

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, a group of young researchers, university researchers and adults involved with the YEF network met 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 takes part?

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?

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.

Email Clarkins@uclan.ac.uk

