'unhappy with';
- Fourth, to explicitly value collaborative publications, including the names of project partners as co-authors and share drafts of papers/ chapters with participants for feedback and be prepared;
- Fifth, to include dissenting views if there is disagreement on interpretation and constantly question whose voice is dominant in written work, and whose language is privileged.

Thinking about how, where and by who stories are told is also essential (Roy et al. 2020; Frank, 2010) and there is a call in many papers to be creative in how research is disseminated (Ackerman and Schubotz, 2020; Bertrand, 2019; Kidd, 2018; Pahl, 2019; Wilhelm et al. 2021).

Bertrand (2019) suggests that YPAR groups and their supporters can anticipate the discourse of surprise and use it to create liminal spaces in which decision makers are encouraged or made to confront their own assumptions. These moments need careful planning, creation and facilitation in order to promote real dialogic exchanges rather than tokenistic listening.

Kidd et al (2018) co-created a formal launch of the research publication, a forum attended by over 200 people that included catering by a youth-run social enterprise, two publicly broadcasted interviews, youth performances, and a powerful story telling session by one of the youth participants. As well as impressing a number of senior policymakers this event was instrumental in securing change which included seed funding for a new program of work to support youth in transition out of homelessness.

Bettencourt (2020) suggests that it is important to remember that the goal of YPAR may not be the clear creation and dissemination of a final product in traditional formats (e.g., papers or presentations). Instead, the process of engaging in collaborative research is often an outcome unto itself that can support iterative growth and learning across those who take part.

8.4.5 Social action is linked to youth agency

An important aspect of the transformative social action process discussed in the review papers was enabling agency in children and young people. Youth participatory action research (YPAR), in particular, offers a vehicle to promote change because the approach is focussed on actions for change (in other forms of peer action aspects (see sections 5.2.8 and 5.2.9) may be absent).

Valdez et al. (2020) discussing YPAR projects in their review argue that “fundamental to the success of YPAR was the development and strengthening of collective efficacy (or collective empowerment) among these groups of youth, which enabled them to engage in social action.” They suggest that collective efficacy and empowerment can be achieved through contribution of young people in action plans and/or through conducting action-orientated activities with peers, including other stakeholders. In this way, YPAR projects helped to re-shape community perceptions of youth, shifting the discourse from youth as problems to youth as resources and agents of change.

Creating opportunities for young people to be involved in the dissemination of research findings can help stakeholders to see young people as experts, resulting in a change in organisational culture, particularly where young people are enabled to do this in spaces that are seen as adult spaces (e.g. city council meetings). Bradley-Jones, Isham & Taylor (2018), citing Vaughan (2014), suggest that peer research needs to move beyond creating safe social spaces to the development of ‘in-between spaces’ with the intent of motivating powerful others to support and participate in transformative efforts. Creating these in-between spaces in which children, young people and adults come together in dialogue, and with resources, to decide and implement decisions can create the conditions for corporate agency (Larkins 2019), that is influence over resources that affect the lives of others, as well as themselves.

9. Closing key messages

Some of you, readers, will have jumped straight to this section. So here you have a summary of the answers to the questions we have asked so far. But also, this is a reminder: our conversation and opportunities to learn from each other will continue for the next 18 months. So do ask more questions, and together we can look for the answers in the literature or in the peer research that we are cocreating.

What is peer research, where is it taking place, who with and on what?

Peer research is young people's research. Young researchers doing collaborative research, working with different groups to develop an idea and discovering interesting new things about people and experiences in a conversation. It's people powered research.

It is taking place in a wide range of contexts with a wide range of children, young people and adults. Understanding who is involved and the context they are researching is the first step for making any plans to do research and ongoing attention to people and contexts is the only way of making sure it is safe and inclusive. This also increases the potential for social impact.

What is the thinking behind how children, young people and adults do peer research?

To understand the people, contexts, relationships and ambitions that are investigated in peer research it is essential to think critically. This means thinking about what the world is like now, what history can tell us, and how that affects what people experience and speak about. This has implications for how we do research. Working through cycles of planning, acting and reflecting about ourselves and the new understandings we think we are gaining is the best way to cocreate learning and research.

How do children, young people and adults put peer research into practice?

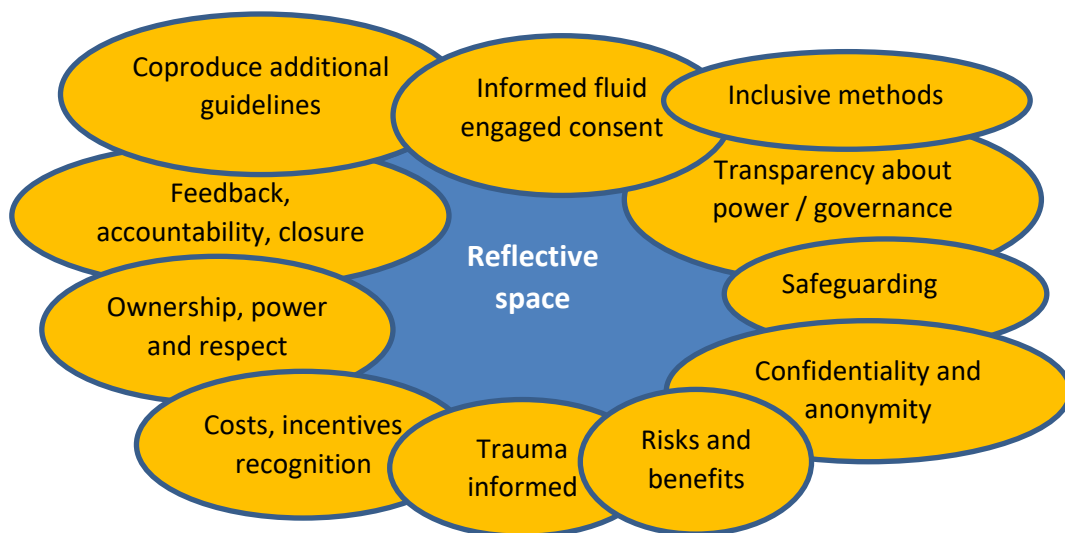
There is no single or preferred way of doing peer research, as research has to fit the topic and the context being investigated. A very wide variety of methods are being used.

There are strategies for supporting young people's leadership in each of aspects of research shown below (including on topics related to violence). A rolling process of co-reflection has to be at the heart of this.



How is an ethical approach followed in peer research on violence related topics?

An ethical approach involves following existing guidance and thinking about:



How are benefits, successes, impacts and change in peer research recorded and understood?

Benefits gained by young researchers who have been actively involved in research processes, include helping them to build and enhance personal, social, emotional and psychological skills, resilience and competencies. Informal spaces for young people are key, to discuss, debate and discover solutions to overcome research challenges using strength-

based approaches in combination of learning by doing. Young researchers have benefited from inclusive environments, having accessible and timely information and establishing supportive relationships with peers and adults leading to a stable identity and sense of belonging on their individualised research journeys. There is no one standard tool but measurement tools commonly include surveys, interviews, mentoring sessions, observational notes, needs assessments and the blending of creative methods to allow young researchers to reflectively record their own thoughts and experiences using mediums that suit them best.

In terms of impact and change, the greatest areas of change resulting from the studies have been upon raising awareness among peers on social issues as well as partnerships and networks young researchers have forged with adult collaborators and organisations - typically representing the public and third sectors. The forging and maintenance of relationships is evidenced, for example, in panels and advisory groups young researchers have been invited to sit-on resulting from their empirical works. A few measurement tools have been identified such as the 7S Framework, Ecological Evaluation and stakeholder interviews used to assess impact, but these methods have been sparingly applied across all the illustrated cases provided in this report. What is clearly needed is a systematic way to elicit the views and opinions of end-users and benefactrices on the relevance and significance of young people's research in helping to find solutions to help overcome the societal challenges.

What are key tensions in peer research and how are these dealt with?

Negotiating the commitments and challenges of peer research with children and young people requires the development of approaches based on recognition of power, people and contexts. These should embrace an emancipatory research paradigm and strive to coproduce research that will create change in the lives and contexts of those who take part. Enabling the leadership and control of research agendas by children and young people who experience marginalisation requires a critical engagement with the social relations in which they are embedded. Projects must challenge the normative (and ableist) conventions of research as well as traditional methods and methodologies. Adults who take part must be open minded, flexible, easy-going, compassionate and willing to be equal partners. However, they must not abdicate their responsibilities, must balance protection with protectionism and must codevelop cushions which support young people throughout the different stages of projects.

Projects must focus on team building and creating a sense of community within projects. They must develop and implement different forms, spaces and processes through which to validate the contributions of children and young people who take part. They must also maintain an explicit and open awareness of the ways in which funding, timelines, organisational values and expectations can affect the possibilities and realities of collaboration. They must accept different forms, styles and levels of involvement by children

and young people which reflect the different circumstances of their lives as well as different interests in the project. Peer research is not “synchronised swimming” (Tuck et al. 2008).

The potential for change needs to be considered throughout projects allowing children and young people to consider what is desirable and achievable and which organisations and individuals need to be engaged. A lack of relevant change can reinforce existing power structures and risks marginalised children and young people becoming feeling exploited. Developing personal relationships with people like policy makers early on is a good strategy. Careful planning and coplanning of realistic change objectives and of dissemination activities can foster the real involvement and children and young people and can help ensure they are seen and recognised as competent producers of knowledge.

Appendix 1 Bibliography of included papers included by type

Appendix 1a: List of included review papers

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Appendix 1c: List of included about papers

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Appendix 1d: List of included general critique papers

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Appendix 2 Detailed summaries of data

Tables Section 2

Table 2.3 Characteristics of included review papers

First Author	Year	Peer Research approach	Review Type	Focus	Age group	Description, if specific population	Topic area, if specific topic	Projects/papers included
Agdal	2019	Asset-based community development	qualitative meta-synthesis	if, and how, ABCD enhances the level of participation for children, youth and schools in health promotion projects	CYP under 25		health promotion	12
Anderson	2019	Youth participatory action research	qualitative	review of peer reviewed YPAR projects in schools in US	High school students			26
Anyon	2018	youth participatory action research	mixed	methods to assess youth outcomes and whether the outcomes reported vary by the characteristics of the study or the YPAR program	18-25			63 (67 papers)
Asuquo	2021	youth engagement in research	scoping	the extent of youth engagement in HIV prevention research in sub-Saharan Africa	10-24		HIV prevention	74 (112 papers)

Bailey	2014	involvement in research	mixed	how disabled children and young people have been involved as research partners	5-25	disabled children and young people		22
Bovarnick	2018	participatory research	scoping	involvement of children and young people in research on sexual violence	15-24	victims and perpetrators and those indirectly affected by sexual violence	Sexual violence	112
Bradbury-Jones	2018	participatory research	qualitative	methodological, ethical and practical issues involved in carrying out participatory research with vulnerable or marginalised children.	not specified	vulnerable children and young people		13
Branquinho	2020	youth participatory action research	mixed	characteristics of community-based Youth Participatory Action Research programs with a focus on health and well-being	11-25		health and well-being	13
Brown	2020	participatory visual research methods	scoping	participatory visual research methods with children who have moved from their country of	under 18	migrated children		21

				origin for any reason				
Clark	2012	participation in research	scoping	evidence of participation of children and young people (CYP) in, and with, criminal justice research.	9-27	youth offenders	criminal justice research	not mentioned
Gavine	2017	participatory research	mixed	benefits of the involvement of children and young people in the development, implementation and evaluation of programmes aiming to secure health.	5-18		Health interventions	42
Gibbs	2020	youth-led participatory action research	mixed	use of technology in YPAR projects	10-19			5 (9 papers)
Grace	2019	participatory research	scoping	review of the literature on child participatory research on service provision in Australia published in academic journals between 2000 and 2018	not specified	children being supported on a range of services	youth services	207
Haijes	2016	participatory research	mixed	review of peer reviewed studies and grey literature	not specified		Medical research	24

				of participatory pediatric research				
Jacquez	2012	community- based participatory research	mixed	community-based participatory research with youth examining how youth are included as partners and the role of youth in the research process.	not specified			56
Larsson	2018	participatory approaches	scoping	maps recent research involving children and young people in the development of interventions targeting issues of health and well- being.	CYP under 25		Health and well- being interventions	41
Montreuil	2021	participatory research	realist	participatory research with children and to highlight context, mechanisms and outcomes of children's participation	Under 12			57
Raanaas	2020	participatory action research	scoping	participatory action research approaches to promote mental health and/or resilience in youth	10-30		Mental health and resilience	54

Schelven	2020	patient and public involvement	scoping	existing literature on PPI of young people with a chronic condition by mapping reported definitions, goals, activities, experiences and impact.	12-25	chronic health condition	Health and social care	19 (23 papers)
Sellars	2020	young peoples' advisory groups	scoping	methods and impacts of YPAG in health research	12-18		Applied health research	27
Shamrova	2017	participatory action research	mixed	methodological features and outcomes of PAR with children	under 18			45
Valdez	2020	youth participatory action research	Mixed	identify and describe YPAR studies in the context of youth substance use prevention research.	10-24	Vulnerable youth	Youth substance use	15
Vaughn	2013	community-based participatory research	mixed	benefits, barriers, and scope of community-based participatory research (in child health with pediatric populations.	CYP (age not specified)	children with health conditions	Child Health	34

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Wilson	2020	youth-led participatory action research, community-based participatory research	rapid evidence review	rapid evidence review written up as a report commissioned by Wellcome Trust	10-24		Health research	187
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Tables Section 3

Table 3.1 Definitions related to peer research in review papers

First Author	Year	Peer research term	Definition
Agdal et al.	2019	Asset-based community development	defined by three characteristics: 1) Citizen led - Local citizens map their resources and needs and lead the collaboration with outside partners, 2) Relationship oriented - There is a focus on building social networks, 3) Asset-based - the process focusses on strengths, resources, and assets.
Anderson	2019	Youth participatory action research	a process through which youth engage in systematic inquiry alongside adult researchers to learn about social injustices and develop solutions for social change (Cammarota & Fine, 2008).
Anyon	2018	youth participatory action research	Three key principles: 1) Inquiry based - topics of investigation are grounded in youths' lived experiences and concerns, 2) Participatory - youth are collaborators in the methodological and pedagogical process and 3) Transformative - to actively intervene in order to change knowledge and practices to improve the lives of youth and their communities. (Rodriguez & Brown, 2009). Consistent with these principles, key processes include youth and adults sharing power during an iterative process that includes developing an integrated research and action agenda; training in, and application of, research and advocacy methods; practicing and discussing strategic thinking about how to create social change; and building alliances with stakeholders (Ozer & Douglas, 2015).
Asuquo	2021	youth engagement in research	a process of working collaboratively with diverse groups of people to address common issues
Bailey	2014	Public and Patient Involvement	research being carried out 'with' or 'by' members of the public rather than 'to', 'about' or 'for' them (INVOLVE, 2013)
Bovarnick	2018	participatory research	any research that entails a degree of collaboration between those undertaking the research and those who are typically 'the researched' (Pain, 2004).

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Bradbury-Jones	2018	participatory research	a particular form of research that signifies the active involvement of participants in research, beyond providing data. Participatory research entails children playing a significant and equivalent role to adult researchers and being involved in some or all stages of the research process (Bishop, 2014).
Branquinho	2020	youth participatory action research	fulfilment of: (a) participatory research of young people, (b) power-sharing with adults, and (c) transformative character through the acquisition of knowledge or with impact on practices to improve youth or their communities (Rodriguez & Brown, 2009).
Brown	2020	participatory visual research methods	an umbrella term capturing a broad range of methods including, but not limited to the use of drawing, photography, digital storytelling, or mapping to share stories in a visual narrative
Grace	2019	participatory research	Very broadly, research with or by children, and not on children (i.e. children treated as the objects of study without opportunity to express their own opinions. (Mason & Watson, 2014).
Haijes	2016	participatory research	research which actively involves children in defining relevant research questions and in the design and conduct of studies.
Jacquez	2012	community-based participatory research	an orientation to research that values the role of community members and academics as equitable partners, each contributing unique strengths to the research process (Israel et al. 1998).
Larsson	2018	participatory approaches	children and young people participate in one or more levels of the development of an intervention
Montreuil	2021	participatory research	children engaged in at least one aspect of the research process (i.e. not a study in which children were solely involved as research subjects for data collection, but in which children were involved, for example, to refine the research question, to collect data, to interpret data or plan dissemination
Raanaas	2020	participatory action research	broad term, where all parties are ideally involved in the knowledge creation, as collaborators and co-researchers in the research process (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008).

Schelven	2020	patient and public involvement	Five recurring elements across definitions: 1) a collaborative approach, meaning that projects are carried out with or by CYP (not on them), 2) participatory projects address topics that matter to CYP, 3) a continuum of activities in which CYP have different levels of influence, varying from being informed to being the main decide, 4) allows CYP to play a role in various stages of a project is the fourth element we identified 5) meaningful to both the CYP involved and CYP in general. 3 key principles on which PPI is built: 1) sharing power 2) iterative development, 3) focus on CYP strengths and resources.
Valdez	2020	youth participatory action research	form of participatory action research that provides youth with the opportunity to study social problems affecting their lives and to determine actions to solve these problems (Cammarota & Fine, 2008). Youth learn how to conduct research, effectively becoming youth researchers and advocates for change (Jason & Glenwick, 2016). Further, YPAR emphasizes the development and strengthening of collective efficacy (or collective empowerment) among youth involved in the research, which enables them to engage in social action for change.
Vaughn	2013	community-based participatory research	scientific inquiry conducted in communities in which community members, persons affected by condition or issue under study and other key stakeholders in the community's health have the opportunity to be full participants in each phase of the work: conception - design - conduct - analysis - interpretation - conclusions - communication of results (NIH, 2009, para. 2).
Wilson.	2020	youth-led participatory action research, community-based participatory research	Youth-led participatory action research - approach to scientific inquiry and social change grounded in principles of equity that engages young people in identifying problems relevant to their own lives, conducting research to understand the problems, and advocating for changes based on research evidence" (Ozer, 2016, p.189). Community-Based Participatory Research - an approach to research that values the role of community members as equitable partners and acknowledges the importance of building partnerships with the people that ultimately are targeted by research efforts (Israel et al., 1998).

Table 3.2 Contexts in which peer research takes place

	Majority/ Minority world	Noted economic or social disadvantage	Institutional Setting
<i>Process paper</i>			
1 : Ajodhia-Andrews 2016 Reflexively Conducting Research with Ethnically Diverse Children	Minority	y	Education
2 : Akom-2016-Youth-participatory-action-research	MAJORITY	y	
3 : Aldana-2016-Dialogic-pedagogy-for-youth-partici	Minority	y	Community
4 : Ascroft-2020-Gender-violence-through-the-eyes-of	MAJORITY	y	Education
5 : Baas-2013-Childrens-perspectives-on-cyberbull	Minority		Education
6 : Barraza 2016 INDIGENOUS_YOUTH-DEVELOPED_SEL	Minority		
7 : Beatriz-2018-Evaluation-of-a-teen-dating-violenc	Minority	y	Community
8 : Benjamin-thomas-2021-Situating-occupational-injustices-e	MAJORITY	y	
9 : Benwell-2020-Engaging-political-histories-of-urb	Minority	y	
10 : Bertrand-2017-Were-trying-to-take-action-transfor	Minority		Education
11 : Brady 2019 Challenging_dominant_notions_o	Minority	y	Community
12 : Bramsen-2019-My-path-towards-living-on-my-own-vo	minority		youth justice
13 : Brannstrom-2020-Girls-perspectives-on-gendered-viol	Minority	y	Education
14 : Bristow 2020	Minority	y	Education
15 : Calder-Dawe 2019	Minority	y	Community
16 : Campos 2016	Majority	y	
17 : Chou-2015-Nothing-about-us-without-us-youth-l	Minority	y	Education
18 : Collins-2020-Childrens-rights-to-participation-a	Majority	y	Community
19 : Crook-2021-A-case-for-complexity-informed-part	Minority	y	Education
20 : Cuevas-parra-2019-Child-led-research-questioning-know	Both	y	
21 : Cuevas-parra-2020-Co-researching-with-children-in-the	Majority	y	
22 : Davidson-2017-Saying-it-like-it-is-power-particip	Minority	y	Community
23 : Dennehy-2019-Involving-young-people-in-cyberbull	Minority	y	Education
24 : Evans-2017-Using-the-nominal-group-technique-t	Minority		Health
25 : Evans-Winters 2017	MAJORITY	y	Education

26 : Factor 2019 Young_people_and_police_making	Minority		Community
27 : Farre 2018 Adolescent_health_promotion_ba	MAJORITY	y	
28 : Fay-2018-The-impact-of-the-school-space-on-r	MAJORITY	y	Educ/Com
29 : Felner 2018	Minority	y	
30 : Fine-2018-Queer-solidarities-new-activisms-er	Minority	y	
31 : Flicker-2019-Stay-strong-stay-sexy-stay-native-s	Minority	y	
32 : Forbes-genade-2019-Girrl-power-participatory-action-re	MAJORITY	y	Education
33 : Fortin-2015-I-was-here-young-mothers-who-have-e	Minority	y	
34 : Fox-2019-Crossing-under-the-highway-youth-ce	Minority	y	Community
35 : Garasia 2015	Minority	y	Educ/Com
36 : Gardner-2019-Amplifying-youth-voice-and-cultivat	MAJORITY	y	
37 : Gilhooly-2017-The-karen-resettlement-story-a-part	Minority	y	Community
38 : Haskie-mendoza-2018-Conducting-youth-participatory-acti	Minority	y	Education
39 : Heykoop 2017 Our stories our own ways	MAJORITY	y	Community
40 : Irby-2018-Violence-as-a-health-disparity-adol	Minority	y	
41 : Kia-keating-2017-Photography-and-social-media-use-in	Minority	y	Education
42 : Kia-keating-2017-Using-community-based-participatory	Minority	y	Community
43 : Larkins-2020-If-rich-people-gave-more-money-to-p	Minority	y	youth justice
44 : Luguetti-2021-Stop-mocking-start-respecting-an-ac	Minority	y	
45 : MacDowell 2017 Girls'_Perspectives_on_(Mis)Re	Minority	y	
46 : Maclure-2017-Youth-reflexivity-as-participatory-	Majority	y	Community
47 : Mathikithela 2019 Youth as participatory	MAJORITY	y	
48 : Mcquaid-2020-Girls-have-powers-using-research-le	MAJORITY	y	Education
49 : Neufeldt-2021-Learning-from-and-with-community-ba	MAJORITY		Community
50 : Norton-2019-We-speak-exploring-the-experience-o	MAJORITY	y	Community
51 : Papa 2019 Revealing Resistant Capital with Cambodian Youth for Advocacy and Policy Change	Minority	y	Community
52 : Pk-2018-Our-seat-at-the-table-mentorship-ad	Minority		Education
53 : Ravi-2018-Refugee-youth-as-peer-leaders-in-a- (1)	Minority	y	
54 : Ritterbusch-2020-Pushing-the-limits-of-child-partici	MAJORITY	y	Community

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55 : Rodriguez-2018-Action-research-at-the-intersection	Minority	y	Community
56 : Rombalski-2020-I-believe-that-we-will-win-learning	Minority	y	Education
57 : Ruff-2020-Ask-me-what---want-community-based-	Minority	y	
58 : Sarti-2018-Around-the-table-with-policymakers-	Minority	y	
59 : Sawyer_et_al_2019 Applied Theatre as Participatory	Minority	y	Education
60 : Schmid-2020-Promoting-youths-self-empowerment-i	Minority		
61 : Shiller-2018-The-disposability-of-baltimores-bla	Minority	y	Educ/Com
62 : Sprague-martinez-2020-Adult-reflection-on-engaging-youth- (1)	Minority	y	
63 : Teixeira-2020-Participatory-photo-mapping-to-unde	Minority	y	
64 : Templeton-2020-Young-peoples-sexual-readiness-insi	Minority	y	Community
65 : Thompson-2020-Girls-and-young-women-negotiate-wel	Minority	y	Education
66 : Thorburn-2021-To-send-or-not-to-send-nudes-new-ze	Minority	y	
67 : Treffrey-Goatley 2017 Technologies_of_Nonviolence_E	MAJORITY	y	Education
68 : Wainwright-2020-Race-ethnicity-young-people-and-off	Minority	y	youth justice
69 : Whittington 2019 Co-producing_and_navigating_co	Minority	y	Educ/Com
70 : Wojcik-2020-Student-action-research-preventing-	Minority		Education
71 : Wood-2020-The-role-of-educational-spaces-in-s	Minority	y	
72 : Worthen-2019-The-transformative-and-emancipatory	MAJORITY	y	

Table 3.2 - Children and young people involved in sample of peer research process papers related to violence

Process Paper	Age 5-12	Age 12-18	Age 19-25	Protected Characteristic	Single Gender Group
1 : Ajodhia-Andrews 2016 Reflexively Conducting Research with Ethnically Diverse Children	Yes	Yes		Disabled	
2 : Akom-2016-Youth-participatory-action-research		Yes			
3 : Aldana-2016-Dialogic-pedagogy-for-youth-partici		Yes		BAME	
4 : Ascroft-2020-Gender-violence-through-the-eyes-of		Yes			
5 : Baas-2013-Childrens-perspectives-on-cyberbull	Yes				
6 : Barraza 2016 INDIGENOUS_YOUTH-DEVELOPED_SEL		Yes			
7 : Beatriz-2018-Evaluation-of-a-teen-dating-violenc		Yes		BAME	
8 : Benjamin-thomas-2021-Situating-occupational-injustices-e		Yes		Disabled	
9 : Benwell-2020-Engaging-political-histories-of-urb		Yes			
10 : Bertrand-2017-Were-trying-to-take-action-transfor		Yes			
11 : Brady 2019 Challenging_dominant_notions_o		Yes	Yes	Disabled	
12 : Bramsen-2019-My-path-towards-living-on-my-own-vo		Yes	Yes		
13 : Brannstrom-2020-Girls-perspectives-on-gendered-viol		Yes			Female
14 : Bristow 2020	Yes			BAME	
15 : Calder-Dawe 2019		Yes			
16 : Campos 2016		Yes		Street Connected	
17 : Chou-2015-Nothing-about-us-without-us-youth-l		Yes			
18 : Collins-2020-Childrens-rights-to-participation-a		Yes	Yes		
19 : Crook-2021-A-case-for-complexity-informed-part	Yes				
20 : Cuevas-parra-2019-Child-led-research-questioning-know					
21 : Cuevas-parra-2020-Co-researching-with-children-in-the					
22 : Davidson-2017-Saying-it-like-it-is-power-particip		Yes	Yes	BAME/ Disabled	
23 : Dennehy-2019-Involving-young-people-in-cyberbull		Yes		BAME	
24 : Evans-2017-Using-the-nominal-group-technique-t					
25 : Evans-Winters 2017		Yes		BAME	Female
26 : Factor 2019 Young_people_and_police_making		Yes	Yes		

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27 : Farre 2018 Adolescent_health_promotion_ba		Yes			
28 : Fay-2018-The-impact-of-the-school-space-on-r	Yes				
29 : Felner 2018		Yes	Yes	LGBTQ	
30 : Fine-2018-Queer-solidarities-new-activisms-er			Yes		
31 : Flicker-2019-Stay-strong-stay-sexy-stay-native-s		Yes	Yes		
32 : Forbes-genade-2019-Girrl-power-participatory-action-re	Yes	YesYes			Female
33 : Fortin-2015-I-was-here-young-mothers-who-have-e		Yes	Yes		
34 : Fox-2019-Crossing-under-the-highway-youth-ce		Yes		BAME	
35 : Garasia 2015		Yes		BAME	
36 : Gardner-2019-Amplifying-youth-voice-and-cultivat		Yes	Yes		
37 : Gilhooly-2017-The-karen-resettlement-story-a-part		Yes		Migration	Male
38 : Haskie-mendoza-2018-Conducting-youth-participatory-acti		Yes		BAME	Female
39 : Heykoop 2017 Our stories our own ways	Yes	Yes	Yes		
40 : Irby-2018-Violence-as-a-health-disparity-adol		Yes			
41 : Kia-keating-2017-Photography-and-social-media-use-in		Yes		BAME	
42 : Kia-keating-2017-Using-community-based-participatory		Yes			
43 : Larkins-2020-If-rich-people-gave-more-money-to-p		Yes			
44 : Luguetti-2021-Stop-mocking-start-respecting-an-ac		Yes		Migration	Female
45 : MacDowell 2017 Girls'_Perspectives_on_(Mis)Re	Yes	Yes			Female
46 : Maclure-2017-Youth-reflexivity-as-participatory-	Yes				
47 : Mathikithela 2019 Youth as participatory		Yes			
48 : Mcquaid-2020-Girls-have-powers-using-research-le	Yes	Yes			Female
49 : Neufeldt-2021-Learning-from-and-with-community-ba			Yes	BAME	
50 : Norton-2019-We-speak-exploring-the-experience-o		Yes		Migration	
51 : Papa 2019 Revealing Resistant Capital with Cambodian Youth for Advocacy and Policy Change		Yes	Yes		
52 : Pk-2018-Our-seat-at-the-table-mentorship-ad		Yes	Yes		
53 : Ravi-2018-Refugee-youth-as-peer-leaders-in-a- (1)		Yes	Yes	Migration	
54 : Ritterbusch-2020-Pushing-the-limits-of-child-partici		Yes	Yes		
55 : Rodriguez-2018-Action-research-at-the-intersection		Yes	Yes	BAME/ Migration	

56 : Rombalski-2020-I-believe-that-we-will-win-learning		Yes		BAME	
57 : Ruff-2020-Ask-me-what---want-community-based-		Yes	Yes	Care	
58 : Sarti-2018-Around-the-table-with-policymakers-	Yes	Yes		BAME	
59 : Sawyer_et_al_2019 Applied Theatre as Participatory		Yes	Yes		
60 : Schmid-2020-Promoting-youths-self-empowerment-i		Yes	Yes	BAME/ Care	
61 : Shiller-2018-The-disposability-of-baltimores-bla		Yes			
62 : Sprague-martinez-2020-Adult-reflection-on-engaging-youth- (1)		Yes	Yes	BAME	
63 : Teixeira-2020-Participatory-photo-mapping-to-unde		Yes			
64 : Templeton-2020-Young-peoples-sexual-readiness-insi		Yes			
65 : Thompson-2020-Girls-and-young-women-negotiate-wel		Yes			Female
66 : Thorburn-2021-To-send-or-not-to-send-nudes-new-ze		Yes			Female
67 : Treffrey-Goatley 2017 Technologies_of_Nonviolence_E		Yes			Female
68 : Wainwright-2020-Race-ethnicity-young-people-and-off		Yes		BAME	
69 : Whittington 2019 Co-producing_and_navigating_co		Yes	Yes		
70 : Wojcik-2020-Student-action-research-preventing-		Yes			
71 : Wood-2020-The-role-of-educational-spaces-in-s		Yes			
72 : Worthen-2019-The-transformative-and-emancipatory		Yes	Yes		

Table 3.4 Topics addressed in sample of peer research related to violence

Table 4.2.3 Topics addressed in sample of peer research related to violence	A : A topic	B : B topic	C : C Topic	D : D topic	E : E topic
1 : Ajodhia-Andrews 2016 Reflexively Conducting Research with Ethnically Diverse Children		YES			
2 : Akom-2016-Youth-participatory-action-research			YES	YES	YES
3 : Aldana-2016-Dialogic-pedagogy-for-youth-partici				YES	
4 : Ascroft-2020-Gender-violence-through-the-eyes-of				YES	
5 : Baas-2013-Childrens-perspectives-on-cyberbull		YES			
6 : Barraza 2016 INDIGENOUS_YOUTH-DEVELOPED_SEL					YES
7 : Beatriz-2018-Evaluation-of-a-teen-dating-violenc	YES				
8 : Benjamin-thomas-2021-Situating-occupational-injustices-e				YES	
9 : Benwell-2020-Engaging-political-histories-of-urb			YES		
10 : Bertrand-2017-Were-trying-to-take-action-transfor		YES			
11 : Brady 2019 Challenging_dominant_notions_o	YES				YES
12 : Bramsen-2019-My-path-towards-living-on-my-own-vo	YES				
13 : Brannstrom-2020-Girls-perspectives-on-gendered-viol				YES	
14 : Bristow 2020		YES			
15 : Calder-Dawe 2019				YES	
16 : Campos 2016				YES	
17 : Chou-2015-Nothing-about-us-without-us-youth-l		YES			
18 : Collins-2020-Childrens-rights-to-participation-a		YES			
19 : Crook-2021-A-case-for-complexity-informed-part		YES			
20 : Cuevas-parra-2019-Child-led-research-questioning-know	YES				
21 : Cuevas-parra-2020-Co-researching-with-children-in-the					YES
22 : Davidson-2017-Saying-it-like-it-is-power-particip			YES		
23 : Dennehy-2019-Involving-young-people-in-cyberbull		YES			
24 : Evans-2017-Using-the-nominal-group-technique-t					YES
25 : Evans-Winters 2017				YES	
26 : Factor 2019 Young_people_and_police_making	YES				

27 : Farre 2018 Adolescent_health_promotion_ba	YES				
28 : Fay-2018-The-impact-of-the-school-space-on-r		YES			
29 : Felner 2018				YES	
30 : Fine-2018-Queer-solidarities-new-activisms-er				YES	
31 : Flicker-2019-Stay-strong-stay-sexy-stay-native-s				YES	YES
32 : Forbes-genade-2019-Girrl-power-participatory-action-re					YES
33 : Fortin-2015-I-was-here-young-mothers-who-have-e	YES	YES		YES	
34 : Fox-2019-Crossing-under-the-highway-youth-ce		YES		YES	
35 : Garasia 2015					
36 : Gardner-2019-Amplifying-youth-voice-and-cultivat					
37 : Gilhooly-2017-The-karen-resettlement-story-a-part					
38 : Haskie-mendoza-2018-Conducting-youth-participatory-acti			YES	YES	
39 : Heykoop 2017 Our stories our own ways			YES		
40 : Irby-2018-Violence-as-a-health-disparity-adol					YES
41 : Kia-keating-2017-Photography-and-social-media-use-in				YES	
42 : Kia-keating-2017-Using-community-based-participatory					YES
43 : Larkins-2020-If-rich-people-gave-more-money-to-p			YES		
44 : Luguetti-2021-Stop-mocking-start-respecting-an-ac				YES	
45 : MacDowell 2017 Girls'_Perspectives_on_(Mis)Re				YES	
46 : Maclure-2017-Youth-reflexivity-as-participatory-		YES			
47 : Mathikithela 2019 Youth as participatory		YES			
48 : Mcquaid-2020-Girls-have-powers-using-research-le				YES	
49 : Neufeldt-2021-Learning-from-and-with-community-ba			YES		
50 : Norton-2019-We-speak-exploring-the-experience-o			YES		
51 : Papa 2019 Revealing Resistant Capital with Cambodian Youth for Advocacy and Policy Change		YES		YES	
52 : Pk-2018-Our-seat-at-the-table-mentorship-ad				YES	
53 : Ravi-2018-Refugee-youth-as-peer-leaders-in-a- (1)	YES				
54 : Ritterbusch-2020-Pushing-the-limits-of-child-partici	YES				
55 : Rodriguez-2018-Action-research-at-the-intersection	YES				

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56 : Rombalski-2020-I-believe-that-we-will-win-learning				YES	
57 : Ruff-2020-Ask-me-what---want-community-based-					
58 : Sarti-2018-Around-the-table-with-policymakers-				YES	
59 : Sawyer_et_al_2019 Applied Theatre as Participatory					YES
60 : Schmid-2020-Promoting-youths-self-empowerment-i	YES				
61 : Shiller-2018-The-disposability-of-baltimores-bla				YES	
62 : Sprague-martinez-2020-Adult-reflection-on-engaging-youth- (1)				YES	YES
63 : Teixeira-2020-Participatory-photo-mapping-to-unde			YES	YES	
64 : Templeton-2020-Young-peoples-sexual-readiness-insi		YES			
65 : Thompson-2020-Girls-and-young-women-negotiate-wel					YES
66 : Thorburn-2021-To-send-or-not-to-send-nudes-new-ze		YES			
67 : Treffrey-Goatley 2017 Technologies_of_Nonviolence_E	YES				
68 : Wainwright-2020-Race-ethnicity-young-people-and-off			YES	YES	
69 : Whittington 2019 Co-producing_and_navigating_co		YES			
70 : Wojcik-2020-Student-action-research-preventing-		YES			
71 : Wood-2020-The-role-of-educational-spaces-in-s	YES				
72 : Worthen-2019-The-transformative-and-emancipatory		YES			

Tables Section 4

Table 4.1 Definitions of peer research used in the review papers

First Author	Year	Peer research term	Definition
Agdal et al.	2019	Asset-based community development	defined by three characteristics: 1) Citizen led - Local citizens map their resources and needs and lead the collaboration with outside partners, 2) Relationship oriented - There is a focus on building social networks, 3) Asset-based - the process focusses on strengths, resources, and assets.
Anderson	2019	Youth participatory action research	a process through which youth engage in systematic inquiry alongside adult researchers to learn about social injustices and develop solutions for social change (Cammarota & Fine, 2008).
Anyon	2018	youth participatory action research	Three key principles: 1) Inquiry based - topics of investigation are grounded in youths' lived experiences and concerns, 2) Participatory - youth are collaborators in the methodological and pedagogical process and 3) Transformative - to actively intervene in order to change knowledge and practices to improve the lives of youth and their communities. (Rodriguez & Brown, 2009). Consistent with these principles, key processes include youth and adults sharing power during an iterative process that includes developing an integrated research and action agenda; training in, and application of, research and advocacy methods; practicing and discussing strategic thinking about how to create social change; and building alliances with stakeholders (Ozer & Douglas, 2015).
Asuquo	2021	youth engagement in research	a process of working collaboratively with diverse groups of people to address common issues
Bailey	2014	Public and Patient Involvement	research being carried out 'with' or 'by' members of the public rather than 'to', 'about' or 'for' them (INVOLVE, 2013)
Bovarnick	2018	participatory research	any research that entails a degree of collaboration between those undertaking the research and those who are typically 'the researched' (Pain, 2004).
Bradbury-Jones	2018	participatory research	a particular form of research that signifies the active involvement of participants in research, beyond providing data. Participatory research entails children playing a significant and equivalent role to adult researchers and being involved in some or all stages of the research process (Bishop, 2014).

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Branquinho	2020	youth participatory action research	fulfilment of: (a) participatory research of young people, (b) power-sharing with adults, and (c) transformative character through the acquisition of knowledge or with impact on practices to improve youth or their communities (Rodriguez & Brown, 2009).
Brown	2020	participatory visual research methods	an umbrella term capturing a broad range of methods including, but not limited to the use of drawing, photography, digital storytelling, or mapping to share stories in a visual narrative
Grace	2019	participatory research	Very broadly, research with or by children, and not on children (i.e. children treated as the objects of study without opportunity to express their own opinions. (Mason & Watson, 2014).
Haijes	2016	participatory research	research which actively involves children in defining relevant research questions and in the design and conduct of studies.
Jacquez	2012	community-based participatory research	an orientation to research that values the role of community members and academics as equitable partners, each contributing unique strengths to the research process (Israel et al. 1998).
Larsson	2018	participatory approaches	children and young people participate in one or more levels of the development of an intervention
Montreuil	2021	participatory research	children engaged in at least one aspect of the research process (i.e. not a study in which children were solely involved as research subjects for data collection, but in which children were involved, for example, to refine the research question, to collect data, to interpret data or plan dissemination
Raanaas	2020	participatory action research	broad term, where all parties are ideally involved in the knowledge creation, as collaborators and co-researchers in the research process (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008).
Schelven	2020	patient and public involvement	Five recurring elements across definitions: 1) a collaborative approach, meaning that projects are carried out with or by CYP (not on them), 2) participatory projects address topics that matter to CYP, 3) a continuum of activities in which CYP have different levels of influence, varying from being informed to being the main decide, 4) allows CYP to play a role in various stages of a project is the fourth element we identified 5) meaningful to both the CYP involved and CYP in general. 3 key principles on which PPI is built: 1) sharing power 2) iterative development, 3) focus on CYP strengths and resources.

Valdez	2020	youth participatory action research	form of participatory action research that provides youth with the opportunity to study social problems affecting their lives and to determine actions to solve these problems (Cammarota & Fine, 2008). Youth learn how to conduct research, effectively becoming youth researchers and advocates for change (Jason & Glenwick, 2016). Further, YPAR emphasizes the development and strengthening of collective efficacy (or collective empowerment) among youth involved in the research, which enables them to engage in social action for change.
Vaughn	2013	community-based participatory research	scientific inquiry conducted in communities in which community members, persons affected by condition or issue under study and other key stakeholders in the community's health have the opportunity to be full participants in each phase of the work: conception - design - conduct - analysis - interpretation - conclusions - communication of results (NIH, 2009, para. 2).
Wilson.	2020	youth-led participatory action research, community-based participatory research	Youth-led participatory action research - approach to scientific inquiry and social change grounded in principles of equity that engages young people in identifying problems relevant to their own lives, conducting research to understand the problems, and advocating for changes based on research evidence" (Ozer, 2016, p.189). Community-Based Participatory Research - an approach to research that values the role of community members as equitable partners and acknowledges the importance of building partnerships with the people that ultimately are targeted by research efforts (Israel et al., 1998).

Tables Section 5

Table 5.1. Assessment of levels of children and youth participation and involvement in research stages in the review papers

First Author	Year	Framework used	Details about numbers of projects at different levels of participation/stages of research process	Conclusions about types of approaches/studies/methods relating to levels of participation/stage research process
Agdal	2019	Roger Hart's level of participation	5 projects classed as non-participation, five projects (across 6 texts) as participatory and were adult initiated, consulted and informed, 3 projects were at the highest levels of participation at rung 6-8	The projects with the highest degree of participation adhere to the ABCD principles and employ skilled facilitators. Facilitators cautiously supported the participants with a focus on developing their participatory skills and on raising awareness of their own skills and gifts. These three projects involved awareness of friction and inequality, which strengthened both the individual and collective competence and agency.
Anderson	2019	not mentioned	Regardless of the YPAR project's methodology, nearly all of the studies described youth researchers' dissemination of results to various stakeholder groups through in-person presentations.	
Asuquo	2021	Hart's ladder of participation - grouping into 1) substantial engagement (strong youth decision-making power), 2) moderate engagement (shared decision-making with adults), and 3) minimal engagement (no youth decision-making power) or no engagement.	Three intervention studies (4%) had substantial engagement in at least one research phase whereby youth initiated and carried out some research activities from start to finish. Of these three interventions, one had substantial youth engagement in all three phases of research. Moderate youth engagement was identified in six interventions (8%) whereby youth, under supervision, were empowered to decide how to deliver intervention components, implying shared decision making with adults. Most interventions (48, 65%) had minimal engagement, with youth having no decision-making power, and some	For the intervention with substantial engagement, street-connected youth peer educators were trained to conduct research and initiated, planned, and implemented a series of HIV prevention programme activities within their communities that targeted similar groups of youth, and carried out data analysis of their programme effectiveness. Substantial youth engagement was also identified with engagement approaches that used crowd-sourcing of ideas for interventions, and youth-initiated post-intervention community HIV prevention effort.

			interventions (17, 23%)had no engagement at any phase of research.	
Bovarnick	2018	Lansdown and O’Kane’s (2015) ‘participation continuum’	majority of studies were consultative (n=53) and collaborative (n=46), with very few examples (n=4) of child/youth-led research. Breakdown of participatory research initiatives identified in the review included: child-led (4), collaborative (47), consultative (53), participatory monitoring and evaluation of youth services (3) and participatory action research project with young people (5). Breakdown of projects in relation to stage of participatory research process: research design (18), ethics (9), research governance/management (10), recruitment and engagement (12), data collection (25), analysis (21) and dissemination (24).	
Bradbury-Jones	2018	levels of participation reported but no framework used, just noting how authors describe involvement in their study	Two groups were discerned: For one group, engagement was focused at certain points, such as informing the research agenda (n = 1); project planning and decision making (n = 1) ; data generation (n = 2); data analysis (n = 2); and dissemination (n =1) . (one study included CYP in analysis and dissemination). The other cluster of articles described the participation of children and young people from the onset of the project, through to dissemination (often including co-authorship (n = 7).	

Brown	2020	not mentioned	All the included research reported participatory data collection, while the majority (n=14) also involved children in the data analysis. Nine of the included studies involved children in knowledge mobilization activities (most often a public exhibit of their photography or art), while only three explicitly engaged children in the development of the research design.	
Clark	2012	none mentioned	only 3 studies found that would be considered "full participation", seven further studies that incorporated many of the elements of a truly participatory approach, and which went beyond consultation or CYP as respondents, but which had important elements of participatory methods missing. CYP acting as peer researchers was very rare. where innovate and creative methods were used these gave more in-depth findings and were viewed by CYP as more relevant and a means by which they could more readily express themselves.	
Gavine	2017	the extent to which young people were involved in the programme using five categories of participation: 1) issue identification, 2) needs assessment (i.e. investigating the issue of interest), 3) development of the intervention (including development of materials), 4) delivery of the intervention, and 5) evaluation of the intervention.	The most common component for young people to be involved was delivery of sessions (n=40). For ten of these programmes, young people's participation was limited to programme delivery. Only two studies did not involve young people in the delivery of sessions, and instead their input was limited to programme development and programme development and needs assessment. Thirty-two studies involved the young people in programme development and in almost of all these, the young people were also involved in the delivery of the intervention. Only six studies involved young people in the issue identification process and only ten involved young people in a needs assessment to	Only six studies involved young people in the issue identification process and only ten involved young people in a needs assessment to research the programme. Importantly, these studies tended to describe themselves as PAR or were based upon strengths based approaches.

			research the programme. Four studies involved young people in the evaluation of the programme. Only one appeared to involve young people in all five components of the research process and only three studies involved young people in four components of the research process.	
Gibbs	2020	Youth-Led Participatory Action Research and technology appraisal tool designed by the authors to assess participatory approaches using technology throughout project stages based on Shier's analytical tool.	When young people were involved in the research process (specifically data collection, analysis, and advocacy), they mostly acted as collaborative researchers with adult guidance and support.	challenge to identify participation because participation varied across the participants, YPAR groups, and project sites. It was also influenced by the medium of engagement and the adult support person involved.
Grace	2019	Shier's participation matrix (2019)	All of the papers involved children as research participants who provided data to adult researchers. Relatively few papers engaged with participatory methodologies across other phases of the research. Only 7 of the 207 papers included in this scoping review reported engaging children in decisions about research questions and project design. Only 3 of 207 papers reported on advocacy activities.	

Jacquez	2012	assessed based on 5 phases of involvement: 1) partnership formation and maintenance, (2) community assessment and diagnosis, (3) definition of the issue, (4) documentation and evaluation of the partnership process, and (5) feedback, interpretation, dissemination, and application of results' (Israel et al.2005)	Only 15% of literature described as CBPR and youth actually partnered with youth to conduct research. We classified 43 articles as CBPR with adults, about youth because they described projects that partnered with adults on projects focused on issues related to youth. 56 studies were identified that involved partnering with youth in the research process. Youth were most commonly involved in several phases of research, with 21 % involving youth in two phases, 23 % in three phases, 29 % in four phases, and 18 % involving youth in all five phases. Only 9 % of studies involved youth in only one phase of the research. Youth most often participated in Phase 2, the identification of needs, priorities, and goals of research (77 %) and in Phase 3, designing or conducting the research (84 %). Fifty-nine percent of studies utilized a youth Advisory Board (Phase 1). Youth were least likely to be involved in Phase 4, data analysis (54 % of studies) and Phase 5, disseminating and translating research findings (52 % of studies).	The 56 studies that partnered with youth to conduct CBPR varied considerably in both the content of the research and the way in which youth were involved.
Larsson	2018	Shier's pathways to participation model	The vast majority, in total 28, of the included articles, met the criteria for level 3. Seven of the 41 articles were considered to fulfil the criteria for the fourth level of participation. Only three papers were judged to involve children and young people at the highest level. None of the included studies focusing on school settings reached the highest level of participation. It is possible that the school context, with its traditional structure of power, is preserving a top-down approach in the development of school interventions.	The three studies that achieved the highest levels of participation were more characterised by a willingness from the researchers to share the power to influence the developing process with the participants.

Raanaas	2020	None mentioned	Only 17 of these of studies that had advisory boards included youth. Only 18 of the studies described youth involvement as co-researchers in the sense that they are actively involved as research assistants participating in collecting data on peers/others than themselves. Thirty-one of the 54 studies involved youth in the data analysis process. Among these only 20 studies report processes where the youth were active partners in the creation of themes or interpretation of data. In eleven studies youth had the role of consultant. Only 33 of the studies included youth in the translation (action) phase.	The quality or intensity of involvement in data collection depended on the actual methods used, where some methods may entail a more active role in defining and generating data.
Sellars	2020	Research stages that young people's advisory groups (YPAGs) might be involved in (adapted from Gaillard et al. and with interactive advice given by the University of Oxford Neuroscience, Ethics and Society Research Group YPAG (NeurOX YPAG)).	In terms of level and type of involvement, YPAG contribution was identified across all different phases of the research process, but most commonly in the research design phase. The level of involvement varied between and within research phases, from affirmation to co-production; none of the studies were youth-led. The phase of research design had the widest variation for level of involvement and the phase of conducting research had the least variation. The majority of research phase activity was conducted at the level of co-production (71% of reported activities).	
Shamrova	2017	no framework mentioned but levels of engagement reported	Most papers described involving children as a source of data, as well as being the collectors of the data itself. Additionally, in almost half of the selected papers, children and youth were involved in the dissemination of findings and, in almost 23% of the articles, children participated in recommendation and action plan development. itself.	Children and youth tend to be involved at the latest stages of research and are under-included at early and data analysis stages. This trend could create a situation in which children can be used as decoration or their voices can be manipulated.

Valdez	2020	<p>The Reliability-Tested Guidelines for Assessing Participatory Research Projects (Mercer et al., as cited in Minkler & Wallerstein, 2011) were adapted to assess the level of youth engagement in each stage of the participatory research process: participants and the nature of their involvement (i.e., participants' appropriateness for the project); participants' role in shaping the purpose and scope of the research (i.e., inception of the research question and development of the study design); their role in research implementation and context (i.e., data collection and analysis); and their role in the dissemination of research outcomes (i.e., dissemination/application of the results [social action]).</p>	<p>Researchers were less likely to involve youth in the development of the research question (n = 7), or consult with them or involve them in the research design (n = 7). All articles described work involving youth in research implementation, providing youth with the opportunity to learn about research, and permitting researchers to learn about youth's perspectives on the research topic. Nearly all research engaged youth in data analyses and sufficiently involved youth in interpretation of research findings (n = 13). All articles described a formal or informal agreement (verbal or written) regarding ownership and sharing of the research data (n = 15). Most articles reported providing feedback of research results to youth (n = 13) and involving youth in the dissemination of research findings (n = 14). Most articles described plans directed at sustainability in relation to the purpose of the research (e.g., by fostering collaboration between youth and youth-serving agencies, funding sources, policymakers) (n = 12).</p>	
Vaughn	2013	not mentioned	<p>All the studies included in this review directly involved youth in research, even though to different extents and in various research roles. One common aspect of CBPR child health studies is the involvement of youth stakeholders in an advisory board/council/stakeholder group. Of the 34 articles, some type of youth stakeholder group for the</p>	<p>level of participation in the research process depended on youth age. High school students were typically involved in data collection and research design when properly guided. Middle-school-aged youth were often in the role of peer advocates/champions for the particular</p>

			purpose of providing input was mentioned in nine articles.	projects whereas elementary school students tended to have much less involvement and input in projects (e.g., participating in a group activity to inform the project).
Wilson	2020	A framework for evaluation of studies was designed by review authors which included: 1. the stage of research in which young people are involved; 2. the level of involvement they have; 3. inclusiveness of the research in terms of the background of young people involved; 4. the geographies in which they are based; 5. the health topics they focus on. They also used Shier's (2001) Pathways to Participation model	Only 15 articles reviewed involved young people at the agenda-setting stage (i.e. defining broad priorities or directions of research). This review found low participation of young people at the earliest stages of research, potentially because involving young people this early on requires researchers to plan their involvement in advance, before they have funding to secure it. Nearly two-thirds of relevant papers (63%) involved young people in at least two stages of research, and 31% involved young people in at least three stages. In 69% of articles, young people's views were taken into account (Level Three in Shier's model) or young people participated in decision-making (Level Four). Only 10% of articles described young people making decisions alongside adults (Level Five).	

Tables Section 7

Table 7.0 Summary of About Papers

Lead author	Year	Key theme
Anselma	2019	Co-designing an obesity prevention program
Ardoin	2014	Youth, community and university partnerships
Castro	2016	Youth, creative methods and 'voice'
Kerawalla	2018	Self-directed social science studies
Kornbluh	2019	Youth involvement in social justice issues
Koudelka	2021	Getting young people ready for social action
Makhoul	2012	Getting young people ready for social action with refugee backgrounds
Trott	2019	Climate change awareness
Worthen	2019	Reintegration after war
Bautista	2013	Institutional and social inequity
Bennett	2016	Sexual and reproductive health rights
Pitt	2018	Professional development
Zeylikman	2019	Youth engagement with cultural institutions
Tsang	2020	Health Care
Keddie	2019	Microaggressions and heterosexual relationship
Wright	2020	Pedagogical research framework as YPAR
Lindquist-Grantz	2018	Suicide and obesity
Odera	2021	critical thinking and professional skills development
Wood	2020	Personal and professional growth
Van Mechelen	2019	children's emotional and behavioural self-regulation
Bertrand	2018	Leadership among students of colour

Tavecchio	2019	Severe behavioural issues and with mild intellectual disabilities
Brickle	2017	Pollutio
Batsleer	2011	Perspectives of male prostitutes
Wagaman	2015	value of PAR as an empowerment-based approach among LGBTQ youth with a focus youth perspective on how the process was impactful and empowering.
Goodnough	2014	Youth-led community practice implementation in a school environment addressing smoking and alcohol use.
Gaffney	2013	Young people's involvement in a youth service evaluation
Frasquilho	2018	Nationwide project to enhance young people's participation and citizenship through thematic research and social action activities
Fleming	2013	Young people's levels of participation, involvement in decision making and strategies to more equitable power relationships between organisations and young people
Doveyâ Pearce	2019	Young people co-design and co-creation of a large-scale health research and dissemination. Adolescent advisory groups involvement in research and social advocacy to improve the life's of families with AIDS
Cluver	2020	Adolescent advisory groups involvement in research and social advocacy to improve the life's of families with AIDS
Halliday	2019	Research and implementation of a positive education programme through a school –based YPAR
Hampshire	2012	Mobility constraints faced by children and young people in Ghana, Malawi and South-Africa
Sales	2019	The impact of participation in a youth research coalition on positive youth development and trust in medical research
Schelven	2021	Experiences of young people living with chronic conditions with youth panel involvement
Trott	2020	Art and science integration in sustainability education: children and young people's experiences through two case studies

Tables Section 8

Table 8.0 Annotated Summary of General Critique papers

First Author	Year	Central arguments
Abo-Zena, M.M.	2016	This paper argues that the “in-between” position of emerging adults aligns with the in-between position of PAR, where individuals are both participants and researchers. Through PAR, academics and participants partner in a cyclical process of exploration, knowledge construction, and action. The article outlines the utility of PAR in studying both common and understudied issues and populations relevant to emerging adults and provides a case study to illustrate a PAR project on intersectionality and microaggressions among an undergraduate population at an institution of higher education in the United States.
Ackermann, T.	2020	This paper looks at the origins and theoretical perspectives of participatory research and discusses some ethical considerations for research with children and young people. Its focus is on some of the practical challenges in each stage of participatory research projects and the challenges that need to be addressed when moving the participatory agenda forward.
Anang, P.	2021	This paper illustrates the lessons learned from “Building on Strengths in Naujaat”, a resiliency initiative with the objective of promoting sense of belonging, collective efficacy, and well-being in Inuit youth. Naujaat community members over time established strong meaningful relationships with academic researchers. It acknowledges and addresses power imbalances, arguing that striving for transparency, accountability, and trust, are compelling guiding principles.
Banks, S.	2013	This article explores a range of ethical issues that arise in community-based participatory research (CBPR). It concludes that current institutional ethical codes, guidelines and ethical review procedures are not particularly well-suited to CBPR, in that they adopt principle-based and regulatory approaches to ethics; whereas character- and relationship- based approaches to ethics are also very important in CBPR, which is adopted by many researchers with a strong value commitment to social justice.
Bettencourt, G.M.	2020	This paper argues that YPAR provides one forum through which to challenge adultism by providing youth with voice and input. It argues that YPAR can serve as a tool for liberation when approached as a contact zone, problem-posing education, and a process rather than a product. It advocates key considerations of YPAR work: the need to challenge research norms, encourage reflexivity, and promote youth-centered approaches. These considerations span individual, collective, and institutional measures to support equitable and just applications of YPAR work.

Bertrand, M.	2019	This article explores decision makers' responses of surprise or amazement to Students of Color engaged in youth participatory action research (YPAR). These responses—termed “the discourse of surprise”—may have constrained the transformative potential of the students' research.
Bird, D.	2013	This article discusses collaboration with children under the age of 16 years in health research: what this means and why (or why not) to do it. The definition of collaboration is discussed and the risks and benefits of collaboration are reviewed, both theoretical and evidence based, where evidence exists. The review ends with advocating agreed definitions, better reporting of collaboration with children to build up the much needed evidence base and the need for careful consideration as to whether collaborating with children is appropriate in each circumstance.
Bradbury-Jones C.	2015	This paper critiques the ethical, methodological and practical issues associated with a participatory approach. The discussion is framed around six challenges: (1) Children lack research competence; (2) A comprehensive training programme is required; (3) Insider/outsider perspectives are difficult to balance; (4) Remuneration is complex; (5) Power differentials need to be overcome; and (6) Children need to be protected. For each challenge a counter-challenge is proposed and pragmatic solutions offered.
Dan, D.	2019	The purpose of this paper is to explore young researchers perspectives on children and young people's research, participation and protection. The paper is co-authored with young people. It captures children and young people's perspectives on the journal's theme and other contributions to it.
Dixon, J.	2019	This paper discusses the development of methodologies for hearing and acting upon the voices of care- experienced children and young people. It describes the opportunities and challenges of empowering young people to have a voice.
Duggan, J.	2021	This article explores the co-production of research as creative, speculative, and eventful rather than as research processes determined by equality, empowerment and social justice. The case is made for focusing on the complex processes through which ideas, affects and relational capacities emerge, are nurtured or obscured, and circulate as part of the complex processes of co-producing research. The argument is developed with reference to a recent research project on youth loneliness.
Ellsworth	2005	This paper is beyond our data range however it was extensively referenced in process papers. We have therefore included it here.
Ergler, C.R.	2017	This paper explores the practical obligations, ethical challenges and tensions that impact on primary school children's research experiences. IT suggests that more attention needs to be paid to the messy realities of becoming and being a child researcher. In particular, adult researchers should be more attuned to children's capabilities and the ethical hurdles for child and adult researchers.
Fine, M.	2012	This article sketches a critical participatory action research project conducted with urban youth, which was designed to challenge both the strategic disinvestment in the public sphere and the

		concomitant conservatizing pressures on our methods of social inquiry, raising questions about “evidence-based practice” and the current marketing of Randomized Clinical Trials as the “gold standard.”
Fitzgerald, H.	2020	This paper draws on participatory research with young people within PE and sport. The paper offers some preliminary thoughts about experiences of dealing with this messiness. It concludes by exploring what it might mean if researchers were more transparent about the usually unpredictable, messy and confusing situations that arise in the practice of doing participatory research with young people.
Fleming, J.	2011	This article draws considers how young people's involvement in research challenges current practice and influences research and researchers. It explores critically why so little has actually changed and seeks to identify future changes that need to happen, raising some important questions about the nature of research – its purpose and ideology. It concludes that in order for young people's active involvement in research to develop, we need to explore some crucial questions through a mutual interchange and dialogue between all researchers committed to participative research and youth participation.
Flewitt, R.	2018	With a focus on developing ethical and inclusive principles for participatory research and pedagogy, this paper reports on a pilot project where the authors worked with young, hard-to-reach individuals across four sites in England to enable them to design and carry out research about their experiences and views of disadvantage. Reflecting back on the project, the authors discuss effective ways to initiate and sustain participatory research that can enable young researchers to be involved as active and empowered agents at every stage of the research process. It also considers the implications for developing participatory pedagogy, with researchers working alongside educators to create school cultures that foster belonging and genuinely support all students' expertise and ways of knowing by looking beyond the school buildings and into their lives in the wider community.
Franks, M.	2011	Paper addresses the clash of interests and power relations in participatory research and offers a suggestion to overcome conflict in adult-led research carried out by young researchers: to develop participative ownership of specific parts of the research process so that participants become stakeholders rather than owners of the research.
Gaillard, S.	2018	Children and young people can be trained in clinical research through participation in young person advisory groups (YPAGs), whereby YPAG members assist other children and young people to learn about clinical research and share their experience and point of view with researchers, influencing the development and

		prioritization of research questions, design and methods, recruitment plans, and strategies for results dissemination.
Garnett, B.R.	2019	This paper considers the emancipatory potential of incorporating youth participatory action research (YPAR) and restorative practices (RP) implementation into a transformative mixed methods study design as a means to create equitable and caring school systems for marginalized youth. The paper sets out a transformative paradigm which offers a methodological and philosophical platform to weave together the emancipatory tenets of restorative practices, youth participatory action research and critical theory.
Hamilton, C.J.	2019	This paper is co-authored by three members of Young Researchers' Advisory Panel at the International Centre: Researching child sexual exploitation, violence and trafficking (IC) at the University of Bedfordshire, and supported by an academic researcher. The paper reflects the group's discussions about the relationship between children's participation and protection, considered within the context of the group's role and work.
Hawke, L. D	2018	Drawing on experience of collaboration with youth researchers, the article offers suggestions around engaging with youth in meaningful ways to inform planning, design and execution of academic research.
Hawke, L.D.	2020	This paper argues that skills in collaborating with youth to design, conduct and implement research have to be learned. Researchers need concrete training and networking opportunities to develop and maximize these skills. They also need mechanisms that formally acknowledge the value of engagement. Researchers and those promoting youth engagement in research are encouraged to consider these findings in their promotion and training endeavours.
Herr, K.	2017	Explores authors experiences as a practitioner researcher with students on a participatory action research project.
Horgan, D.	2017	This paper argues that, along with the growth of child participatory research, an increased focus on its complexity, specifically unaddressed power inequities in the research relationship and unreflexive use of methods, has developed. It reflects on attempts to achieve deeper participation through the use of children and youth advisory groups, mixed visual and discursive group methods. It argues that overly paternalistic frameworks adopted by ethical review bodies can hamper participatory research with children.
Horgan, D.	2018	Reflections on the use of children and youth advisory groups, mixed visual and discursive group methods: argues that overly paternalistic frameworks adopted by ethical review bodies can hamper participatory research with children.

Johnson, P.	2014	Reflections of a collective narrative film methodology emerging from co-research with a group of young people at the Domestic Violence Action Centre in Ipswich, Queensland.
Kellet	2010	This paper is beyond our data range however it was extensively referenced in process papers. We have therefore included it here.
Kidd, S	2018	Provides a critical reflection on participatory action research (PAR) methods in relation to community psychology. Key developments in the field are examined to provide some lessons learned in order to inform a renewed effort by community psychologists to challenge and re-engage current services and systems to address community mental health.
King, A.C.	2021	The purpose of this article is to describe the application of a particular form of technology-enabled participatory action research, called the <i>Our Voice</i> citizen science research model, with youth. It reviews 20 projects across five continents indicates that youth and young adults from varied backgrounds and with interests in diverse issues affecting their communities can participate successfully in multiple contributory research processes, including those representing the full scientific endeavor.
Kornbluh, M.	2016	Explores the use of social networking sites (SNS) in promoting social change efforts: youth with limited civic activity may take longer to engage in social justice efforts; bridging communication relationships with youth to peers who frequently utilize SNS may enhance usage; support from adult allies and teachers are key to facilitating and enhancing the use of a youth-led SNS.
Lac, V.	2018	Autoethnographic article about the process of undertaking PAR research as an graduate student and details the resistance and tensions faced in response to unsupportive ethics review board and university-school partnerships.
Larkins, C	2016	Strategies for connecting marginalised children's action research with children's citizenship. Stresses the importance of giving children ownerships of time, resources, research tools and research findings, so that they can mobilise these to choose priorities, reflect on their understandings and act for change.
Larkins, C	2014	Generational relationships to resources and social esteem can be disrupted through localised practices, enabling children to exercise influence where they are normally excluded. This requires: 1. changes in attitudes regarding the status of children and support for their participation in making and enacting decisions regarding resources; 2. reflection on processes and products of participation to question how the diversity of children's and young people's knowledge can be achieved.
Liddiard K.	2019	This article details the politics and practicalities of co-produced disability research with disabled young people with life-limiting and life-threatening impairments. It aims to encourage disability studies

		researchers and others to adopt virtual environments when researching with and for the lives of disabled people.
Lohmeyer, B.A.	2020	This article argues that there is a need to accept that some of the power asymmetries of participation might be unsolvable, and to reposition the power relationship between young people and researchers. A central concern is the paradoxically unethical outcomes produced by adult-centric ethics review processes.
Lozenski, B. D.	2017	This study highlights how an out-of school educational space afforded alternative pedagogical opportunities by specifically examining how pedagogies of Black eldership helped youth researchers historicize and politicize their research, pushing them to move from embodied knowledge to self-knowledge.
Lushey, C	2015	This paper argues that the peer research methodology can yield rich data but that adequate resources and effective research management are crucial. The authors also caution against a reductionist approach that privileges peer research methodology above other methods of inquiry in the study of transitions from care to adulthood.
MacSweeney, N.	2019	The authors describe emerging practices of youth involvement in paediatric research and outline how such practices can be extended to the domain of youth mental health. In particular, the authors highlight Young Persons' Advisory Groups through which young people can be involved in an active, meaningful and mutually beneficial manner, at each step in the research life cycle.
Makuch, K.E.	2020	This article examines the benefits and challenges of engaging children in environmental citizen science, defined as science conducted by nonspecialists under the direction of professional scientists, to promote social good. It evaluates how participation in citizen science projects focused on the environment (eco-citizen science) benefits the child's development, contributes to science, and leads to commitment to environmental stewardship and justice as adults.
Martin, S.B.	2019	This article discusses more broadly how our participatory methodologies have impacted those involved. The authors reflect on experiences engaging participatory methodologies in two different contexts and examine the collective impacts.
McGlaughlin, J.	2020	This paper addresses concerns about the appropriateness of children's and young people's rights and participation in research. It argues that both capacity and vulnerability should be seen as socially produced, meaning that the scope for capacity to be increased and vulnerability decreased also lies within the social. It draws on notions of relational autonomy or 'associational presence' to argue that what children and young people need to be active participants in research is the creation of spaces within which relational agency can be nurtured and sustained.
Mirra, N.	2017	This paper considers the ways in which digital media has fundamentally transformed the public sphere and expanded opportunities for youth civic expression and action. It offers a new

		conceptual model for civic learning and engagement that pushes past participation into the realms of interrogation and innovation.
Moore, T.	2015	The focus of this paper is on developing ethical and inclusive principles for participatory research and pedagogy, reporting on a pilot project with young, hard-to-reach individuals across four sites in England. It discusses effective ways to initiate and sustain participatory research that can enable young researchers to be involved as active and empowered agents at every stage of the research process. It also considers the implications for developing participatory pedagogy, with researchers working alongside educators to create school cultures that foster belonging and genuinely support all students' expertise and ways of knowing by looking beyond the school buildings and into their lives in the wider community.
Ozer, E. J.	2017	Reports findings from an integrative review of reviews: considers how some youth participatory approaches aim to influence the social determinants of health that lead to the physical embodiment of health inequities.
Pahl, K.	2019	This article argues that it is important to find a language to describe youth engagement practices in informal settings. It argues that many young people do not have the resources to be heard on visible platforms, but their work, and meaning making practices might provide important information about their ideas and relay key concepts about how communicational practices are constructed.
Percy-Smith, B.	2019	This paper draws upon findings from research across Europe examining the styles and spaces of youth participation. It explores the significance of young people's own choices for democratic knowledge production, communication and engagement within a context of shifting discourses of participation, democratic engagement and active citizenship.
Read, A.	2018	An autobiographical narrative reflecting on the ideology of child-led research.
Rubin, B. C.	2017	This paper focuses on three main points of tension that emerged when integrating action research with youth into the school curriculum: maintaining a sense of authenticity amid the constraints of schooling, negotiating cycles of direct action and inquiry, and navigating classroom and school power differentials while preserving the youth-directed nature of YPAR. YPAR approach is epistemologically at odds with the ways that teaching and learning are structured in school classrooms.
Spiel, K.	2020	This paper argues that engaging marginalised children, such as disabled children, in Participatory Design entails particular challenges, maintaining a delicate balance between ensuring their right to participation as well as their protection from harm. It argues that the resulting tensions are politically charged, affected by myriads

		of power differences and create moral dilemmas. The authors identify three challenges: positioning work to the children's carers' values, protection, and enabling the (relative) risk-taking associated with participation for children. They call for this micro-ethical approach to be used when reporting research ethics in practice, and as a guidance for the training of researchers and practitioners.
Spriggs, M.	2019	This article discusses ethical complexities of involving children as co-researchers, identifying six ethical complexities: 1. A hidden rationale: Taking advantage of children's relationships/networks; 2. Child co-researchers may gain access to knowledge they would not otherwise have about people in their network; 3. Child co-researchers pressuring participants to take part; 4. Participants pressuring child co-researchers; 5. Child co-researchers' exposure to distressing information and 6. Possible burdens for child co-researchers.
Teixeira, S.	2021	This paper explores the promise and challenges of youth participatory action research (YPAR), paying particular attention to ethical issues and power dynamics that emerge in the context of research partnerships between youth and adults. It describes the tension between the values of YPAR and the systems and structures embedded in the academy. It demonstrates how adultism and the capitalist nature of the academy intersect with white supremacy culture, posing significant barriers to meaningful youth participation in community research partnerships, describing ways in which participatory scholars can disrupt these systems to elevate youth voices and to amplify their efforts for equity.
Thabrew, H	2018	Co-design can successfully be undertaken with children and young people but thought needs to be given to settings and techniques to ensure meaningful engagement and participation. Co-design has promise for increasing the impact of eHealth interventions for children and young people.
Thomas, N.P.	2020	This paper offers a response to critiques (by Kim and Hammersley) about the methodological and normative assumptions that underlie research 'by' children; claims made about the implications of children's rights for the ethics of research with children; and more broadly, some of the central commitments of Childhood Studies. It seeks to distinguish between those that clearly should be accepted, those that appear to be based on a misreading of the claims being made by scholars and researchers, and those that represent serious challenges to defend, redefine or rethink our aims, claims or practices.
Tuck	2008	This paper is beyond our data range however it was extensively referenced in process papers. We have therefore included it here.

Whelan, F.	2018	This article describes the dialogical methodology of a creative practice that has negotiated new and established approaches in order to construct horizontal working relations with young people and police that visualise, diffuse and challenge existing power structures. It outlines two forms of relational power that are experienced in the private and public processes that underpinned this durational engagement: a form of relational power that articulates inequalities between those who exercise power and those who are subject to power, and another whereby power is co-produced through collaboration.
Wilkinson, C	2017	Including young people in the writing up of research is important: through “owning and controlling” participants’ stories, researchers can sustain hegemonic depictions of participants, and add further to this oppression. By including young people in this process, participatory research can be more considerate to the ways in which they would like to be perceived in academic writing.
Wilhelm, A.	2021	This paper seeks to identify lessons learned when implementing school-based youth and parent PAR (YPAR and PPAR) targeting health and academic outcomes for Indigenous students and students of color. It argues that PAR holds promise for application in other settings to address institutional change and social determinants of health.
Woodgate, R. L.	2018	As co-researchers, youth and their families are able to participate, learn, and contribute to knowledge and building relationships that are designed to innovate and improve healthcare systems. Promoting and creating the space for identity, capacity building, and leadership is integral to the engagement of youth and their families in health research in a way that they consider meaningful and rewarding.