

**Scaling-up participatory research with children –
investigating the influence on child co-researchers’
critical consciousness and their agency in the research
process**

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Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

October 2020

Melbourne School of Population and Global Health
Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences
The University of Melbourne

Abstract

Participatory research with children aims to actively collaborate with child co-researchers to co-construct knowledge and social action about their worlds. Recently, a growing number of studies have increased the size and scope of participatory research with children. However, there is scarce evidence on how collaborating across study sites and engaging with data that reflects the lives of children from different backgrounds and contexts influences child co-researchers' views about themselves, their communities, and the world, as well as their experiences during the research process. Additionally, although scaled-up participatory studies tend to show overall high levels of child agency, little is known about the process of increasing child co-researchers' agency within and beyond the research setting.

My PhD research focused on answering the question of how does scaling-up participatory research with children influence child co-researchers' critical consciousness and their agency in the research? To answer this question, I carried out a scoping review of the literature and two qualitative participatory studies. The Children's Araucaria study focused on exploring children's experiences in two disaster risk reduction programs, one in Chile, the other one in Australia. My second study, Kids Contribute, was part of a larger initiative led by the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit at the University of Melbourne and carried out in collaboration with a children's television news program. Child co-researchers from different backgrounds and places in Australia helped create questions and interpret results for a poll about how children contribute at home, school and elsewhere in the community. Then, a group of child co-researchers presented their findings and recommendations at a national forum, organized with the Australian Human Rights Commission. My work in this project focused on examining the qualitative and participatory component of the research.

My findings showed that scaling-up participatory research with children can help promote child co-researchers' critical consciousness at the individual, social and global levels of awareness. As the research process increased their exposure to other children's perspectives, child co-researchers began to explore the connections between their personal experiences and those of other children in their communities and across Australia. Child co-researchers were also motivated to learn about the realities of children in different parts of

the world and to collaborate across geographic frontiers to address global issues like climate change and racism.

My research also found that, if the goal is to scale-up *participatory* research with children, child co-researchers should have opportunities to engage in research activities beyond their local community across the different stages of the research process. This task can be complex, since the context of each study location can facilitate or constrain child agency in different ways. Through their dialogue with child co-researchers, adult researchers can promote critical consciousness at different levels of awareness by using research activities as prompts and integrating discussions about the different geographic and ecological levels involved in the study. Child co-researchers can also benefit from collaborating with each other across study sites. Finally, to increase the impact of the research and child co-researchers' empowerment in their relationship with adults, researchers can help build increasingly wider audiences that are willing to listen and act upon children's ideas.

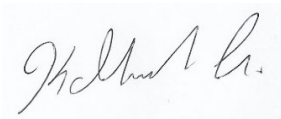
Declaration

This is to certify that:

The thesis comprises only my original work toward the Doctor of Philosophy and due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used.

The thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katitza Marinkovic', written on a light blue background.

Katitza Marinkovic

Preface

I acknowledge that this PhD research was funded by the Becas Chile CONICYT Scholarship program.

Acknowledgements

I wish to show my deepest gratitude to all the children, young people and adults who made this research possible. First and foremost, I'm thankful to my supervisors, Professor Lisa Gibbs and DR Karen Block. I'll always be thankful for how you guided, supported and challenged me throughout my whole candidature. I also wish to pay my special regards to my Advisory Committee, Associate Professor Cathy Vaughn (Chair) and Associate Professor Eva Alisic, for their warm, timely and insightful feedback during each one of our meetings.

Special thanks to the rest of the team at the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit and the members of the Kids in Action network. I have learned so much from all of you as a researcher and human being. Thanks also to the rest of the academic and professional staff at the Centre for Health Equity who encouraged me to participate in this community and to the PhD candidates who offered me their friendship and advice. In particular, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Shaira Baptista and Jess Franks for our conversations and writing sessions.

I would like to pay special regards to the individuals and organizations that made the Children's Araucaria and Kids Contribute study possible, and whose names I cannot share in consideration of child co-researchers' privacy and confidentiality. My deepest appreciation goes to the young co-researchers that I had the privilege of working with. Your passion, wisdom and creativity transformed how I see the world and my role as a researcher.

I wouldn't have been able to complete this research without the love and support from my family in Chile: my father Boris, my mother Paulina, my nona Inés and my sisters, Tanya and Lenka. I also want to give thanks to Milos, my nono, whose spirit continues inspiring me to never stop learning. Thanks to my friends Bethany, Constanza and Stella, for being there for me. Finally, I don't have words to express my gratitude and love to Manuel, my partner, for his unconditional support and helping me keep going when things got tough.

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Glossary

Child agency: children's capacity to make decisions, express themselves, reflect and act on their worlds (Montreuil & Carnevale, 2018). In participatory research, children's agency manifests when they take part in decisions that influence the research, freely express their views and decide when and how to become involved (as well as choosing not to participate in research) (Clark, 2010; Liegghio, Nelson, & Evans, 2010).

Child empowerment: children's sense of competence and efficacy as agents of social change in combination with having effective access and control over the resources and conditions in their environment (Kohfeldt, Chhun, Grace, & Langhout, 2011; Rappaport, 1981). Children's empowerment is not something that can be controlled by external agents, and adults cannot make children become empowered. However, adults can help promote the process of children's empowerment. In participatory research, this involves supporting children's development of research skills, providing access to resources and opening opportunities for children to express their views and influence the research (Liegghio et al., 2010).

Children: people under 18 years old (United Nations, 1989). There is a wide diversity of terms and definitions that are complementary and sometimes overlap (e.g. adolescence, youth). Yet, in consideration of space and the reader's comfort, I will use the most commonly used term 'children' and, if necessary, use other terms when I cite other authors.

Critical consciousness: originally named *conscientização* by popular educator Paulo Freire (Freire, 2017), critical consciousness is the process through which individuals who engage in reciprocal dialogue critically reflect and act upon the oppressive conditions that affect their everyday lives. During this process, individuals gain new understandings about the social issues affecting their lives (and their root causes) as something that can be transformed. According to the Social Justice Youth Development framework (Ginwright & James, 2002), critical consciousness is a natural part of children and young people's positive development, through which they gain new understandings about themselves, their communities and the world.

Participatory research: a research paradigm with a wide range of approaches that share the

core principles of a) actively involving the people whose lives are the subject of the research, b) being locally situated in the contexts of people's everyday lives, c) co-constructing knowledge through a collectively owned research process and d) aiming for transformation through human agency (International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research (ICPHR), 2013).

Participatory research with children: a wide and diverse field of approaches that share the aim of collaborating with children as co-researchers in creating knowledge that improves their lives (Gibbs et al., 2018). These different approaches shared in common the principles of promoting child empowerment and decision-making, democratizing knowledge and mobilizing social change to improve the lives of children and their communities (Kohfeldt et al., 2011).

Scaling-up participatory research with children: expanding the size and scope of participatory research to collaborate with child co-researchers from a diversity of places and backgrounds. This involves: a) expanding the geographic scope and impact of the research beyond one geographic location, b) adults and child co-researchers share power for decision-making across different stages of the research and c) adult researchers support child co-researchers' empowerment beyond the research and into the community (Gibbs, Kornbluh, Marinkovic, Bell, & Ozer, 2020).

Chapter 1: Introduction

In recent decades, children¹ have increasingly become acknowledged as important social actors (Jans, 2004). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) confirmed that children have the right to be protected from harm and to have a say in matters that affect them. The UNCRC provided the framework for child rights-based research, leading to a growing interest in applying participatory approaches that acknowledge children as the true experts in their lives (Kellett, 2010; Powell, Fitzgerald, Taylor, & Graham, 2012; Shier, 2018).

Participatory research with children is a wide and diverse field of approaches that share the aim of collaborating with children as co-researchers in creating knowledge that improves their lives (Gibbs et al., 2018). Figure 1 summarizes the core elements of participatory research with children.



Figure 1: Core principles of participatory research with Children

¹ For my thesis, I will use the term 'child' to refer to people under 18 years old (United Nations, 1989). I acknowledge that there is a wide diversity of terms and definitions that are complementary and sometimes overlap (e.g. adolescence, youth). Yet, in consideration of space and the reader's comfort, I will use the most commonly used term 'children' and, if necessary, use other terms when I cite other authors.

According to authors like Mary Kellett (2010), in participatory research with children, adult researchers share power for decision-making with child co-researchers across the different stages of the research process (i.e. design, data collection, analysis and dissemination). By sharing control over the research, participatory approaches seek to transform adult-child relationships and make them more egalitarian. This process can be empowering for children and expand beyond the research setting into children's relationships with other adults in the community. At the same time, research collaborations between adults and children result in knowledge that wouldn't be accessible without child co-researchers' involvement. Because theory and action are closely related in participatory research, this new knowledge is used to mobilize positive social change in children's lives (e.g. by helping improve services and policies) (Gibbs et al., 2018).

Traditionally, participatory research is carried out at the local level over long periods of time and across many sessions. This approach helps establish the necessary rapport and trust to enter a dialogue where children examine their communities and everyday lives. However, in recent years, new digital technologies have given children an unprecedented access to information and helped them cross geographic and language barriers (Kidron & Rudkin, 2017). These changes may contribute to children's development as global citizens and increase their awareness of global issues beyond their local communities (Bennett, 2008; Jans, 2004).

Global child activism could be a manifestation of this phenomenon. In March 2019, thousands of Australian students joined the movement initiated by Swedish 16-year-old Greta Thunberg and went on a Climate Change Strike. Their protest against governments' inaction on climate change was echoed in over 2,000 protests in 125 countries (Gleanza, Evans, Ellis-Petersen, & Naaman, 2019). Other examples of children and young people joining forces and leading large social justice movements include the #enough campaign against gun violence (McCarthy, Gabbat, Beckett, Luscombe, & Lartey, 2018) and the Dreamers movement that fights for the rights of Latinx migrant youth across the USA (Gambino, 2018). At the same time, a growing number of researchers, practitioners and decision-makers support the notion of global child citizenship and advocate for incorporating children's perspectives on national and international issues. For example, Ireland's National

Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making 2015 – 2020

(Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2015) seeks to incorporate children's voices in areas like health, education, protection and the economy. Meanwhile, in the field of public health, the Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing (Patton et al., 2016) concluded that adults must collaborate with young people to improve policies and services at the local, national and international levels.

In this context, participatory research could be scaled-up to facilitate children's empowerment as global citizens and to promote their wellbeing. Doing this would require expanding the size and scope of participatory research to collaborate with child co-researchers from a diversity of places and backgrounds. The idea of collaborating across communities is not new for participatory approaches. Paulo Freire (2017), who had a crucial influence on the development of participatory research, stated that it's important for local communities to collaborate at the regional level to transform the large social forces affecting their lives. However, there might be important ethical and methodological implications associated with scaling-up participatory research with child co-researchers.

Scaling-up often involves increasing the study size, number of child co-researchers and study sites and there is a small but emerging body of literature about its potential benefits (Gibbs et al., 2020). However, I argue that there's still not enough evidence on how these changes to the research context affect children's experience and the outcomes of their work. On one hand, scaling-up participatory research with children could lead to more inclusive research that has a broader impact (e.g. national and international policies). On the other hand, there might be unexpected implications for the participatory process. Thus, before scaling-up participatory research with child co-researchers, it would be important to consider questions like:

- If there is a higher number of child co-researchers or study sites, could we guarantee that all of them will have equal levels of agency?
- Would a larger study design make it more difficult for adult facilitators to establish rapport and trust with child co-researchers?
- Would increasing the size effectively make the research more inclusive and representative? Or, on the contrary, will some voices dominate over others, or will

- conflicts emerge between child co-researchers from different social groups?
- Will local and individual voices be erased or decontextualized if we increase the scale of participatory research?
 - Who will determine the final outcomes of the research? Will these outcomes be meaningful for child co-researchers and their local communities?

Based on the above, my **aim in this PhD research is to contribute to a better understanding of how to increase the scope of participatory research with children in a way that stays true to its central tenets for high-quality.**

In addition to the emergence of scaling-up as a new trend in participatory research with children, it's important for me to explain how my own experiences led to this work and to position myself in the role of adult researcher. I was born in Chile and, like most people, I grew up in a society that often treats children and young people's perspectives as irrelevant, wrong or even threatening, with detrimental effects on their rights to protection, health and education and their overall wellbeing. I confirmed this during my work as a clinical psychologist in Child Protection Services in a community severely affected by the megathrust earthquake and tsunami of 2010. In the Chilean National Service for Minors (SENAME) it was rare to see any type of consultations or other participatory initiatives carried out with the children in out-of-home-care. If these children had been given the chance to speak out, they would have revealed the psychological, physical and sexual abuse that many were suffering in the system that was supposed to protect them. They were also often denied the opportunity to express their opinions regarding where they wanted to live and with whom. After the disaster of 2010, few children had the opportunity to engage in the recovery of their communities or have a say on how their access to education had been affected. Witnessing these situations convinced me to shift from clinical psychology to working in research that could help improve public policies and programs for childhood wellbeing. It became apparent to me that clinical work could not address the social, economic, political and cultural factors affecting the lives of my patients. Further, many of these social forces were not just acting at the regional or national level but affecting children's lives worldwide. For example, the global economy and the climate emergency are crucial factors that determine how many children (and what children) live in poverty and/or are hit hardest by

disasters.

Thus, when I arrived in Australia, I introduced myself as someone who probably had no idea of what 'participation' was but had a very clear notion of what it wasn't. It took me a long time to fully develop my research questions for this PhD but, deep inside, I was searching for an answer to the following questions: Can children freely express themselves in a way that is safe and inclusive? And, can children have an impact on the local and global social forces that are shaping their lives? It was these questions that led to my interest in scaling-up participatory research with children as a way of promoting their wellbeing within and beyond their communities.

I'm glad to say that my answer to these questions, after completing this PhD research, is yes. However, this can only happen if many members of society commit to this endeavour. I would also like to add that this work must be done with hope and love to be effective. Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (2014, 2017), who I will refer to many times across this thesis, argued that practitioners and researchers prefer not to use these words very often, but that they are prerequisites for building a fair and just society. They have also been key for me to complete my research and become aware of the important connections between the lives of adults and children across the globe. During the four years of being a PhD student in Australia, I've seen the injustices of the Chilean National Service for Minors exposed in the media, denied by the authorities and the efforts of a growing number of people to change this situation. Last year, I was filled with hope when I saw the largest social movement in my country being started by our secondary students and supported by people of all ages, but also with fear and anger from the brutal repression that they endured. I've also seen children in Australia building more resilient and inclusive communities. Further, I've seen children and young people around the world calling for action on the climate emergency. Overall, I've learned about many children and young people's motivation to work together to create a better future despite geographic, cultural, religious and political borders, and the commitment of numerous researchers, practitioners and decision-makers to support them in achieving this goal.

Thus, I cannot say that I'm neutral or objective in my work as a researcher, but I've tried my best to remain critical and reflexive to translate this journey into a coherent and high-quality

study. The thesis is structured as follows:

- In Chapter 2, I outline the conceptual background that guided my research. Often, the literature review chapter of a thesis comes before its conceptual background. However, because one of my main areas of focus in this PhD study were the methodological aspect of participatory research with children, my conceptual background provides foundational information for my literature review.
- In Chapter 3, I address the current literature on scaling-up participatory research with children.
- In Chapter 4, I introduced the overall approach and methodology of my research, which consisted of two participatory studies: the Children's Araucaria and Kids Contribute studies. I also introduced some of the main ethical and methodological issues that I encountered during my research.
- Chapter 5 reports the results of the Children's Araucaria study, a pilot that aimed to explore the process of scaling-up participatory research with children about their role in disaster risk reduction, and that provided useful insights on the contextual constraints of scaling-up participatory research with children.
- In Chapter 6, I explain in more detail the methods and setting of the Kids Contribute study, a study that focused on children's experiences of contributing at home, school and community, and in which child co-researchers presented their findings at a national forum.
- Chapter 7 consists of the main findings of the Kids Contribute study, including details about the child co-researchers, their roles and how participating in this research influenced their critical consciousness.
- Chapter 8 comprises my reflections about how my role influenced child co-researchers' experiences of agency in the Kids Contribute study, and how child co-researchers addressed increasingly larger audiences as the study scaled-up.
- Chapter 9 presents my overall discussion on this PhD research.

Chapter 2: Conceptual framework

In the previous chapter, I introduced the issue that there is a growing trend to increasing the size and scope of participatory research with child co-researchers, but there are important gaps in our understanding of child co-researchers' experiences. To address these gaps, I guided my research based on the following conceptual framework.



Figure 2: Conceptual framework for understanding scaling-up participatory research with children

Figure 2 illustrates the different components of my conceptual framework. I focused on Paulo Freire's (2017) concept of critical consciousness and how it influenced the core principles of participatory research in general. I also incorporated concepts related to how new understandings of children's rights reshaped childhood research, and how all these ideas and concepts led to the historical development of participatory research with children. Additionally, I applied the Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD) framework (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002) to explore how scaling-up participatory research may influence the experience of child co-researchers.

The concept of critical consciousness

Participatory research with children has been largely influenced by the works of educational theorist and practitioner Paulo Freire (1921 – 1997). Freire was influenced by anti-colonial thinkers like Marx and Hegel and proposed an educational model for achieving greater social

equity (Freire, 2017). During his work in Brazil and other Latin American countries, Freire observed that alphabetization efforts were often guided by a 'banking' concept of education, where teachers are the only experts in the educational setting. Meanwhile, students are passive vessels where knowledge is 'deposited.' Educational efforts are not situated in people's local contexts, excluding students' knowledge about their own lives and the problems in their community. Thus, banking education helps perpetuate the oppression and living conditions that affect the people it's meant to help. In contrast, Freire proposed a 'problem-posing' method, where all members of the educational setting are teachers and students at the same time. Participants acknowledge each other's expertise and establish an ongoing dialogue where they question and respond to the oppressive forces shaping their everyday lives.

In his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (2017) explained the concept of *conscientização*, translated as critical consciousness in English. Freire's concept of critical consciousness was key for the development of the principles of participatory research. The process of critical consciousness involves critically reflecting and acting upon the world, resulting in a new awareness about one's position in it and our capacity to transform it.

Critical consciousness results from the combination of critical reflection and critical action. Critical reflection is the process of questioning everyday situations, beliefs and practices and realizing that these conditions are not natural and can be changed. Meanwhile, critical action involves making concrete efforts to transform them. Freire (2017) emphasized that critical reflection and critical action feed each other in a cyclical process that he called 'praxis', and thus cannot be separated from each other. If theoretical knowledge is not integrated into action, social justice efforts will not address the real root causes of inequality. Conversely, focusing solely on promoting critical reflection can only result in armchair activism or a sense of hopelessness.

Core principles of Participatory Research

The concept of critical consciousness is ingrained in participatory research. According to the International Collaboration on Participatory Health Research (International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research (ICPHR), 2013), this methodology assumes that research about

a group of people must be done in collaboration with them by incorporating their perspectives and local knowledge. The members of the community being studied should influence the whole research process, from the formulation of research questions and study design, to the collection and interpretation of data, and the dissemination of findings. Making the research a collective process that is collectively owned can also help communities become more empowered.

Freire's work is also manifested in the importance that participatory research gives to building trusting relationships and co-creating knowledge through dialogue. Participatory research is understood as a dynamic and relational activity that seeks to incorporate different perspectives. To achieve this, professional researchers must be aware of their tendency to impose their own views and reflect on the power asymmetries between them and the community. In a similar way to how Freire (2017) developed the technique of cultural circles to promote dialogue, participatory researchers use different strategies and methods to collaborate with communities in problematizing social issues, identifying their root causes and developing solutions (International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research (ICPHR), 2013). Participatory research also aims to have a broad impact, based on communities' perceptions of what that impact should be (International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research (ICPHR), 2013).

Child rights-based research

In recent decades, children have been increasingly acknowledged as social actors, citizens and agents of change who have the capacity to form their own views (Jans, 2004; Kellett, 2010). In 1989, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) set a milestone for recognizing children's rights both to be protected from harm and to actively participate in society (Jans, 2004; Shier, 2018). More specifically, Article 12 of the UNCRC established that 'States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child' (United Nations, 1989). Further, various authors argue that promoting child participation and agency is necessary for their protection, and incorporating children's perspectives can contribute to development of better programs, services and public policies (Franklin & Slope,

2006; Liegghio et al., 2010; Patton et al., 2016; Shier, 2018).

The recognition of children's rights in research has transformed the ethical and methodological standards for doing research with children (Powell, Fitzgerald, Taylor, & Graham, 2012; Shier, 2018). According to Kellett (2010), it has become increasingly more important for adult researchers to shift from doing research *on* children, to doing it *for* and *with* them. In the next section, I will explain how participatory research with children has positioned itself as an increasingly accepted approach to balance children's rights to protection and participation in research.

Participatory Research with Children

I use the term participatory research with children to refer to a broad range of approaches that, in line with the principles of participatory research, seek to actively include children in creating knowledge to improve their lives (Gibbs et al., 2018). Participatory research with children is a very diverse field, with approaches like *participatory action research with young people* or *youth participatory action research (YPAR)* (Fernández, Nguyen, & Langhout, 2015), *community-based participatory research (CPBR) with children and adolescents* (Jacquez, Vaughn, & Wagner, 2013), *transformative research with adolescents* (Shier, 2015), *child participatory action research* (Maglajlic, 2010), *participatory methodologies* (Green, 2015), *research led by children* (Kellett, 2010), *youth-led research* (Ozer, Newlan, Douglas, & Hubbard, 2013) and *collaborative ethnography with children and adolescents* (Red Internacional de Etnografía con Niñas Niños y Jóvenes, 2019).

Participatory research with children has been influenced by theories on adult participation, emancipation, empowerment and voice (Kellett, 2010; Maglajlic, 2010; Shier, 2001), including the works of Paulo Freire. There's also a growing evidence base on the importance of critical consciousness for child development, and activities that promote it have been found to benefit children's analytical and communicational skills, academic achievements, future plans and sense of citizenship (Diemer, Kauffman, Koenig, Trahan, & Hsieh, 2006; Diemer, McWhirter, Ozer, & Rapa, 2015; Diemer, Voight, Marchand, & Bañales, 2019; Diemer & Rapa, 2016; Rapa, Diemer, & Bañales, 2018; Watts, Diemer, & Voight, 2011).

As explained in Chapter 1, in participatory research, children are acknowledged as co-

researchers and share power with adult researchers for decision-making across the research. This helps co-create knowledge that otherwise wouldn't have been accessible to adults. This knowledge is not necessarily *better* in comparison to using other methodologies, but it is *different*, because child co-researchers are epistemologically privileged in comparison to adults to do research about their lives (Balen et al., 2006; Kellett, 2010). Additionally, participating in the co-creation of knowledge and the mobilization of social change is expected to be an empowering experience for children that can expand beyond the research setting (Langhout, Kohfeldt, & Ellison, 2011; Ozer et al., 2013).

Participatory research with children is a child rights-based approach to doing research with children (Shier, 2018). In participatory research, children's right to be protected from the potential harms of research (i.e. distress, re-traumatization, breaches of privacy and confidentiality, burnout) is balanced with promoting their agency and freedom of expression. Thus, child co-researchers' roles must correspond to their age, development and maturity, and children are not expected to share the same activities or responsibilities with adults (Clark, 2010; Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012; R. D. Langhout & Thomas, 2010; Ozer et al., 2013; Wong, Zimmerman, & Parker, 2010). Meanwhile, adult researchers establish trusting relationships with child co-researchers, support shared decision-making (Kellett, 2010; Shier, 2001, 2015) and develop methods that allow children to engage in research according to their unique interests and skills (Peek, Morrissey, & Marlatt, 2011; Punch, 2002b). Adult facilitators also provide technical support, secure funding, establish strategic partnerships and advocate for child participation beyond the research setting (Green, 2015; Ozer et al., 2013; Shier, 2001, 2015).

Different authors have warned against misinterpreting participatory research with children as an approach that seeks an ideal of completely autonomous child participation. This notion does not reflect how children participate in real-life scenarios (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008; Grace & Langhout, 2014; Kellett, 2010; Shier, 2001; Wong et al., 2010). For Shier (2018), adult researchers will always get the final decision of how to incorporate children into their work, so it is not possible to achieve adult-child relationships that are completely egalitarian. Participatory research with children must also navigate pragmatic limitations that determine how and when children can become involved as co-researchers. Because of this, in a

participatory study, not all child co-researchers will necessarily participate in the same way and with the same degree of agency. Children also require an attentive and influential audience willing to act upon child co-researchers' ideas (Lundy, 2007). Without this, it is not possible to achieve the levels of impact and empowerment expected by participatory research. Additionally, it is also necessary to acknowledge that children may not necessarily want to engage in research or may choose to withdraw (Dockett, Einarsdottir, & Perry, 2009), and adults should avoid imposing a 'dictatorship of participation' (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008).

Another important development in participatory research with children was acknowledging the crucial role that children's contexts (social, cultural, economic, political, environmental) have in shaping their lives and opportunities to participate in research (Green, 2015; Porter et al., 2010; Shier, 2015). From the perspective of the ecological and systems model, children's lives and development are intrinsically related to the contexts where they live their lives (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For this reason, authors like Kohfeldt and colleagues (2011) have argued that applying an ecological and systems approach is key to understand when, why and how children participate in research as co-researchers.

Since children's contexts determine their role and status in society (Porter et al., 2010), their levels of agency as child co-researchers will also be shaped by the different social forces around them (Langhout & Thomas, 2010; Maglajlic, 2010; Porter et al., 2010). Thus, doing participatory research with children requires anticipating and managing the ethical challenges to doing research with child co-researchers present in each particular context (Kohfeldt et al., 2011; Ozer et al., 2013). During his work with child co-researchers in Nicaragua, Shier (2015) observed that NGO's had to manage the risk of supporting children in opposing the interests of businesses that used child labour. In that case, being co-researchers could involve risks for children's safety. Based on this experience, Shier (2015) concluded that developing enabling environments for participatory research with children requires a careful examination of how to balance children's right to protection and to participate in matters that affect them.

Another way in which an ecological perspective can help us better understand child co-researchers' experiences in participatory research is by illuminating how the different

contexts where the research takes place can influence child co-researchers' reflections about themselves and the world around them. This point will be explained further in the following section.

Applying a Social Justice Development framework to understand the influence of scaling-up on child co-researchers' experiences

Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD) proposes that youth organizing, empowerment and healthy development are interrelated (Ginwright, 2003; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Ginwright & James, 2002). Psychological approaches to youth development during the 70's and 80's focused on preventing negative behaviours and pathologies in at-risk individuals. This approach contributed to the stigmatization of youth as a group that needed 'fixing.' In response to this, positive youth development shifted towards an understanding of young people as active agents who, with the necessary support and opportunities, can become important assets to their communities (Ginwright, 2003; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Ginwright & James, 2002).

However, positive youth development was criticized for failing to address the larger political and economic realities surrounding youth agency (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). Work was mostly focused on the individual level and assumed that adults were in charge of managing young people's relationships with their communities (Ginwright, 2003). This framework overlooked that youth develop mainly within their communities, not programs, and omitted the economic, political, cultural and social forces impacting their lives. This led to ineffective policies that homogenized youth and failed to promote their wellbeing (Ginwright, 2003; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002).

In response to this, Ginwright and Cammarota (2002) proposed SJYD as a framework for understanding young people's lives within the larger contextual forces surrounding them. This approach is based on Paulo Freire's (2017) insights on how collective action is closely linked to becoming aware that life and society are not predetermined. As previously seen, critical consciousness and social action are interdependent in what Freire named *praxis*. Although social forces are strong influences on young people's lives and decisions, youth have the capacity to respond to their community's problems and be resilient (Ginwright &

Cammarota, 2002). Furthermore, addressing the root causes of issues in the community is an important part of young people's identity development. This provides a new understanding of youth agency as young people's capacity to negotiate and respond to their social realities.

SJYD is relevant for exploring the process of scaling-up participatory research with children because it incorporates an ecological perspective where youth develop progressively larger levels of social justice awareness: self, social and global awareness (see Figure 3). These stages are consistent with the different levels that scaled-up participatory studies may seek to address: the individual, community and beyond. According to Ginwright and Cammarota (2002), the first stage of developing a sense of social justice corresponds to *individual-awareness*. Young people embark on a process of self-evaluation that can lead to a more positive self and social identity. In this process, youth critically reflect on how their identity and self-determination are influenced by power relationships that result in privilege or oppression.



Figure 3: Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD)

The next level corresponds to *social awareness* (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). Youth move beyond the self to develop a deeper understanding of their immediate social world and its functioning. They address the root causes of inequity in their communities by applying knowledge about social problems and cognitive skills for investigation and problem solving. Finally, youth develop a sense of *global awareness* about social issues affecting all humanity (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). In this way, youth empathize with the struggles of people

across the world. This process is manifested in two types of action. The first consists of examining historical forms of oppression and the systems that support them. The second involves experiencing a sense of connectedness with others. The development of global awareness can lead to youth seeing the world as a place of possibilities that they can improve through their intentional choices (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002, p. 90).

SJYD can manifest in different ways. For example, youth culture can be explored as a manifestation of social justice awareness (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). Participatory research is another path for engaging in collective action. Ginwright and Cammarota (2002) specified that research can help develop analytical skills that are crucial to build youth's capacity for addressing social problems. It could also be expected that being a child co-researcher could contribute to developing what Ginwright (2003) described as interpersonal capacities, understood as young people's sense of belonging, self-worth and skills like communication, self-expression and problem-solving. Likewise, participatory research could promote youth's socio-political capacity: the ability to connect community problems with larger social issues (Ginwright, 2003).

Additionally, SJYD proposes that the development of social justice awareness can be a healing experience, as it provides a way of actively understanding and addressing social problems. Furthermore, SJYD states that self-transformation is a prerequisite for social transformation, and necessarily involves connecting the personal to the political (Ginwright, 2003). Youth organizing can provide a space to share, listen and learn from others. Engaging in reciprocal dialogue can enhance optimism, emotional stability, self-esteem and resilience (Ginwright & James, 2002). Ultimately, this can lead to a new sense of purpose where individual actions are connected to mobilize social change.

Based on the above, SJYD can provide a useful framework for exploring how child co-researchers develop critical consciousness when scaling-up participatory research. Its ecological approach to the development of social justice awareness and action can provide a richer understanding of how child co-researchers explore the relationships between themselves and the social issues in the community, city, country and global levels. Moreover, SJYD has the potential to help identify potential ways in which participatory research can contribute to child co-researchers' healthy development. As Ginwright (2003, p. 16) puts it,

‘given adequate resources and opportunities for scale, youth organizing can build more effective youth development policies and institutions. And it is here that youth organizing may well reach its potential as both sound youth development and the harbinger of democratic possibilities’. In summary, SJYD can help study how scaling-up participatory research with children can shape the process of knowledge co-creation and, therefore, child co-researchers’ experiences.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the conceptual framework that guided my PhD research on how scaling-up participatory research with children could influence its core principles. I explained how Paulo Freire’s (2017) concept of critical consciousness influenced the core principles of participatory research in terms of collaborating with communities to generate knowledge and action in a dialogical process that is also empowering. In recent decades, new social understandings of childhood and child rights-based research have further informed the application of participatory principles to working with child co-researchers. Additionally, Ginwright and Cammarota’s (2002) Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD) framework is potentially useful in understanding how scaling-up participatory research may influence child co-researchers’ experience by promoting their individual, social and global awareness. In the following chapter, I will discuss my review of the available literature on scaling-up participatory research with children to identify the main gaps in our knowledge about this emerging field.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Introduction

As previously explained in Chapter 2: Conceptual framework, in participatory research with children, adult researchers collaborate with child co-researchers to construct knowledge that actively incorporates children's perspectives about their lives. However, this knowledge is not merely theoretical, as it combines critical thinking with critical action for social justice. Thus, in participatory research with children, children are acknowledged as agents of change and research is understood as a mechanism for social change (Gibbs et al., 2018; Kellett, 2010; Kohfeldt et al., 2011).

In view of the above, the recent trend to increase the geographic scope of participatory studies with child co-researchers could open new opportunities for children to become empowered as agents of change beyond their communities. Further, increasing the geographic scope of participatory research with children could help children actively engage in addressing global social issues that affect them locally (i.e. climate change). However, the potential benefits of scaling-up to expand the impact of participatory research with children will depend on the experiences and real levels of agency that child co-researchers have in this type of study. For example, there is scarce knowledge on how increasing the scale of the study may affect children's sense of ownership over the research and their real levels of decision-making across the research process.

In this literature review, my goal was to explore the available evidence on scaling-up participatory research with children, and what might be the implications of this approach. Despite a recent trend to scale-up participatory research with child co-researchers, it is still unclear how changing the size and scope of participatory research can influence the experience of child co-researchers.

I use the term child participatory research to refer to a diversity of approaches to doing research with people under 18 years old that seek to promote their engagement and active decision-making across the research and have the ultimate goal of helping mobilize positive social change. This definition is supported by a wide literature on this methodology that has

developed for over 30 years (Gibbs et al., 2018).

In contrast, the concept of scaling-up participatory research with children is still an emerging field. In the previous chapter, I defined scaling-up participatory research with children as ‘extending research activities and decision-making beyond one geographic site’ (Gibbs et al., 2020, p. S16). This definition is based on a systematic review in which I had the opportunity to participate during my PhD studies, and that focused on how participatory research with children had been scaled-up with a particular focus on the use of digital platforms to achieve this (Gibbs et al., 2020) (see Appendix 1: Systematic Review). Before this systematic review, Kornbluh and colleagues (2016), had already emphasized the idea of increasing the scale and impact of the research to amplify youth-led social justice efforts and strategies. Thus, in this PhD literature review, participatory studies with child co-researchers were considered to be scaled-up when a) their scope expanded beyond one geographic location, b) adults and child co-researchers shared power for decision-making across different stages of the research and c) adult researchers supported child co-researchers’ empowerment beyond the research and into the community.

Methods

The field of scaling-up participatory research with children is still emerging and requires conceptual definition and consistent terminology. Thus, I conducted a scoping review by applying a systematic search in combination with exploring the wider literature on participatory research with children to identify relevant articles. According to different authors (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005; Levac, Colquhoun, & O’Brien, 2010; Peters & Godfrey, 2015), scoping literature reviews can be useful to map and clarify key concepts. In this way, researchers can examine the amount and type of evidence available on a topic, summarize and report those findings, identify research gaps and determine if a more focused systematic review is relevant and feasible (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005). According to Arksey and O’Malley (2005, p. 22), scoping reviews consist of the following stages:

- Stage I: Identifying the research question.
- Stage II: Identifying relevant studies.
- Stage III: Study selection.

- Stage IV: Charting the data.
- Stage V: Collating, summarizing and reporting the results.

These stages are meant to be a useful reference to guide researchers and help them report the process of their scoping reviews in a transparent way. In practice, the process of a scoping review is ongoing, reflexive and iterative, and researchers may repeat steps (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). Below is a detailed description of how I carried out each one of the steps recommended by Arksey and O'Malley (2005):

Identifying the research question

Arksey and O'Malley recommended (2005) that the research question and search terms are broad to reduce the possibility of missing relevant articles, but not to the extent that they generate an unmanageable number of results. This review aimed to answer the question of: What is the available evidence concerning the processes, outcomes and impacts of studies that have scaled-up participatory research with children?

Identifying relevant studies

In scoping reviews, search terms may evolve as the researcher becomes more familiar with the literature (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). My search strategy began with an initial exploration of the University of Melbourne's online library and Google Scholar to identify the most useful keywords for increasing the size and scope of participatory research with children. This search was guided by a review I did based on a reference list about participatory research with children that was shared online by the Kids in Action network (<http://www.icphr.org/helpful-links-and-resources.html>).

Then, I had the opportunity to apply and improve my preliminary list of key words when I participated in the more focused systematic review about the use of digital technologies for scaling-up participatory research (Gibbs et al., 2020). Participating in the systematic review helped me reduce the large number of terms that I had found for participatory research with children. I also learned that, while 'scaling-up' was a useful term to refer to increasing the size and scale of participatory research, it was still not commonly used.

Thus, I tried to find keywords that worked as proxies for scaling-up. Terms referring to

working across multiple study locations or multi-site research were useful. I identified these terms in publications about community-based research (CBPR) with adults (Chirowodza et al., 2009; Katz, Green, Murimi, Gonzalez, & Njike, 2012; Katz, Murimi, Gonzalez, Njike, & Green, 2011; Matloub et al., 2009; Naqshbandi et al., 2011; L. R. Thomas, Rosa, Forcehimes, & Donovan, 2011; Trickett, 2011). Meanwhile, terms that referred to a larger study size and scope (city, region, national, country, international, global) resulted in too many search findings for the scope my PhD research.

I used my final list of keywords to search for articles in electronic databases (PsycARTICLES, PsycInfo, PubMed) and supported this search using Google Scholar and the online catalogue at the University of Melbourne's Library. Search engines were last reviewed on 17 October 2020. The terms that I used to define the application of a participatory approach, working with child co-researchers and increasing the scope of the research were the following:

- participatory research/ OR YPAR/ OR youth-led research/ OR action research/ OR community-based research AND
- child* OR young people/ OR adolescents/ OR students/ OR juvenile/ OR minor/ OR teen/ OR teenager/ OR youth AND
- scaling-up/ OR scaling up/ OR multisite/ OR multi-site/ OR multiple sites

Study selection

My inclusion criteria were that articles had to a) correspond to primary research, b) have been published between 1989 and 2019, c) were written in English, d) had gone through a process of peer-review and d) applied participatory research to working with child co-researchers beyond one geographic site.² I chose 1989 as the starting point for my search because this was the year of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a year that marked the beginning of a growing interest in participatory approaches to research with children (Kellett, 2010).

The final step in my systematic search was to screen each article's title, abstract and key

² This inclusion criteria was different from the systematic review that I co-authored, that only included articles published between 2000 and 2018 and that explicitly discussed how the study used digital platforms to scale-up participatory research with children (Gibbs et al., 2020).

words to check against my inclusion criteria and review the full-text article when there was not enough information. I complemented the findings from my systematic search with references from the more focused systematic review about the use of digital platforms for scaling-up participatory research with children (Gibbs et al., 2020). This systematic review had used terms for digital platforms (social media/ OR digital platforms/ OR digital tools) that were the most useful proxies to search for scaled-up studies. This was probably because digital platforms are closely related to scaling-up participatory research with children. In fact, our systematic review found that digital tools are often necessary for implementing the research at a wider scale and deliver important benefits to working with child co-researchers (Gibbs et al., 2020). For this reason, some of the studies discussed in this chapter are the same as the ones our team identified during our systematic review. Finally, I screened the reference section of the studies that I identified during my systematic search and of literature reviews about participatory research with children on other topics (Anyon, Bender, Kennedy, & Dechants, 2018; Bradbury-Jones & Taylor, 2015; Haijes & van Thiel, 2016; Jaquez et al., 2013; Kennan, Brady, & Forkan, 2018; Kennedy, DeChants, Bender, & Anyon, 2019; Larsson, Staland-Nyman, Svedberg, Nygren, & Carlsson, 2018).

Charting the data

Once I had a final collection of articles about scaling-up participatory research with children, I extracted the following information from each study:

- Author(s), year, title
- Setting and duration of study
- Research topic
- Scale (geographic coverage), location and number of sites
- Conceptual frameworks and methods used
- Interactions between adults and child co-researchers: length and frequency

I also gathered information on whether each study had carried out an assessment of the participatory process and of child co-researchers' experience to explore the impact of scaling-up participatory research with children on the process and outcomes of the research, the levels of child agency, and the challenges and ethical issues present during the research.

Collating, summarizing and reporting the results

I collated the extracted data and developed a narrative description of the studies' features based on the following guiding questions:

- What are the trends in scaling-up participatory research with children?
- How and why is participatory research with children being scaled-up?
- What is the impact of scaling-up participatory research with children?
- What are the ethical, methodological and logistical implications of scaling-up participatory research with children?

In this way, I deductively identified the main themes in relation to how scaling-up influences the experience of child co-researchers.

Results

For this scoping review, I was able to identify 12 studies that scaled-up participatory research with children (corresponding to 20 articles) (see Figure 2 of the flow chart for the process of study selection). As shown in Figure 4, my systematic search only allowed me to identify three out of the 12 studies in this review. This was because scaling-up is still a new topic in participatory research with children. Further, the term 'scaling-up' was only used in two of the articles that I found, corresponding to the same study (Kornbluh, Watling Neal and Ozer, 2016; Kornbluh, 2017). Other terms that were used to refer to different approaches to increasing the geographic scale of participatory approaches to doing research with children were multi-site participatory research with children (Fletcher et al., 2016; Trott, 2019) and multi-site or multi-organizational action research (Fuller-Rowell, 2009).

Table 1 summarizes the main characteristics of the studies found by this review (for the rest of the information gathered about the different studies, see Appendix 2: Main characteristics of scaled-up participatory studies with child co-researchers). I used the study's original name, or a short description based on the publication's title to make it easier to identify each project during this review. As previously noted, I added five more studies from the systematic review on the use of digital platforms for scaling-up participatory research (Gibbs et al., 2020), three from the reference list of previously identified articles and other literature reviews and one study that I found while reviewing the literature on children's participation in disaster risk reduction (Haynes & Tanner, 2015; Seballos & Tanner, 2011; Tanner, 2010; Tanner & Seballos, 2012).

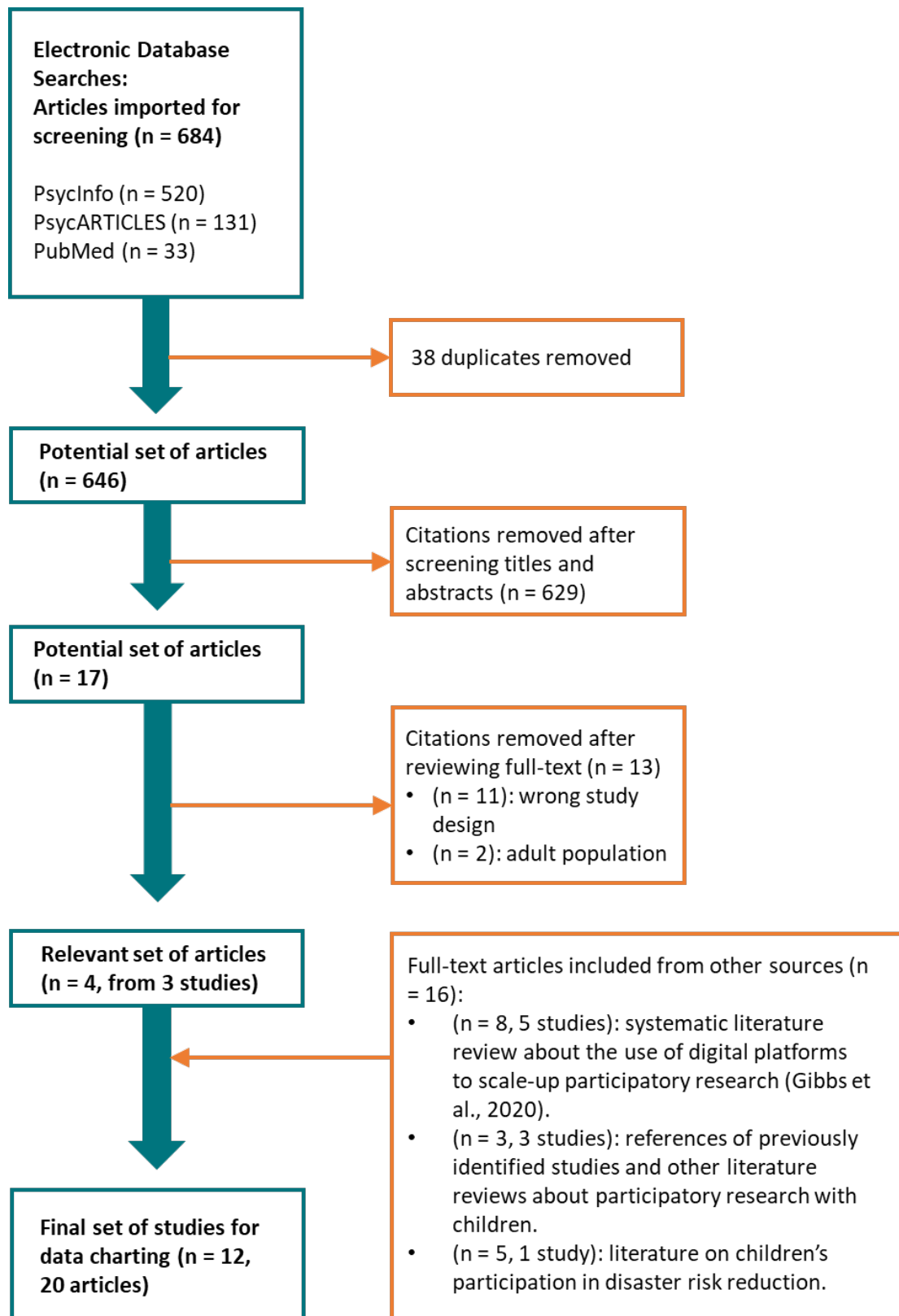


Figure 4: Flow chart for study selection

Table 1: Main characteristics of scaled-up participatory studies with child co-researchers

Study/ References	Scale/ Locations	# of sites and child co-researchers	Setting	Topic and aim	Methods
Children in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) (Haynes & Tanner, 2015; Seballos & Tanner, 2011; Tanner, 2010; Tanner & Seballos, 2012)	Multinational/ Philippines and El Salvador	20 teams of child co-researchers from 10 communities in El Salvador and 10 in the Philippines. Information not available on the total number of child co-researchers.	NGO - University study	Exploring children and adolescents' views and experiences of Disaster Risk Reduction in their local communities.	Participatory action research tools applied to disaster risk reduction: hazard identification, ranking grids, mapping of community vulnerabilities and capacities, stakeholder analysis and mapping, group timelines, seasonal calendars, guided walks.
Dream Teens (Branquinho, 2018; Branquinho, Cerqueria, Ramiro, & Gaspar de Matos, 2018; Frasilho et al., 2018; Gaspar de Matos & Simoes, 2016)	National/ Portugal	67 child co-researchers across 6 virtual research teams (not based on location).	University study	Collaborating with children and youth to carry out separate participatory studies on topics related to health and citizenship during times of economic crisis.	Various methods depending on the project.
Growing Up in New York City (GUINYC) (Driskell, 2007; Fuller-Rowell, 2009)	City/ New York, USA	Over 140 child co-researchers divided into 6 groups across 6 locations.	Coalition between a university and six community organizations, under the umbrella of a UNESCO program.	Collaborating with child co-researchers on local projects related to city planning, improving neighbourhood, public housing, and access to parks.	Interviews, photography, guided tours, mapping.

JaxHero (Livingood et al., 2017)	County/ Jacksonville- Duval county, Florida, USA. (city-county)	9 child co-researchers, 1 site.	University- Community collaboration	Collaborating with young people to develop a digital communication intervention to reduce adolescent obesity.	Combination with exploratory focused qualitative research: Youth Advisory Group, photovoice and focus groups.
National Youth Leadership Initiative (NYLI) (Mortensen et al., 2014)	State/ West Virginia, USA.	130 child co- researchers, 1 site.	Youth leadership program	Exploring children and young people's views and experiences of leadership.	Photovoice.
Peer Resources (Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016)	School district/ San Francisco, USA.	54 child co- researchers across three locations.	School	Supporting youth-led initiatives to promote student health at their local schools.	Mixed-method design: social network analysis, in-person survey, online survey on YPAR practices and key student interviews.
Reshaping Our World (Trott, 2019)	Inter-municipal/ Three municipalities in Northern Colorado, USA.	55 child co- researchers across three locations (town, suburb and city). Each team had 9 - 27 members.	After-school program.	Strengthening child co- researchers' climate change awareness and supporting them in developing collaborating action projects in their neighbourhoods.	Photovoice
Streetwyze (Akom, Shah, Nakai, & Cruz, 2016)	Area of city/ East Oakland, California, USA.	90 child co- researchers, 1 site (3 cohorts of 30 adolescents each)	Schools	Empowering local youth to become agents of change for food security in their communities.	Combination of technology and ground-truthing through mapping (analogue and digital)
Teens Tackle Tobacco (Ross, 2011)	City/ Worcester, Massachusetts, USA.	Information not available.	Community-based coalition that included a	Collaborating with local youth to address the problem of distribution and	GIS and photo documentary

			University	advertising of tobacco in their community.	
You<th are Here (Walker & Saito, 2011)	County/ 11 neighbourhoods in Minneapolis, USA.	Information not available on the total number of child co-researchers nor the exact number of study locations. Two locations had 20 - 25 child co-researchers each and one of them included children from different parts of the county.	Youth development program	Collaborating with child co-researchers in identifying and disseminating opportunities for youth development in the local community.	Mapping and community asset mapping
Youth Creating Disaster Recovery and Resilience (YCDR²) (Fletcher et al., 2016)	International/ 3 communities in Alberta, Canada, and 1 in Missouri, USA.	4 sites, with 6 -15 child co-researchers each. Information not available on the total number of child co-researchers.	University-led study	Exploring children and young people's views and experiences of disaster recovery.	Participatory workshops with creative and arts-based methods: trust and rapport building activities, photo story, digital storytelling.
Youth Action for Health (Suleiman, Soleimanpour, & London, 2006)	County/ Alameda Country, California, USA.	40 child co-researchers, 28 participated across the whole project. There were 2 to 6 child co-researchers at each one of the 7 sites.	School-based health centres.	Collaborating with child co-researchers to improve the services provided by their school health centres.	Case study methods: reflective sessions, individual interviews, pre/post survey on child co-researchers' experiences.

What are the current trends on scaling-up participatory research with children?

The earliest of the studies identified by this review dates from 2006 (Suleiman et al., 2006), but most were carried out during the last 10 years. The identified studies were carried out in different countries, and most collaborated with child co-researchers between 15 and 19 years old. Only four studies worked with child co-researchers younger than 14 years old (Branquinho, 2018; Driskell, 2007; Frاسquilho et al., 2018; Gaspar de Matos & Simoes, 2016; Haynes & Tanner, 2015; Seballos & Tanner, 2011; Tanner, 2010; Trott, 2019). Scaling-up was frequently associated with increasing the number of child co-researchers and study sites, although the number of child co-researchers varied greatly across studies (between 9 and over 140 child co-researchers). Group work was the preferred modality, and groups of child co-researchers ranged from two to 30 members. The studies in this review also tended to address audiences that often corresponded to higher levels of decision-making at the city, state, regional or international level.

Adult researchers in these studies used a wide range of methods (see Appendix 2) for working with child co-researchers, including mixed-methods (Akom et al., 2016; Branquinho et al., 2018; Driskell, 2007; Frاسquilho et al., 2018; Gaspar de Matos & Simoes, 2016; Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016). Child co-researchers participated in mapping, making surveys, interviewing and carrying out focus groups. Some studies also used expressive and arts-based methods (e.g. storytelling, photography). New methods for data collection and analysis were also incorporated. In the Streetwyze (Akom et al., 2016) and Teens Tackle Tobacco (Ross, 2011) studies, child co-researchers used geographic information systems (GIS) to map elements associated to health issues in their communities (i.e. the availability of health food in stores and the presence of tobacco vendors and advertisements, respectively). Meanwhile, in the Peer Resources study, Kornbluh and colleagues (Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016) used system network analysis (SNA) to observe the interactions between students from different participatory projects through social media sites.

Based on the above, it is possible to argue that scaling-up is emerging as a new field of participatory research with children, and that this phenomenon is being facilitated by new digital technologies.

How is participatory research with children being scaled-up?

This review indicated that, in general, participatory studies with child co-researchers were scaled-up in two ways. In some cases, local studies that weren't formulated with the objective of scaling-up gradually expanded as a result of opportunities that emerged during the research process in a ripple or snowball effect (Ross, 2011; Walker & Saito, 2011). In the Teens Tackle Tobacco study (Ross, 2011), child co-researchers were invited to present their findings about tobacco advertising to progressively wider audiences: local community leaders, city council, the neighbourhood business association, and finally to the Massachusetts Statehouse. The You<th are Here study (Walker & Saito, 2011) began as a small pilot where child co-researchers in one neighbourhood of Minneapolis mapped the available opportunities for youth development and participation. The study gradually scaled-up to 11 projects that mapped youth programs and initiatives at the county level. In contrast, the Dream Teens (Branquinho, 2018; Branquinho et al., 2018), Growing Up in New York City (GUINYC) (Driskell, 2007; Fuller-Rowell, 2009) and the National Youth Leadership Initiative (NYLI) (Mortensen et al., 2014) studies were formulated as large-scale participatory studies with children from the start.

Incorporating the notion of scaling-up from the beginning helped researchers think of ways to use digital technologies to facilitate the participatory process. In our systematic review, our team found that digital technology is being increasingly used not only as a means for data collection, analysis and visualization, but to scale up the scope and impact of the research (Gibbs et al., 2020). Tools like e-mail, blogs, Skype and platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram are being used to invite and recruit child co-researchers, develop instruments, collect and analyse data, disseminate findings and evaluate the research. For example, to promote child co-researchers' free expression, Fletcher and colleagues (2016) used digital stories. Further, Akom and colleagues (2016) developed the YPAR 2.0 model for introducing digital platforms in Youth Participatory Action Research. They developed an App for participatory mapping that allowed child co-researchers to work, communicate and share data in person and online. However, the adult researchers concluded that adult facilitators needed specialized training to provide online and offline facilitation (Akom et al., 2016; Kornbluh et al., 2016). The digital world also presented new risks for children's safety and wellbeing (e.g. cyberbullying, grooming) that had to be addressed before attempting to use

digital platforms for participatory research (Gibbs et al., 2020).

Why is participatory research with children scaled-up?

In this literature review, I identified four main benefits that researchers claim for scaling-up. Figure 5 summarizes the potential benefits of scaling-up that were identified by the authors of the reviewed studies. These benefits were facilitated by increasing opportunities to scale-up the participatory research with children and by carefully addressing the ethical, methodological and logistical implications of expanding the scope of the study.



Figure 5: Potential gains of scaling-up participatory research with children

Addressing global issues, locally

In the studies found by this review, increasing the size and scope of participatory research with children was often related to addressing global issues affecting local communities (Fuller-Rowell, 2009). They tended to focus on exploring children's perspectives and experiences around issues like the climate emergency, disaster risk reduction, non-communicable health diseases, food security, tobacco, building better cities, and citizenship (Table 1).

The participatory studies with child co-researchers that I found suggested that working in wider contexts wasn't an obstacle for co-creating knowledge and mobilizing change at the local level. On the contrary, Suleiman and colleagues' (2006, p. 139) proposed that thinking globally and acting locally helped maximize child co-researchers' potential as social actors. In

this context, Suleiman and colleagues' (2006) and Ross (2011) noted that adult facilitators had a key role helping child co-researchers reflect on their personal experiences in their communities and connect them to how large social forces affect people in other contexts. Otherwise, child co-researchers found it more difficult to progress their reflections and actions beyond the local level.

Most adult researchers in these studies also concluded however, that there are important challenges to scaling-up participatory research with children to explore how global issues affect children locally by comparing data from different communities. Often, adult researchers contemplated the possibility of comparing findings across study sites, but data could not be compared using the same analytical methods or could not be treated as a single data set. In the Youth Creating Disaster Recovery and Resilience (YCDR²) study, Fletcher and colleagues (2016) reported that it was challenging to analyse the large and diverse amount of data that resulted from scaling-up their project. They attempted using qualitative analysis software but found that the data was too different. In a similar way, in the You<th are Here study, Walker and Saito (2011) found that the local maps of opportunities for youth participation that resulted from their study could not be used over time or across communities.

In contrast, the adult researchers in the GUiNYC study never tried to address global issues at the local level by comparing data from different study locations. In this study, Fuller-Rowell (2009) argued that multi-site action research (MSAC) studies with young people consist of the coordination between separate and distinctive action research projects. These research processes have a similar focus, but don't form part of an overarching action research project. Instead, the goal of connecting study sites in MSAC is to enhance the process of implementing each local project through a network that helps each local organization build capacities for action research. This approach to increasing the geographic scope of the research will be discussed in more depth further below.

Promoting child agency in increasingly wider contexts

Authors like Kornbluh (2017), Kornbluh and colleagues (2016) and Suleiman and colleagues (2006), stated that scaling-up participatory research can help promote child co-researchers' agency beyond their local communities. For example, the Dream Teens study in Portugal had

the aim of empowering the country's children and youth during economic recession and promote their civic engagement (Branquinho, 2018; Branquinho et al., 2018; Frasilho et al., 2018; Gaspar de Matos & Simoes, 2016).

However, in some reviewed participatory studies, child co-researchers were aware that they were part of a larger study but weren't involved beyond their local participatory projects. In the two participatory studies that scaled-up to the international level, Children in Disaster Risk Reduction (Haynes & Tanner, 2015; Seballos & Tanner, 2011; Tanner, 2010; Tanner & Seballos, 2012) and the YCDR² (Fletcher et al., 2016) studies, adult researchers worked separately with local teams of child co-researchers. Children were active in collecting and interpreting data about their experiences of disaster preparedness and recovery in their communities. However, after this stage, they did not participate in drawing the final conclusions of the study or their dissemination. Similarly, child co-researchers in the GUINYC study (Driskell, 2007; Fuller-Rowell, 2009) only participated in doing action research at the local level. However, as previously noted, in contrast to the Children in Disaster Risk Reduction study, researchers did not try to integrate the local findings to draw final conclusions and child co-researchers from different sites did not carry out the participatory process of research together.

Bringing together diverse child perspectives

Increasing the scale of participatory research could enrich the dialogue that takes place during the research process by bringing together the diverse perspectives of child co-researchers from different backgrounds (Fletcher et al., 2016; Frasilho et al., 2018). This, in turn, generated a wide range of data to inform theory (Fletcher et al., 2016). However, increasing the scale of participatory research does not necessarily result in higher levels of representativeness or inclusiveness. Not all the studies found by this review had a large number of child co-researchers. Only three studies had over 50 child co-researchers and three over 90 (see Appendix 2: Main characteristics of scaled-up participatory studies with child co-researchers). Only four studies (Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016; Mortensen et al., 2014; Trott, 2019; Walker & Saito, 2011) reported the demographic characteristics of their child co-researchers. Despite the fact that studies often didn't report on their levels of diversity and inclusiveness, it was possible to observe that collaborating with a larger

number of child co-researchers did not necessarily aim or result in a more diverse group. For example, the NYLI study (Mortensen et al., 2014) worked with 130 children and young people from rural areas, 90% of which were White.

A finding that emerged from this review was that the benefits of dialoguing across study sites could only be possible if child co-researchers were given opportunities to connect during the research. According to Kornbluh and colleagues (2017; 2016), exposing child co-researchers to alternative perspectives and life experiences can help build their social capital. In their study, they connected child co-researchers from different schools and observed gains in child co-researchers' communication, perspective taking and socio-political awareness, and concluded that connecting different social justice youth groups could help children and youth develop as active citizens.

However, connecting child co-researchers is not always an aim or outcome of scaling-up. This review identified three ways in which teams of child co-researchers were organized in different studies, leading to different opportunities to connect. Child co-researchers worked in separate local teams and never contacted each other in the You<th are Here (Walker & Saito, 2011), Youth Action for Health (Suleiman et al., 2006), Children in Disaster Risk Reduction (Tanner & Seballos, 2012) and Reshaping Our World (Trott, 2019) studies. In the Teens Tackle Tobacco (Ross, 2011), NYLI (Mortensen et al., 2014), Streetwyze (Akomo et al., 2016), and JaxHero (Livingood et al., 2017) studies, all child co-researchers worked together as one team, either in person or online. Meanwhile, in a third scenario, child co-researchers from different locations connected at different points of the research. This happened in the Dream Teens (Branquinho, 2018; Branquinho et al., 2018), GUiNYC (Driskell, 2007; Fuller-Rowell, 2009) and Peer resources (Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016) studies. However, only the Dream Teens and the Peer Resources studies provided opportunities for child co-researchers to directly connect across study sites (either in person or online) with the goal of collaborating in doing research or disseminating findings together. Meanwhile, in the GUiNYC study, some child co-researchers from each study location participated in bi-weekly meetings with other child co-researchers and adults from the different study sites. These meetings helped child co-researchers and adults coordinate activities and develop new ideas to implement their local studies and overcome logistic challenges. However, in line with

MSAC, these meetings were not part of a collective action research process between the different study locations (Driskell, 2007; Fuller-Rowell, 2009).

To enhance connections between child co-researchers from different sites, Kornbluh and colleagues (2017; 2016) proposed enhancing participatory research with digital platforms that children already use in their everyday lives to transcend geographical, cultural and language barriers (e.g. social networking sites). These tools have already been used by children and young people around the world to generate common agendas for action. Although digital technologies are not a panacea for the challenges of scaling-up participatory research, they can help increase the representativeness and inclusiveness of the research by giving access to children who otherwise may have not been able to participate and by helping child co-researchers collaborate across study sites (Akom et al., 2016). Further, digital technologies can be used to bring child co-researchers together when geographic barriers preclude them. For example, in the NYLI study, Mortensen and colleagues (2014) used online photovoice to work completely online with child co-researchers from distant rural communities without the need to first organize them into locally-based groups.

Different authors noted that, to reap these benefits, digital platforms should foster democratic dialogue (Akom et al., 2016; Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016). Using digital technologies to connect child co-researchers across study sites can also benefit from effective adult facilitation. As previously noted, in the Peer Resources study, Kornbluh and colleagues (2017; 2016) used social media sites to connect secondary students from three participatory projects. They concluded that, for child co-researchers to gain from the use of digital platforms, adult facilitators had to dedicate enough time to both in-person and online activities and promote discussions that integrated both types of activities.

Based on the above, it's possible to suggest that scaling-up may bring important benefits for child co-researchers in terms of exposing them to new and diverse perspectives. However, there is very scarce evidence on this, and only one study evaluated child co-researchers' experiences of connecting across study sites. In the Peer Resources study, Kornbluh and colleagues (2017; 2016) applied social network analysis and interviewed child co-researchers to explore communication patterns between three different participatory projects that

connected using social media sites. They observed that child co-researchers increasingly interacted with peers from other locations and gained skills in perspective-taking. Child co-researchers reported gaining more awareness of their personal resources and those in their immediate communities, as well as the issues affecting children in other contexts and how they responded to them. However, this study did not include a more in-depth exploration of the process through which child co-researchers developed these skills, the content of these interactions and how they influenced children's reflections and actions.

Expanding the impact of the research

As previously noted, scaling-up participatory research with children is expected to help expand its social impact. According to Fuller-Rowell (2009), collaborating across multiple sites can improve the visibility of each local project and their overall impact. This can be achieved through collaborations in disseminating findings (e.g. joint publications), taking advantage of the attractive and innovative image that multi-site research projects offer to organizations and building new research coalitions that are sustainable over time.

Scaling-up can also help increase the size of the adult audiences willing to listen to and act upon child co-researchers' findings and recommendations. Connecting child co-researchers from different study locations can also help disseminate strategies and efforts for social justice, as found in the Peer Resources study (Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016).

Additionally, in the Teens Tackle Tobacco (Ross, 2011) and Youth Action for Health (Suleiman et al., 2006) studies, having the opportunity to connect with larger social action movements was the key for some child co-researchers' sustained engagement in their participatory study. In both studies, the authors explained that some child co-researchers were beginning to experience feelings of apathy or frustration in their local projects, but regained motivation when they had the opportunity to present their findings to decision-makers across the country. According to Ross (2011) and Fuller-Rowell (2009), increasing the potential impact of their actions gave child co-researchers a stronger sense of meaning and purpose to their work.

Yet, when researchers scale-up studies to address higher levels of government, they may face more difficulties in promoting child agency. In the Teens Tackle Tobacco study (Ross, 2011), child co-researchers reported that advocating for a law bill at the state level for

tighter control on tobacco advertising was their main achievement in the project. However, after the first stage of developing the bill was completed, the policy-making space became less child-friendly. Many child co-researchers began feeling tension when their project of passing the bill was extended for over a year, and their participation in meetings was affected because they were scheduled during school hours. Also, discussions for making modifications to the bill became increasingly technical.

Ethical, methodological and logistical implications of scaling-up participatory research with children

Fletcher and colleagues (2016) reported that the biggest strength of the Youth Creating Disaster Recovery and Resilience (YCDR²) study was its international scale, but that working with multiple sites across a wide geographic region presented important challenges. Overall, Fuller-Rowell (2009) recommended that multi-site action research projects should involve more than two study sites to really benefit from exchanging different perspectives, and less than seven sites to be able to initiate and coordinate activities in a coherent way. If a project requires a larger number of organizations, then the initiative can be broken down into smaller modules that gather subgroups of sites. Fuller-Rowell (2009) also argued that working across different study sites does not require standardising the participatory research process. However, the different local projects should share a common focus for their collaboration to be relevant and useful to the involved organizations. Also, activities at different sites should be coordinated so they happen around the same time. This requires researchers and collaborators to dialogue and establish a realistic time frame for a project's implementation.

To address the complexity of coordinating activities across multiple sites, adult researchers must build trusting relationships with the communities they work with despite challenges to meeting in person (Fletcher et al., 2016; Fuller-Rowell, 2009). According to Fuller-Rowell (2009), multi-site participatory studies will benefit from having an initiating team composed of researchers representing different study sites. In the GUINYC study, the members of the initiating team developed the outline for the whole project. Because each member of the initiating team was also part of a local action research project, it was easier to make sure that each local project was carried out according to the overall project's guidelines and aims.

The initiating team also meet regularly across the whole project to share updates, exchange professional advice and give each other informal support. These meetings helped solve problems and generate innovations at the different study locations.

Fletcher and colleagues (2016) explained that, in the YCDR² study, dialoguing with adult stakeholders was crucial to develop ways of protecting child co-researchers from the risk of re-traumatization. Yet, doing this across multiple communities was challenging. The adult research team had to overcome the geographical distance between them and four communities in two different countries (USA and Canada) with a restricted travel budget. Coordinating and scheduling activities at each location was also difficult. All of these obstacles made it more difficult to maintain relationships with child co-researchers and community stakeholders and could have affected communities' engagement with the project. Thus, it's possible to argue that, while technology can help overcome the issue of geographical distances, it can also reduce the capacity to build rapport.

Additionally, Fuller-Rowell (2009) argued that the ethical and logistical issues of doing participatory research with children are largely determined by the context in which the research takes place. Adult researchers might have to adapt to very different needs and realities at each study location, including different legal frameworks and cultural understandings of childhood (Powell et al., 2012). Children may also have different roles and responsibilities which, in turn, will determine the proper recognition for their work, potentially including remuneration (Akom et al., 2016; Porter et al., 2010; Powell et al., 2012). In response to these challenges, to scale-up the You<th are Here (Walker & Saito, 2011) and the GUiNYC (Fuller-Rowell, 2009) studies, adult researchers developed a flexible process with guiding principles that each community could adapt to its needs to promote youth engagement and youth-adult partnerships. This flexible approach allowed child co-researchers in both studies to map and analyse issues in their neighbourhoods, disseminate their findings in the community and advocate for improving opportunities for youth participation.

Despite the logistical and ethical challenges of increasing the scale of participatory research with children, Fuller-Rowell (2009) argued that there were also important benefits for the implementation of local research projects. He interviewed nine adult researchers from

different study sites in the GUI NYC study and found that knowing that their local study was part of a larger project served to expand the motivation of both child co-researchers and adult researchers. On one hand, having a sense of belonging to something larger increased children and adults' desire to contribute within and beyond their organization. On the other hand, learning about the advances of other study sites and knowing that their efforts would be communicated to a larger audience of partner organizations and communities promoted a sense of healthy competition between local teams, in terms of wanting to 'keep up' with the advances and achievements that they observed in the other local projects.

Discussion

In this literature review, I aimed to critically explore the available evidence on scaling-up participatory research with child co-researchers. Overall, I found that scaling-up participatory research with children is a growing field of research, especially during the last decade. This trend has been enhanced by new digital technologies that help address some of the logistical and methodological challenges of scaling-up, as well as a growing interest on the part of researchers in supporting children's development as global citizens. The number of publications on this topic is still scarce, but from the available evidence it's possible to argue that, if done properly, it's possible to increase the size and scope of participatory research and maintain its core principles.

The studies found in this review evidenced some of the potential gains of scaling-up participatory research with children. Scaling-up participatory research with child co-researchers can enable them to explore how global issues affect them locally. This advantage has been previously mentioned in the literature about community-based participatory research (CBPR) with adults. According to some authors, large CBPR studies that involve collaborating across multiple communities can help understand how global health trends manifest in specific contexts and regions (Chirwodza et al., 2009; Matloub et al., 2009; Naqshbandi et al., 2011). This knowledge, in turn, can contribute to improve local public health interventions (Katz et al., 2012; L. R. Thomas et al., 2011). However, large scale CBPR studies with adults face important ethical challenges when they try to combine or compare data from different communities. For example, Naqshbandi and colleagues (2011) found that community stakeholders may be against comparing health data between

communities, because it could result in the stigmatization of those that show higher levels of social or health problems.

Rademacher and Patel (2002) also warned about the risks of combining findings from separate local participatory projects to create global representations of social issues. To build a global understanding of poverty across the world, these authors attempted to integrate the findings of 73 participatory research studies from 46 countries carried out by the World Bank between 1990 and 1998. They concluded that there's an unavoidable trade-off when attempting to identify generic patterns across different contexts.

Generalizing can erase individual voices and decontextualize findings. Further, global syntheses that homogenize the complexity and diversity of human experience may be unable to provide any new information than what is already available. Although some authors in Participatory Health Research (PHR) suggested using local case studies to identify common patterns while acknowledging the contextual elements that make each community unique (International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research (ICPHR), 2013), simply combining the outcomes of separate participatory studies could not be considered scaling-up *participatory* research, because the community is not involved in deciding the final outcomes of the combined research.

In this regard, it's also crucial to consider the role that power relationships have in shaping a study's findings and final applications (Rademacher & Patel, 2002). If child co-researchers who participate at the local level are not involved in the integration of findings, the research team and their funding organizations may impose their own views and interests on the final outcomes of the research. In this way, trying to combine the findings from separate participatory studies would contradict the very principles of participatory research and help perpetuate the inequities and power asymmetries it aims to transform (Rademacher & Patel, 2002). Based on the above, I argue that actively involving child co-researchers in interpreting both the local and overall data is an important aspect of scaling-up the participatory component of the research.

Another important benefit of scaling-up participatory research with children is bringing together diverse child perspectives. However, based on the evidence provided by the studies in this review, I argue that increasing the geographic scale of the research does not

automatically make it more representative or inclusive. As shown in the NYLI study (Mortensen et al., 2014), increasing the geographic scale can improve access for children who live in rural areas distant from the larger cities where researchers are usually based. However, expanding the size of the research does not necessarily address the reasons why children living in poverty, with a disability or who belong to ethnic, cultural or sexual minorities are often excluded from participatory research (Franklin and Slope, 2006; Langhout, Kohfeldt and Ellison, 2011; Kohfeldt and Langhout, 2012). In the Streetwyze study, Akom and colleagues (2016) argued that digital technologies can provide greater access for children and youth to become co-researchers. Yet, digital platforms are not the panacea to making more inclusive and representative research, as many children still don't have equal access to these technologies (Lips et al., 2017). Additionally, in relation to increasing the geographic scope of participatory research with children with the goal of bringing together diverse child perspectives, I argue that opening communication channels between child co-researchers across study locations with the goal of promoting a participatory dialogue is an important aspect of scaling-up. These channels should be safe, but at the same time promote child co-researchers' collaboration and freedom of expression (Coleman, 2006; Gibbs et al., 2020; Kornbluh, 2017).

It is also important to consider that child co-researchers from different study sites may interact, but not necessarily in the context of a participatory research process, as in the GUiNYC study (Driskell, 2007; Fuller-Rowell, 2009). In this case, communicating across study sites to coordinate and implement local projects helped promote child co-researchers' motivation and capacities for action research. However, the authors didn't report that these interactions had a direct influence on child co-researchers' critical reflection and action on social issues. Since the literature on participatory research with adults and children suggests that being child co-researchers can promote their critical consciousness (Freire, 2017; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002), it would be worth focusing on how connections across sites influence the process of participatory research with child co-researchers.

Another finding from this review was that increasing the geographic scale of participatory research with children can help empower children within and beyond their communities and increase the impact of the research. However, sceptics in the field of CBPR with adults have

argued that scaling-up can only offer a constrained version of participation because community members cannot make decisions across all the stages of the research process (Trickett, 2011). In this regard, scaling-up *participatory* research with children requires that increasing the scale of the study is not done to the detriment of child co-researchers' agency and power for decision-making over the research.

In this review, the real levels of agency that child co-researchers enjoy in scaled-up participatory studies depended greatly on decisions taken by the adult research team. To carry out our systematic literature review on the use of digital platforms to scale-up participatory research with children (Gibbs et al., 2020), our team applied an analytical tool (Shier, 2018) to explore *how* and *when* child co-researchers were involved in the research process as well as *who* was included or excluded in each activity. We found that child co-researchers from different study sites tended to have high levels of participation. However, it was difficult to assess variations in child agency. Within each study site, child co-researchers' agency could vary across research stages, activities and individuals. Further, there were important differences in child agency across different study locations. These variations largely depended on adult facilitators' training and experience. This review also found that incorporating child co-researchers in the stages of disseminating findings and advocating for change can become more difficult as the scale of the study increases (Ross, 2011). Thus, when adults increase the size and influence of children's audiences, they might have to actively advocate for child co-researchers' agency and freedom of expression in these spaces. Otherwise, adults should negotiate with child co-researchers a clear transition point when agencies can act on the issues raised by the children.

This review has shown that scaling-up participatory research with children involves a complex set of ethics, methodological, logistical issues and motivations. The reviewed studies point to different factors that adult researchers can address to maintain ethical practice and the integrity of the participatory approach and to promote children's rights in research. For example, adult researchers and facilitators can benefit from training in how to support child co-researchers when scaling-up participatory research (Gibbs et al., 2020). This can help adults in different study locations share an understanding of the principles of participatory work and a common language to communicate. If participatory research is

scaled-up using digital platforms, training can help anticipate the potential risks to children's safety and privacy while promoting democratic, transparent and efficient decision-making structures (Coleman, 2006). Additionally, training and experience can also help adult facilitators develop strategies to balance online and in-person activities, promote meaningful interactions with child co-researchers from other study sites (Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016), and discuss both the local and global manifestation of social issues (Ross, 2011; Suleiman et al., 2006).

Advancing the conceptual definition of scaling-up participatory research with children

I began this literature review with an understanding of scaling-up participatory research with children as 'extending research activities and decision-making beyond one geographic site (i.e. adolescent group/ school or community)' (Gibbs et al., 2020). Based on the findings of this review, I propose new elements to be added to this initial definition, as shown in Figure 6.

Scaling-up participatory research with children:



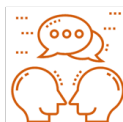
Geographic scale: expanding the scope and impact of the research beyond one geographic location.



Decision-making: maintaining adult-child collaborations and promoting co-researchers' power for decision-making across the research, **including the study's final conclusions and applications.**



Empowerment: promoting child co-researchers' empowerment **within and beyond their immediate community.**



Dialogue: promoting critical consciousness and dialogue about social issues among child co-researchers from different locations.

Initial definition of scaling-up participatory research with children.
New elements after reviewing the literature.

Figure 6: Changes made to my initial definition of scaling-up participatory research with children after reviewing the literature

Based on this new definition of scaling-up participatory research with children, I reassessed the studies in this literature review. I found that only six of the 12 studies fulfilled my new definition (see Table 2): Dream Teens (Frasquilho et al., 2018), JaxHero (Livingood et al., 2017), NYLI (Mortensen et al., 2014), Peer Resources (Kornbluh et al., 2016), Streetwyze (Akom et al., 2016) and Teens Tackle Tobacco (Ross, 2011). Although they all fulfilled the characteristics of scaling-up the study's scope as well as children's decision-making, empowerment and dialogue, there were some differences. For example, most studies used digital platforms to scale-up, with the exception of Teens Tackle Tobacco (Ross, 2011).

Table 2: Reassessing participatory studies based on new definition of scaling-up participatory research with children

Study/ Reference	Geographic Scale	Decision-making	Empowerment	Dialogue
Children in DRR (Tanner, 2010)	✓			
Dream Teens (Gaspar de Matos and Simoes, 2016)	✓	✓	✓	✓
GUiNYC (Fuller-Rowell, 2009)	✓	✓	✓	
JaxHero (Livingood et al., 2017)	✓	✓	✓	✓
NYLI (Mortensen et al., 2014)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Peer Resources (Kornbluh, Watling Neal and Ozer, 2016)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reshaping Our World (Trott, 2019)	✓			
Streetwyze (Akom et al., 2016)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Teens Tackle Tobacco (Ross, 2011)	✓	✓	✓	✓
You<th are Here (Walker and Saito, 2011)	✓		✓	
YCDR ² (Fletcher et al., 2016)	✓		✓	
Youth Action for Health (Suleiman, Soleimanpour and London, 2006)	✓		✓	

There were also differences in how each study promoted a dialogue between child co-researchers. In the Dream Teens (Frasquilho et al., 2018) and Peer Resources (Kornbluh et al., 2016) studies, child co-researchers worked in separate teams that connected at different times. In the Dream Teens study, child co-researchers from different groups met for the first time at the end of the study. Meanwhile, in the Peer Resources study, different teams of child co-researchers interacted across the whole research process. In a different way, the JaxHero (Livingood et al., 2017), NYLI (Mortensen et al., 2014), Streetwyze (Akom et al., 2016) and Teens Tackle Tobacco (Ross, 2011) studies gathered all child co-researchers as one team, either in person or online. Thus, the findings of this scoping review show that high-quality participatory research with child co-researchers can be scaled-up in different ways.

Gaps in the literature about scaling-up participatory research with children

While there is increasing evidence on the benefits and outcomes of scaling-up participatory research with children, only the Peer Resources study specifically assessed the effects of scaling-up on the experience of children as co-researchers (Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016). Thus, little is known about how exposing child co-researchers to diverse child views and realities influences their experience in the research. For example, no study so far has focused on the process through which this type of exposure shapes child co-researchers' reflections about social issues and how they decide to act upon them. Only the Peer Resources study (Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016) aimed to explore how child co-researchers' social capital changed after connecting to other youth-led participatory projects, but the focus was placed on the number and frequency of interactions carried out through social media sites rather than the contents and nature of the dialogue happening within and between each study location. Additionally, in the GUiNYC study, Fuller-Rowell (2009) found that interactions between child co-researchers and adult researchers from different study sites could help build capacities and motivation for action research. However, these gains were the result of coordinating activities and supporting each other in the implementation of local projects, not of engaging in an overarching process of participatory research. Thus, more research is necessary on how connecting child co-researchers across study sites influences their experience doing *participatory research about social issues*.

Also, not enough is known about how child co-researchers' agency is promoted during the

research process when scaling-up participatory research. In the systematic review that we carried out about the use of digital platforms to scale-up participatory research with children, our team found that scaled-up studies showed high levels of child agency across the whole research process (Gibbs et al., 2020). However, research articles don't always report the nuances of the participatory process in the same way or depth, so our team had to contact authors to check some aspects of their research processes.

Also, in the Teens Tackle Tobacco (Ross, 2011), Youth Action for Health (Suleiman et al., 2006) and GUiNYC (Fuller-Rowell, 2009) studies, scaling-up helped child co-researchers feel that they were being a part of something larger than themselves. However, no studies so far have explored in more depth whether and how scaling-up affected child co-researchers' sense of agency, especially in their interactions and discussions with adults and peers during the research process.

Limitations

Due to time restrictions and translation costs, my review only included peer-reviewed articles in English, and it's possible that there might be more information about scaling-up child participatory research in other languages or in other types of reports. Future reviews should consider including these sources as well. Despite these challenges, this literature review can provide valuable insights about scaling-up participatory research with children that can inform future studies.

Summary

Scaling-up participatory research with children is an emerging field. This scoping review contributed to further define the conceptual definition of this approach, its potential benefits and its ethical, methodological and logistical implications. Increasing the geographic scope of the research can help addressing global issues locally, promote child co-researchers' agency in wider contexts, bring together diverse child perspectives and expand the impact of the research. To effectively scale-up the participatory element of the research, adult researchers can open opportunities for child co-researchers to be involved in decision-making processes across the different stages and geographic scales of the research, become empowered as agents of change within and beyond their immediate community and engage in a meaningful dialogue about social issues across study locations.

Overall, this review found that it is possible to increase geographic scale of studies while maintaining high quality standards for participatory research with children. However, this review found that there is still scarce evidence on how scaling-up participatory influences child co-researchers' experiences across the participatory research process. Therefore, my PhD research aims to fill the current gap in our knowledge about a) how scaling-up influences child co-researchers' reflections and actions regarding social issues and b) how it affects child co-researchers' agency in the research. To achieve this, in the following chapter, I will explain how I applied my conceptual framework and the findings of my literature review to develop the methodology of my study.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The focus of this PhD research

So far, I explained that my PhD research aims to contribute to a better understanding of how to increase the scope of participatory research with children in a way that stays true to the central tenets of high-quality participatory research. The available peer-reviewed literature on this topic is scarce, but there are growing signs of the potential of scaling-up participatory research to empower child co-researchers within and beyond their local communities. However, little is known about how scaling-up influences child co-researchers' reflections and actions on social issues and their agency in the research process.

To address these gaps, my research is guided by Freire's concept of critical consciousness, the core principles of participatory research with children as a child rights-based approach and a Social Justice Youth Development framework. I applied this conceptual framework to answer the following research question: **How does scaling-up participatory research with children influence child co-researchers' critical consciousness and their agency in the research process?**

To achieve this, I set the following research objectives:

- To explore how being part of the research influenced child co-researchers' views about the research topic, themselves and the world.
- To explore how child co-researchers' agency and empowerment as social actors changed across the research.
- To explore how child co-researchers' interactions with adults and other child co-researchers influenced their experience.
- To reflect on the influence that my presence as the adult researcher had over child co-researchers' experiences.

Choice of methodology

In this PhD research, I adopted a qualitative and participatory methodological framework. According to the International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research (2013),

participatory research should be understood as a research paradigm that guides the whole research process. Its main assumption is that the participation and decision-making of the people whose lives are being studied should influence the whole research process (International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research (ICPHR), 2013). As previously explained in Chapter 2: Conceptual framework, in participatory research with children, knowledge and action are intrinsically related and socially co-constructed between adults and children.

Study design

My PhD research integrated elements of two separate qualitative participatory studies: the Children's Araucaria and the Kids Contribute studies (Figure 7):

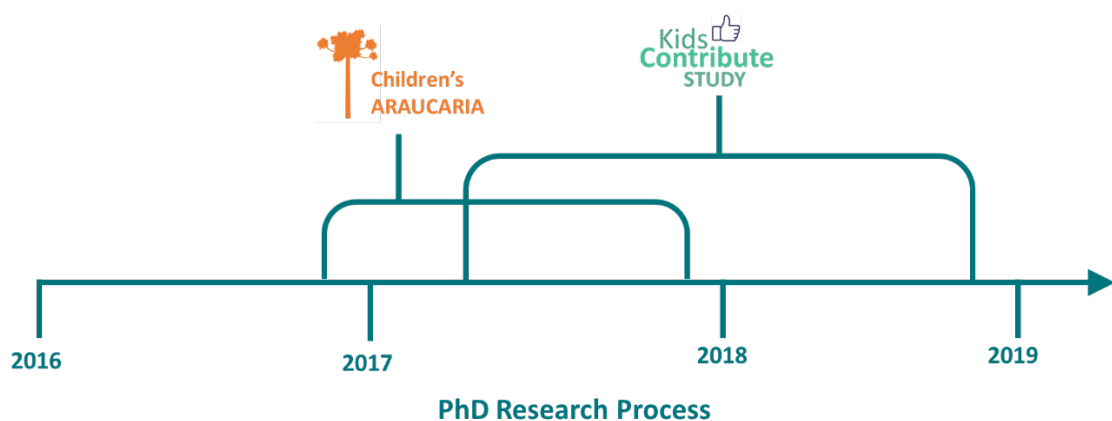


Figure 7: Studies carried out for this PhD research

These studies addressed different aspects of children's role as agents of change. The Children's Araucaria Study was a small pilot that aimed to gain a better understanding of children's engagement in building more disaster-resilient communities. Two groups of children participated in this study. They came from two disaster risk reduction (DRR) programs, one in Chile, the other in Australia. This pilot provided important lessons and insights about the challenges and facilitators to scale-up participatory research with children.

Meanwhile, the Kids Contribute Study was a larger study that resulted from a collaboration

between researchers at the University of Melbourne, an educational television show and the Australian National Children's Commissioner. This study had the goal of exploring how children in Australia contribute at home, school and elsewhere in the community, and how this relates to their resilience. I participated in this project as a Research Fellow and my PhD research focused on the participatory component of this wider project. In this way, I worked with child co-researchers to make questions for a national online poll, interpret the poll results, and then to present their findings to a panel of experts at a national forum. I will explain the specific objectives, and characteristics of these two studies in more depth in the following chapters, as well as my methods for data collection and analysis (Chapter 5: Children's Araucaria, a pilot study to explore how children contribute to disaster risk reduction and Chapter 6: The Kids Contribute Study: Scaling-up Participatory Research to Gain a Better Understanding of Children's Contributions in their Everyday Lives).

Ethical and methodological issues

Both studies in this PhD research were approved by the University of Melbourne Human Research Ethics Committee (HESC) (ID 1749790 and 1748691) (see Appendix 3 and Appendix 4). Figure 8 summarizes the main ethical issues of scaling-up participatory research with children I encountered during my research. As seen in Chapter 2: Conceptual framework, participatory research with children is a child rights-based approach to research, and faces the challenge of balancing children's rights to protection and participation (Lundy, 2007; Shier, 2018). On one hand, children must be protected from the potential harms of engaging in the research. On the other hand, children have the right to freely express themselves and have their opinions taken into consideration in research that affects their lives. In practice, ethical challenges involve a mixture of rights, but may require a stronger emphasis either on children's protection or participation (Figure 8).

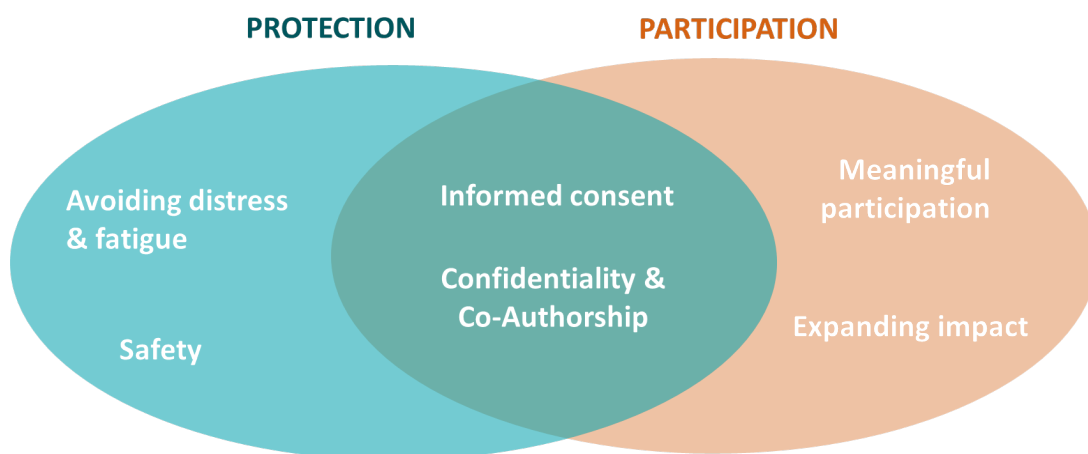


Figure 8: Ethical issues of scaling-up PR with children

Ethical issues that emphasize protecting children from potential harm

Avoiding fatigue and distress

Being a child co-researcher demands considerable time from children's lives and can generate feelings of fatigue. Research should also avoid interfering with children's other interests and responsibilities (Porter et al., 2010). However, because participatory research develops and grows during the research process, it is hard to predict how much time it will require from child co-researchers. In my research, working in larger scale participatory studies meant having to adapt to children's very different schedules and timings.

Children may also experience distress as a result of being co-researchers (Powell et al., 2012). Questioning one's social reality and the social issues that affect our communities can be a painful experience (Freire, 2017). Scaling-up can present additional challenges. Children's lives and cultures vary across contexts and some research topics may be more sensitive for some children than others. Thus, I tried to build a positive rapport with all child co-researchers to generate the necessary trust to discuss sensitive topics. Also, I always addressed sensitive topics (e.g. disaster experiences) with child co-researchers from a positive perspective (e.g. disaster resilience) and only if they wished to talk about them. As a child psychologist, I felt well-equipped to manage any situations involving child distress, however this did not occur.

Additionally, pre-existing social conflicts or cultural stereotypes could affect interactions between child co-researchers from different backgrounds. To prevent them, I always tried to promote a sense of collaboration rather than competition among child co-researchers. Encouraging children to share their ideas, feelings and experiences in a group can also expose them to discrimination or bullying. For this reason, in the Kids Contribute study, children were encouraged to participate in groups of child co-researchers that they knew and were friends with.

Anticipating potential risks to children's safety

In some contexts, being a co-researcher can present different risks to children's safety. Attitudes towards child participation may be more or less positive depending on the local culture and the topic of children's work. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon that young people who raise their voices become the target of personal attacks (Chakraborty, 2019). The literature in participatory research also shows cases where children's advocacy for change has entered into conflict with the interests of other adult and organizations (Shier, 2015). It is possible that, when working with a diverse group of child co-researchers from different backgrounds, some will be more vulnerable to these risks than others.

This was the case in the Kids Contribute Study, where some child co-researchers addressed the discrimination suffered by their communities. It was necessary to anticipate any potential negative reactions, especially during the forum. To make the forum a safe and comfortable space for all child co-researchers, only people who were invited could attend. Similarly, the forum was recorded and uploaded online, but only people who were given the link could access the footage or make comments. This helped prevent other potential risks to children's safety like grooming or cyberbullying.

Ethical issues that emphasize children's right to participation

Securing meaningful participation for all child co-researchers

In my PhD research, I aimed to follow the participatory principle of promoting child agency across the whole research process. However, due to children's lower status in society and the ways in which opportunities to instigate and undertake research are structured, it is impossible to assume that completely egalitarian adult-child relationships can be achieved, and adults will always have the final say on *how*, *when* and *who* participates in the research

(Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008; Shier, 2015). This is supported by evidence showing that when participatory research is scaled-up, there might be important differences in children's agency across study sites (see Chapter 3: Literature Review).

Thus, for this PhD research, I tried to promote opportunities for child co-researchers to contribute to decision making across the research process and study locations, and to be transparent where that was not possible. To achieve this, it was important to develop a shared understanding of participatory principles with all adult collaborators and to give child co-researchers the opportunity to give their feedback on the studies where they participated. Later in this chapter, I will explain how I applied an analytical tool (Shier, 2018) that helped me understand when children's agency was promoted or restrained.

Participatory researchers who want to scale-up must acknowledge that it is not possible to generalize a 'global view of childhood' because there are a multiplicity of child perspectives and experiences (Gibbs et al., 2018). Meanwhile, comparing findings from different contexts could result in stigmatization. To prevent adults from imposing their own views, it is crucial that child co-researchers are involved in developing the final conclusions and outcomes of the research. Otherwise, it is likely that adults and their organizations will impose their own views and agendas (Rademacher & Patel, 2002). Additionally, it will be important to give equal importance to all child co-researchers' voices, so one does not dominate over the rest.

Thus, I chose methods for data collection and interpretation that could help me incorporate the diversity of child co-researchers' ideas into my work. The studies in this PhD research were designed so child co-researchers could actively engage in reflecting and drawing conclusions at different stages of the research. I also recorded our research meetings, transcribed them verbatim and used them as the base of my analysis. In this way, although the final outcomes of my research come from an adult perspective, they include findings that were co-developed with children.

Expanding the impact of the research

Researchers scale-up participatory studies with the goal of increasing its impact. Likewise, child co-researchers can experience feelings of frustration and even withdraw from future opportunities to engage in research if they feel that their work did not generate the changes

they expected (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). However, as seen in Chapter 3: Literature Review, conventionally, adult decision-making spaces tend to be less child-friendly. Thus, adults are generally needed to open spaces where child co-researchers can address larger and more influential audiences. In the Kids Contribute Study, child co-researchers presented their work at a national forum that was organized by the University in collaboration with the Australian Human Rights Commission. Because child co-researchers focused on diverse issues at the forum, it was important to make sure that the audience included representatives from different sectors (education, community development, human rights) who had the potential to incorporate their diverse ideas into practice.

Ethical issues that require equal attention to children's protection and participation

Informed consent

Unlike with most adults, doing research with children usually requires informed consent from their parents or guardians. Additionally, children can be asked for their assent or consent. In my PhD research, I asked for child co-researchers' informed consent – not as a legally binding document but as a respectful confirmation of their agreement.

Informed consent helps secure children's rights to protection and participation because it seeks that children voluntarily participate in the research, based on an informed decision of its potential risks and benefits (Balén et al., 2006; Ebrahim, 2010; Powell et al., 2012). It was also important to acknowledge that children's understandings about research change over time, and that new activities and opportunities that children did not initially plan to engage in can emerge during the process.

Thus, I approached informed consent as a dynamic process that I revisited at different points with the child co-researchers. During the Kids Contribute Study, child co-researchers were asked for their written informed consent at the beginning of the study and before the forum. In addition to requesting child co-researchers' signed consent and revisiting it at different moments, I monitored other potential signs that child co-researchers were voluntarily participating in the study and on their own terms. For example, it was unlikely that all 55 co-researchers would want or be available to remain for the whole duration of the Kids Contribute study, which lasted over a year. Thus, an important sign of children's informed consent was when child co-researchers communicated me their decision to withdraw from

the study. In these cases, I took children's decision not to participate in research as a healthy sign that they felt comfortable to express themselves and understood their rights to voluntary participation.

In relation to this, it was important for me to pay attention to the different ways in which children may express their preference for not working with me in doing research. For example, when I returned to a primary school to report the Kids Contribute poll results to a group of child co-researchers in grade 3, the two children who showed up to that meeting decided not to continue in the project. While one of the boys was very conspicuous by making faces and gestures of wanting to go back with the rest of his class, the other boy remained quietly on his seat. I let the first boy go back to his class and stayed a few minutes with the second one who, at first sight, may have appeared as wanting to be there because he was following my instructions. However, I took his silence as a potential sign of not wanting to engage and assured him that he didn't have to participate if he didn't want to. He looked up, smiled and softly said that he also wanted to go with the rest of his class and not participate in the forum.

Protecting children's rights to confidentiality and co-authorship

Adult researchers must always protect children's privacy and confidentiality (Powell et al., 2012; N. Thomas & O'Kane, 1998). This is a special challenge in participatory research, where children often have a double role as co-researchers and key informants. On one hand, as co-researchers, children have the right to be acknowledged as co-authors if they wish to do so. On the other hand, children's confidentiality must be protected, and what they say and do during the research process will be anonymised when the research findings are disseminated. For this reason, child co-researchers from the Kids Contribute study who presented their findings at a forum were acknowledged and named as co-authors, while their personal contributions to the study findings were treated as anonymous. Also, the names of organizations, schools, people's names and other identifying details have been replaced with pseudonyms in this thesis.

Additionally, one of the aims of a PhD thesis is assessing an individual researchers' work (Evans, Gruba, & Zobel, 2011). This aim could be incompatible with sharing authorship with child co-researchers in participatory research. In Chapter 6: The Kids Contribute Study:

Scaling-up Participatory Research to Gain a Better Understanding of Children's Contributions in their Everyday Lives, I explain when and how I incorporated child co-researchers' perspectives into my findings by incorporating them across different points of the data collection and interpretation. However, my final discussion and conclusions are the product of my individual work. Thus, it is not possible to argue that the outcomes of my PhD research are a direct account of children's experiences as co-researchers when scaling-up participatory research. For this reason, in Chapter 8: Child co-researchers' experiences of agency during the Kids Contribute study, when I narrate the story of my work with child co-researchers, I do it in the first person. In this way, I emphasize that my perspective predominates over the voices of child co-researchers.

Addressing ethical challenges of scaling-up participatory research with children: the importance of context and reflexivity

The ethical issues of doing research with children are intrinsically related to the local context (Porter et al., 2010). Thus, it is critical that the adult researchers learn as much as they can about the cultural, economic, political and social context where they work. Scaling-up participatory research to different communities, regions and countries will also involve navigating different ethical and legal frameworks for doing research with children. Working with special groups like Aboriginal communities and people with disabilities will also present different ethical and methodological requirements. Yet, monitoring those ethical requirements can become harder as communication extends across multiple study locations.

For this reason, I had to become familiar with the context at each study location. This was particularly important, as I was an international PhD student and new to the Australian context. As part of the process of preparing the Children's Araucaria study, I spent my first year of research immersing myself in a participatory disaster risk reduction program for children. I also joined other members of my research team during research activities at schools and attended some sporting activities at a community where I worked in the Kids Contribute Study. Receiving support and advice from my supervisors and research team was also crucial for me to navigate how to do research in the Australian context.

It would be unfeasible to assume that it's possible for one researcher to be an expert in all the research contexts involved in a study. Collaboration with local researchers and

stakeholders is crucial, especially in cases where children can be more vulnerable to the risks of research. Both studies in this PhD research were mostly built from already existing collaborations between the University and different organizations. Maintaining collaborations with adult stakeholders and acknowledging their local expertise was fundamental to adapt the research to each local context. For example, in the Kids Contribute Study, one group of child co-researchers was led by another adult facilitator, who regularly worked with them in a local program that provided them with psychosocial support.

Finally, the literature on participatory research with children establishes that adult researchers must accept their limitations and engage in constant reflection about their influence over the research process (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008). Moreover, adults' ongoing reflexivity is necessary to maintain the quality and validity of the research. Translating these reflections into a common language can help generate shared learning among participatory researchers and improve the reporting of participatory processes. To achieve this, Shier (2018) proposed an analytical tool to help adults explore their collaborations with children (see Table 3).

Table 3: Shier's (2018) analytical tool for adult-child collaborations

Phases of the research process ↓	←Co-researchers' decision-making power or control →				Who's involved/excluded?
	Children are not involved	Children are consulted	Children collaborate with adults	Children direct/decide on their own	
Deciding on the research question		Children asked about problems that concern them.	Children and adults jointly define research question.	Children choose their own research question.	Who has a say in the research question?
Designing the research and choosing methods		Children consulted on what research methodology to use.	Children and adults deliberate and jointly decide on the methodology to use.	Children decide what methodology they want to use.	Who is invited to get involved in the research design?
Preparing research instruments		Children consulted on (and perhaps test) research instruments before use.	Children and adults work together on design of research instruments.	Children create their own research instruments.	Who gets to work on the research instruments?
Identifying and recruiting participants		Children asked to advise on recruiting participants.	Children asked to advise on recruiting participants.	Children identify and recruit research participants.	Who has a say in choosing participants?
Collecting data		Research involves adults interviewing children or surveying their opinions.	Children and adults collaborate on data-gathering activity.	Children organise and carry out data collection activities.	Who gets involved in data collection?
Analysing the data and drawing conclusions		Adults show preliminary findings to children and ask for feedback.	Children and adults work together to analyse data and determine conclusions.	Children analyse data and draw their own conclusions.	Who has a say in what the conclusions are?
Producing a report		Adults consult children on aspects of the final report.	Children and adults work together to produce a report.	Children produce their own report in their own words.	Who gets credit for the report?
Disseminating findings		Adults consult children on how to disseminate findings.	Adults consult children on how to disseminate findings.	Children undertake activities to disseminate their findings.	Who is actively involved in dissemination?
Advocacy and mobilisation to achieve policy impact		Adults consult children about possible advocacy actions.	Children and adults work together on plans for advocacy and mobilisation.	Children develop and implement an action plan for advocacy and mobilisation.	Who is active in follow-up campaigning and advocacy?

I applied this tool to each study in my PhD research to explore the degree to which they achieved the aim of promoting child agency. More specifically, I applied Shier's (2018) tool to identify *when* were children involved in the research, *what* activities they engaged in and the degree of child agency. Additionally, Shier (2018) argued that it is necessary to reflect on *who* is included at each stage and who is not. This is particularly relevant for scaling-up participatory research with children, as child co-researchers may show different types and levels of participation. This tool helped me identify different moments in which children's agency was constrained during my research, which must be considered to interpret my findings. I will report further on children's agency in each one of my studies in the following chapters.

Overall, my PhD research tried to address ethical and methodological issues related to balancing children's protection and participation that are ubiquitous to child rights-based research and participatory research with children. However, I would like to specify that while my research exemplifies some challenges of scaling-up participatory research with children, the wide diversity of approaches in this area means that many challenges were not present in my work. For instance, I did not work with groups of children who have special needs in research, like children with disabilities. My research also did not include working with groups of children from Aboriginal communities. In both of my studies, I was the adult researcher working with most child co-researchers. Thus, the task of coordinating with other adult facilitators and stakeholders was less complex. These circumstances should be considered when reading this thesis, and more research is necessary to explore the ethical and methodological issues of different approaches to scaling-up participatory research with child co-researchers.

Summary

I adopted a participatory and qualitative approach to answer how does scaling-up participatory research with children influence child co-researchers' critical consciousness and their agency in the research process?

My PhD research consisted of two studies: the Children's Araucaria and Kids Contribute studies. In these studies, I addressed some of the ethical and methodological issues of

scaling-up participatory research with child co-researchers. When scaling-up participatory research, balancing children's rights to protection and participation can become more complex. Thus, researchers must learn about the research contexts where they work, establish solid collaborations with local communities and adopt an attitude of constant reflexivity. In the next chapters, I will provide more details about the study designs and report the findings from each one my studies.

Chapter 5: Children's Araucaria, a pilot study to explore how children contribute to disaster risk reduction

Introduction

Globally, children's lives are being increasingly affected by disasters. In 2001, the World Disasters Report estimated that approximately 66.5 million children were affected by disasters each year (Penrose & Takaki, 2006). Some years later, based on a new version of the World Disasters Report that gathered data between 1999 – 2006 (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2006), Save the Children UK (2007) estimated that, if the frequency and magnitude of disasters continued to increase at the current rates, by the start of the 21st century, 175 million children would be affected by disasters annually. Today, these figures look pale compared to UNICEF's estimations of how the COVID-19 pandemic will have affected children by the end of the year 2020: 117 million more children living in poverty; 1.6 billion children and young people affected by school closures (many without access to online learning); an additional 1.2 million children dying due to the interruption of basic health interventions; 36 million children going hungry; and 80 million children under 1 year old missing out on potentially life-saving vaccines (UNICEF, 2020).

These numbers have been cited by a number of researchers and practitioners who advocate for incorporating children's voices in resilience-building efforts (Muzenda-Mudavanhu, 2016; Nikku, 2013; Peek, 2008). From this perspective, promoting children's wellbeing in disaster risk contexts requires protecting them from the physical and psychological impacts of disasters as well as securing their right to have a say in matters that affect them. Further, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) 2015 – 2030 (United Nations, 2015) stated that society must acknowledge that children and youth have a crucial role in reducing risk and promoting resilience. For example, to facilitate children and youth's active engagement in DRR, a Children and Youth Forum was carried out in parallel to the Sendai Conference (UNICEF, 2015), and children's ideas were incorporated in a child-friendly version of the Sendai framework (Kearney, 2015).

There is growing evidence that children can contribute to developing creative and contextually appropriate solutions for disaster problems in their communities (Mudavanhu et al., 2015; Seballos & Tanner, 2011; Tanner & Seballos, 2012). During the preparedness stage, children often participate in school-based activities like drills and class discussions (Ronoh, Gaillard, & Marlowe, 2015), and there are examples of children contributing to identifying and minimizing disaster risk at their homes, schools and communities in countries like Australia, Chile, New Zealand, El Salvador and the Philippines (Ronan, Alisic, Towers, Johnson, & Johnston, 2015; Seballos & Tanner, 2011; Vásquez et al., 2018). Children's contributions during disaster response (e.g. helping at shelters, distributing aid, food water and information) have been documented after floods in Zimbabwe (Muzenda-Mudavanhu, Manyena, & Collins, 2016), Hurricane Katrina in the United States (Mitchell, Haynes, Hall, Choong, & Oven, 2008), and the great tsunami of 2004 in South-East Asia (Taylor & Peace, 2015). Likewise, children are often interested in helping their communities recover in the aftermath of disasters (Peek, 2008; Penrose & Takaki, 2006; Taylor & Peace, 2015). For example, Cox and colleagues (2017) found that youth from communities affected by tornadoes in Canada and the United States had contributed to the recovery of their communities by engaging in artistic and cultural activities to commemorate their disaster experiences, as a way of sharing hope with others. Others directly participated in disaster clean-up and rebuilding.

Authors like Peek (2008) and Penrose and Tataki (2006) argue that engaging in disaster risk reduction activities may help protect children's wellbeing and mental health, while excluding them might lead to feelings of disempowerment, dependency and frustration. Furthermore, authors like Seballos and Tanner (2011) argue that children's roles must expand from the local to the national and international levels, to contribute to the creation of a global DRR agenda. However, there are still important gaps in our knowledge about children's perspectives of participating in building disaster resilience (Peek, 2008; Penrose & Takaki, 2006), including how the contexts where children live influence their views about their engagement in DRR. For example, little is known about children's participation in DRR in developing countries, marginalized communities or multicultural contexts (Muzenda-Mudavanhu, 2016; Peek, 2008; Taylor & Peace, 2015). This can obstruct the replication of initiatives that are successful in one community in other places (Muzenda-Mudavanhu,

2016; Nikku, 2013).

In response to these gaps, authors like Lori Peek (2008) advocate for the use of participatory approaches to research to gain a better understanding of children's perspectives and contributions to disaster resilience. In participatory research with children, adult researchers and child co-researchers collaborate to generate new knowledge about how to build disaster resilience that can enhance the impact of DRR programs (Ronan et al., 2016; Tanner & Seballos, 2012).

Recently, some DRR studies have begun to expand the geographic size and scope of participatory research to the regional, national and international levels. Tanner and Seballos (2012) carried out a multi-site participatory study in El Salvador and the Philippines. They used participatory risk management tools (i.e. games, drawing, mapping, guided walks) to discuss with child co-researchers how to prevent disasters and adapt to climate change in their communities. The authors concluded that children and youth were highly motivated and capable of developing creative ways to build more resilient communities, like advocating for the preservation of the natural environments surrounding their community and more sustainable waste management practices. Based on these findings, they concluded that participatory research can help children become more empowered in their relationship with adults in their communities and result in better informed community-based DRR policies and programs.

In another study, Fletcher and colleagues (2016) worked with 40 adolescents and youth between 13 and 22 years old. Through arts-based methods, they explored children's views and experiences in four communities affected by disasters in the USA and Canada. Child co-researchers participated in workshops and created audio-visual materials (i.e. videos, photography) that were disseminated in a website. Through these activities, child co-researchers expressed that disasters had negative and positive impacts on their lives that also evolved across time and emphasized that young people have the capacity and motivation to help their communities and other disaster-affected youth.

However, these studies faced important challenges in actively involving child co-researchers beyond their local communities. Tanner and Seballos (2012) explained that, in their study,

child co-researchers could only participate in generating and interpreting information about their communities, while the adult researchers analysed the data from all study sites and drew the final conclusions. Child co-researchers were also interested in connecting with peers in other regions, but this wasn't possible due to time and resource limitations. Meanwhile, Fletcher and colleagues (2016) reported that child co-researchers only participated in doing research about their local communities, and that it wasn't possible to compare or integrate the data collected across the different study sites.

Thus, while participatory research has been used to explore how children participate in building disaster resilience in different contexts, so far, child co-researchers' involvement has been limited to the local level. This, in turn, may affect the validity of conclusions from participatory studies that seek to gain a better understanding of children's insights about their contributions to disaster resilience in different contexts. For this reason, this pilot study aimed to explore child co-researchers' insights about their contributions to disaster resilience in different contexts, by working with children who participated in DRR programs in two locations: one in Chile, and the other one in Australia.

Setting: The Children's Araucaria project

The Children's Araucaria project was a pilot participatory study, based on a collaboration between the University of Melbourne and two DRR programs for children, one in Australia (Resilient Seaview Program) and the other one in Chile (Safe Cuesta Grande Program). The project was named after the Araucaria, a tree family that can be found both in Chile and Australia. The name also stood as an acronym for the participatory principles of Action/Acción, Resilience/Resiliencia, Collaboration/Colaboración, Unity/Unidad and Ideas (in English and Spanish). The names of places, programs and organizations have been changed to protect the adult facilitators' and children's anonymity.

Resilient Seaview program, Victoria, Australia: 'Seaview' is a coastal town, located between natural reserves of bushland. The community is exposed to bushfire, especially during the high season between October and February. Although Seaview hasn't experienced a natural disaster in over 10 years (including bushfire), the community witnessed the devastation provoked by the Victorian Black Saturday Bushfires of 2009, has a past history of

catastrophic bushfire and has been threatened by fires in the past 5 years. The Resilient Seaview program resulted from the collaboration between a primary school, a local disaster response agency and a University. In this program, one adult facilitator worked with the students on a weekly basis, sometimes with the help of volunteers.

Safe Cuesta Grande program, Metropolitan Region, Chile: Cuesta Grande is a small community located in one of the central valleys between the Andes Mountains and the Chilean Coastal Mountains and is at risk of wildfires during the hot season. In 2010, Chile was affected by a mega-thrust earthquake. The event was experienced in Cuesta Grande with an intensity of VII in the Modified Mercalli Scale, meaning that an earthquake is strong enough to provoke general alarm, make it difficult for people to remain standing, and cause moderate damage to well-built structures that are not anti-seismic (Dowrick, Hancox, Perrin, & Dellow, 2008; Wood & Neumann, 1931). Additionally, during the summer 2016 – 2017, before this study, a large part of Chile was affected by a succession of wildfires across different regions, the largest wildfire season in the country's recorded history. In the Safe Cuesta Grande program, two adult facilitators from a local University worked with students from a primary and secondary school, and one of them was in charge of designing and coordinating the project.

As an international PhD student, I spent a year regularly visiting the Resilient Seaview program to become familiar with how it promoted children's engagement in disaster resilience efforts in Australia. I had previously worked with staff at the Safe Cuesta Grande program and the school where it took place. Both programs were interested in helping their students reflect on children's contributions to disaster resilience around the world by sharing and learning with peers from other places. I helped connect both programs, leading to the idea of the Children's Araucaria project. Figure 9 explains how the project was originally designed.

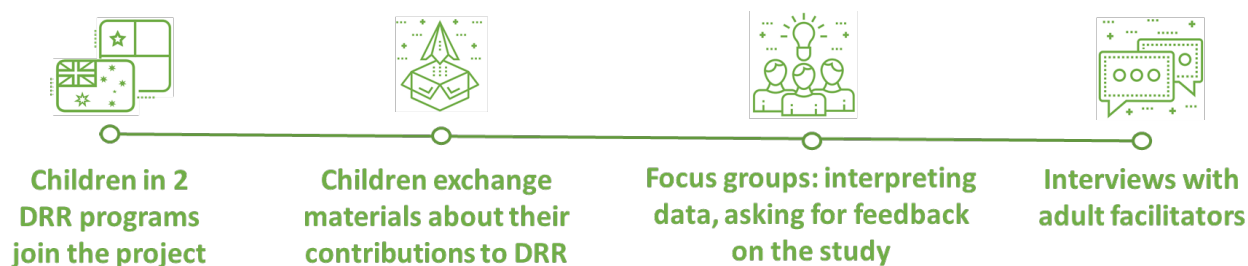


Figure 9: Stages of the Children's Araucaria study

The first phase of the Children's Araucaria project consisted of an exchange between the Resilient Seaview and Cuesta Grande programs. All students from both locations participated. Students in each program created materials that reflected their experiences of contributing to disaster resilience in their communities. The project intended for child co-researchers to be free to choose what materials to make (i.e. videos, posters, photographs) and what they would say. The materials were digitalized, translated and exchanged between the two groups. This activity was led by the Safe Cuesta Grande and Resilient Seaview programs.

In the next phase of the Children's Araucaria project, students were invited as co-researchers to help interpret the materials exchanged. Child co-researchers at each location were meant to use the materials as prompts for discussions to draw their conclusions about how children contribute to disaster resilience in different places. If they wished to do so, both teams of child co-researchers would have the support of their school and program to disseminate their findings and recommendations in their community.

Research questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

- What were child co-researchers' levels of agency during the exchange and the pilot study?
- How did scaling-up participatory research influence child co-researchers' insights about their contributions to disaster resilience?
- What were child co-researchers' perspectives about collaborating with child co-researchers from another study site?

Sampling criteria

All students and adult facilitators in the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs were invited to participate in the study. Additionally, the researcher recommended that children experiencing traumatic stress due to a natural disaster may not benefit from participating if this could intensify their distress, but no students in the DRR programs were in this situation.

Recruitment process

This study received ethics approval from the Human Ethics Sub-Committee (HESC) at the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, University of Melbourne (ID: 1749790) (Appendix 3: Ethics Approval for Children's Araucaria Study). Additionally, it received the support from Seaview Primary School, Cuesta Grande School and the disaster research centre in Chile. The adult facilitator in charge of each DRR program explained the Children's Araucaria project in her own words to the students and asked them if they were interested. Because I was living in Australia, I was able to attend the Resilient Seaview program to introduce myself and answer questions about the project. Additionally, I sent an introductory PowerPoint presentation to the Chilean students that was delivered by the local adult facilitator on my behalf (Appendix 5).

All students who were interested in participating as co-researchers were given Plain Language Statements (PLS) (Appendix 6) and asked to sign an informed consent form (Appendix 7). Because students were under 18 years old, Plain Language Statements (PLS) and consent forms were also sent to their parents or guardians (Appendix 8 and Appendix 9). Finally, the adult facilitators from each program were also invited to an interview and were given a PLS and consent form (Appendix 10 and Appendix 11).

Data collection measures and methods

Data collection was carried out using the following methods:

Collection of materials about children's contributions to disaster resilience

As previously explained, students at each location created written and audio-visual materials to introduce themselves to their overseas peers and show how they contributed to disaster

resilience in their communities. The intention was that the children would decide how to make the materials for sharing information (i.e. letters, photography, video). Any audio-visual materials created were transcribed verbatim for analysis. In the Resilient Seaview program, most materials were digitalized letters (in Word and PDF format) and videos (MP4 and WAV files). This made it easy for the adult facilitator to send me a copy of each using e-mail. I also took pictures of non-digital materials (a board game and a McArthur meter that were not created by the students in the project) before sending them to Chile via courier. In the Safe Cuesta Grande program, child co-researchers also created digital materials (photographs, videos) that the adult facilitator shared with me using Google Drive. When children created materials on paper (messages, drawings), the students kept their work and the adult facilitator took pictures that she shared with me via e-mail.

Focus groups with students

A 1-hour, semi-structured focus group discussion was scheduled at the end of the Children's Araucaria project with the child co-researchers from each DRR program. It was planned that I would ask child co-researchers about their insights on how children contribute to disaster resilience, based on a theme guide and using the materials as prompts. I also wanted to ask child co-researchers for their feedback on their roles during the Children's Araucaria project and their impressions of connecting with peers from another country (Appendix 12). While I was in charge of carrying out the focus group in Australia, it was planned that the focus group in Chile would be led by the program facilitator, and all focus groups would be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Interviews with program facilitators

The 1-hour individual semi-structured interviews were carried out with the main adult facilitator who led each program. Based on a theme guide (Appendix 13), I asked facilitators about their views on children's contributions to disaster resilience and the potential benefits of connecting children through initiatives like the Children's Araucaria project. The interviews were transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Personal notes

I kept notes on my visits to the Resilient Seaview program, focus groups, interviews and my

conversations with the facilitators from both programs. I used these notes to support the analysis of materials, focus groups and interviews.

Data analysis

I carried out an abductive (Haig, 2005) and thematic (Liamputtong, 2013) analysis of the collected data. My abductive analysis consisted of first exploring the data inductively, by starting from singular pieces of data (e.g. words and sentences said by child co-researchers), to progressively identify patterns corresponding to more stable and general phenomena (e.g. child co-researcher's views about their agency in the project). I applied this process during my thematic analysis, in which I identified and analysed patterns in the transcribed material (Liamputtong, 2013).

More specifically, I began by immersing myself in the data (letters, messages, blog posts, transcriptions of videos, focus groups and interviews) to get a general sense of what students and adult facilitators said during the Children's Araucaria study. I generated codes to label and describe the relevant words or phrases that I identified. Then, I grouped codes that referred to similar topics that emerged in the data. I continued this process by grouping codes into progressively more general categories and themes.

After inductively identifying and describing my phenomena of interest (e.g. children's sense of agency as co-researchers, children's use of humour), I applied theoretical knowledge from the literature on participatory research with children to find the best explanation for their underlying causes and mechanisms. I supported this analysis with my personal notes and the rest of the materials collected. It is important to explain that I always started from a pattern that emerged in the data and then explored how it related to the current literature on participatory research with children. For example, I only decided to apply the literature on the use of humour and play in disaster risk communication after observing that child co-researchers preferred to keep a fun and humorous atmosphere during their work.

To explore child co-researchers' insights about their contributions to disaster resilience and how they were influenced by their participation in the Children's Araucaria project, I planned to analyse the collected materials with child co-researchers during our final focus group. However, I was only able to do this with a small group of students from the Resilient Seaview

program. Additionally, I used my notes and the data from focus groups and interviews to identify child co-researchers' level of agency during the Children's Araucaria study, using Shier's (2018) analytical tool for adult-child collaborations.

Results

All students in years 6 and 7 (approximately 25) at the Resilient Seaview program participated in exchanging materials with the Safe Cuesta Grande program. However, only five (two females and three males) participated in the focus group. Meanwhile, the group of students at the Safe Cuesta Grande program began with fifteen students between years 5 and 12, but most took a step back from the program. Only five students (also two females and three males) between years 5 and 7 were involved in responding to the materials received from Australia, and none participated in the final focus group. Table 4 shows the materials that were exchanged between both groups.

Table 4: Materials exchanged during the Children's Araucaria project

Program	Materials created or selected by the program with the participation of students
Resilient Seaview Program	• Pen pal letters. • Short video clips about the program.
Safe Cuesta Grande Program	• 360-degree photographs of school emergency drill. • Written messages with personal introductions and answers to questions about earthquakes. • Mapuche story about the origin of earthquakes and tsunami. • Video about how respond to an earthquake at school.

Sharing knowledge and experiences of participating in Disaster Risk Reduction

The materials exchanged during the Children's Araucaria project showed students engaging in different activities for disaster education and resilience. At the Resilient Seaview program, students learned about fire behaviour and bushfire resilience from adult facilitators and collaborators, mapped planned burned areas, and measured fire danger ratings (Figure 10). Then, students applied this knowledge to become bushfire educators by designing and

carrying out workshops for adults and children from their community at the local fire station (Figure 11).



Figure 10: Students at the Resilient Seaview program measuring fire danger ratings



Figure 11: Students at the Resilient Seaview program using 'burn table' to teach about bushfire behaviour

Meanwhile, students in the Safe Cuesta Grande program participated in group discussions about earthquake resilience and participated in a school emergency evacuation drill. During the drill, they used 360-degree cameras to collect data about the safe and risk areas of their evacuation route. Then, the students at the Safe Cuesta Grande program helped organize a school assembly where they presented their work to their teachers, classmates and parents.

Students also exchanged information about hazards and disaster resilience. A group of four students from the Resilient Seaview program made questions about earthquakes that were responded to by the students from the Safe Cuesta Grande program (see Table 5).

Table 5: Questions and answers exchanged during the Children’s Araucaria project

Questions from Seaview	Answers from Chile
• Can you escape from an earthquake? • How big can earthquakes be?	• Naturally, you cannot escape from an earthquake, you can only wait for it to end, the largest and longest earthquake was in 1960, it had a magnitude of 9.5 and lasted for 10 minutes.³
• Do you do drills?	• We have done videos about earthquakes and talked about them and tsunami. We have also carried out earthquake drills. • We have done many drills. This is a lot of fun because it teaches us how to act in case of an earthquake. • We learned how to record and take pictures with 360-degree cameras. We captured our interaction with our surroundings during a drill. We want to show what we’ve done to our parents, so they know what we rehearse during drills.
• Do cracks appear in the ground, can you fall in them?	• No, at least in these past years, it still hasn’t happened.

The students from the Safe Cuesta Grande program also shared a participatory video about how to respond during an earthquake at school. While the video was accurate regarding safety protocols, not all the information provided in the materials was accurate or in-depth. For example, students in the video confused the concept of preventing the adverse impacts of earthquakes with being able to stop earthquakes from happening. When I presented the video to the students at the Resilient Seaview program, I used the video as an opportunity to explain the frequent confusion between the concepts of preparedness and prevention. Finally, the students from the Safe Cuesta Grande program made an illustrated version of the Aboriginal Mapuche myth of how earthquakes and tsunami are generated by two giant

³ The answer refers to the Valdivia earthquake in 1960 in Chile, the largest earthquake in recorded history.

serpents, the Serpent of the Sea and the Serpent of the Earth, representing the typical Chilean geography consisting of the mountains, coast and valleys (Figure 12):

‘The legend tells that there are two mythological serpents called CaiCai Vilu and TrenTren Vilu, whose names mean ‘Serpent of the Earth’ and ‘Serpent of the Sea.’ This legend tells us about the fight between these two serpents, when the Serpent of the Earth gets angry at the Serpent of the Sea there is an earthquake, and when the Serpent of the Sea gets angry at the Earth, there’s tsunami.’

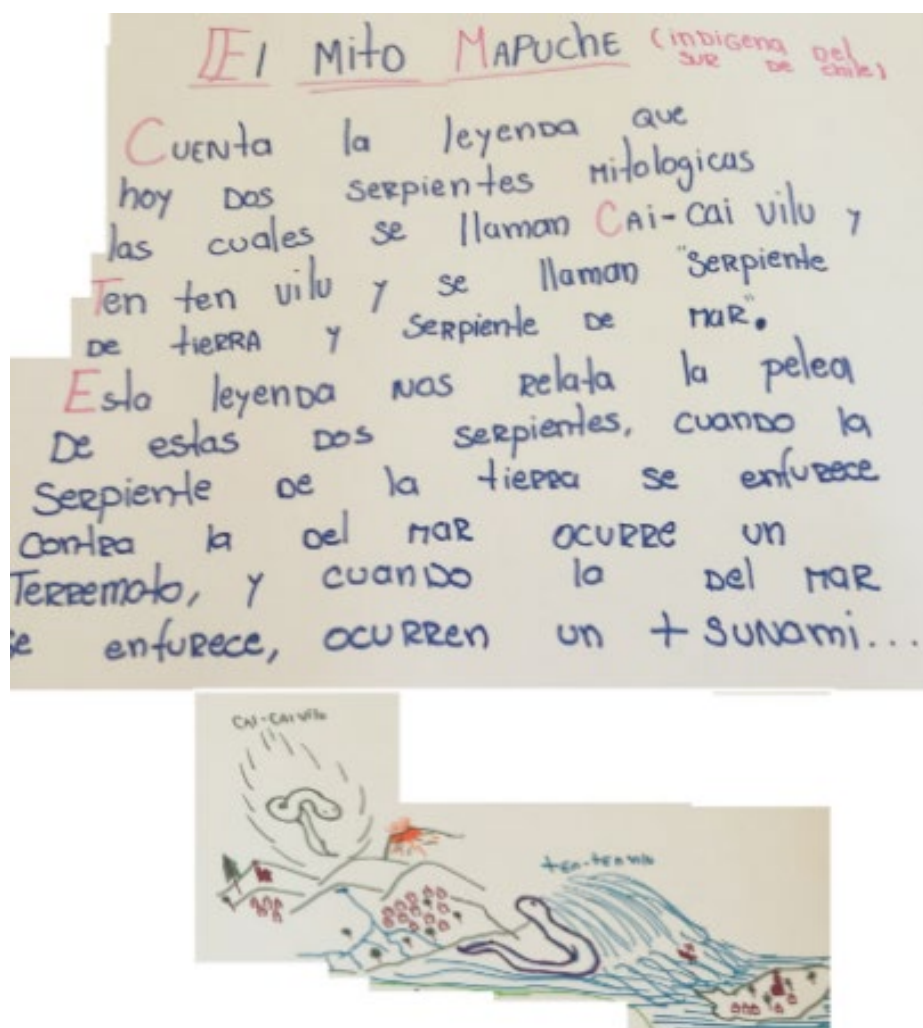


Figure 12: The Mapuche Legend of CaiCai Vilu and TrenTren Vilu

Students' levels of agency during the Children's Araucaria project

Students' agency was severely limited in both study locations. Based on Shier's (2018) analytical tool for adult-child collaborations it is possible to take a closer look at the nuances of child agency at each study location. The original study design intended for adults and children to collaborate across the stages of designing research instruments (i.e. deciding what materials to create and how), collecting data (i.e. deciding what contents to include in the materials and being directly involved in their creation), analysing and drawing conclusions (i.e. helping me interpret the materials and discuss children's role in DRR during the final focus groups) and producing a report (Figure 13). Likewise, with the support of their schools, students would have the choice of disseminating their results and advocating for impact (e.g. presenting to their school and local community).

Levels of child agency at the Resilient Seaview program

Figure 13 summarizes students' degree of agency at the Resilient Seaview program. Students were consulted on the design of research instruments when the adult facilitator proposed making videos and pen pal letters. During the stage of data collection, students were involved in the creation of these materials, but this activity was led by the adult facilitator.

As part of a wider activity, students from the Resilient Seaview program sent 21 pen pal letters to the students in Chile and people in other countries (Appendix 14). The adult facilitator proposed the students use a template with information about themselves and the Resilient Seaview program, and students made questions about disaster resilience for the letter recipients in each country. The pen pal letters were accompanied by six short video clips about the Resilient Seaview program. These video clips were mostly created by the adult facilitator, who recorded and edited footage from activities at the Resilient Seaview program. Some students appeared in the video as narrators or carrying out program activities. However, students did not participate in planning, designing or editing the videos.

	Co-researchers' decision-making power or control			
	Children are not involved	Children are consulted	Children collaborate with adults	Children direct/decide on their own
Making research questions: Intended levels of child agency				
• Resilient Seaview program				
• Safe Cuesta Grande program				
Designing research & methods: Intended levels of child agency				
• Resilient Seaview program				
• Safe Cuesta Grande program				
Designing research instruments: Intended levels of child agency				
• Resilient Seaview program				
• Safe Cuesta Grande program				
Recruiting participants: Intended levels of child agency				
• Resilient Seaview program				
• Safe Cuesta Grande program				
Collecting data: Intended levels of child agency				
• Resilient Seaview program				
• Safe Cuesta Grande program				
Analysing data & drawing conclusions: Intended levels of child agency				
• Resilient Seaview program				
• Safe Cuesta Grande program				
Producing a report: Intended levels of child agency				
• Resilient Seaview program				
• Safe Cuesta Grande program				
Disseminating findings: Intended levels of child agency				
• Resilient Seaview program				
• Safe Cuesta Grande program				
Advocating for impact: Intended levels of child agency				
• Resilient Seaview program				
• Safe Cuesta Grande program				

Figure 13: Intended levels of child agency in the Children's Araucaria study vs children's real levels of agency in the Resilient Seaview and Cuesta Grande programs.

Additionally, the adult facilitator shared an instrument used to measure fire danger ratings

in Australia (McArthur meter) and a board game about fire resilience that was developed with a previous cohort from the Resilient Seaview program. She also included four videos about other cohorts of the Resilient Seaview program and other DRR programs in Australia. Because the students in the Children's Araucaria project were not involved in the creation or selection of these materials, I excluded them from my analysis.

Very few students who participated in the creation and exchange of materials were involved in the final focus group at the Resilient Seaview program. I was able to carry out a session with all the students to hear their comments on the materials they received from Chile and share their impressions of the Children's Araucaria project. Unfortunately, none of the students brought signed consent that day, so it wasn't possible to collect data from this session. The school staff at the Seaview Primary School helped me organize a second focus group. However, only five students attended because it was the last week of the school year. Also, because the school year finished, there wasn't time to continue working on reporting and disseminating findings or advocating for change.

Levels of child agency at the Safe Cuesta Grande program

Figure 13 also illustrates the final levels of child agency at the Safe Cuesta Grande program. In relation to the design of research instruments, the adult facilitators decided that students would create materials using mostly pen and paper, and students decided if they wanted to write messages or create drawings. Students at the Safe Cuesta Grande program created their materials after they received the pen pal letters and video clips from Australia. Overall, they had more power for decision-making during the creation of the materials than the students from the Resilient Seaview program. The adult facilitators at the Safe Cuesta Grande program suggested responding to the pen pal letters and sharing other information about their experiences in DRR. However, students worked autonomously in creating these materials, and the facilitators helped them mostly to organise into subgroups.

In this way, students wrote messages to introduce themselves and respond to some questions from the Australian students. The Chilean students also noticed that one of the video clips from the Resilient Seaview program showed Australian children learning about Aboriginal burn practices. They responded with the illustrated version of the Aboriginal Mapuche story of TrenTren Vilu and CaiCai Vilu that they learned during the Safe Cuesta

Grande program, and that explains the origin of earthquakes and tsunami (Figure 12).

The group also decided to share outcomes from different DRR activities they had done. This included a series of 360-degree photographs that they took during a drill to identify the risk and safe areas in their school's emergency evacuation route. Adult facilitators organized the drill and taught students how to use the cameras on their own. The students accompanied these images with a blog entry about the drill and translated it to English with help from the adult facilitators. Finally, the group shared a video about how to respond to an earthquake at school that was made by two students in the Safe Cuesta Grande program who were part of a participatory video project with me two years earlier. However, it was not possible to schedule a focus group with the students at the Safe Cuesta Grande program. The initial dates for Children's Araucaria project activities were changed because new activities were added with other stakeholders, delaying the final focus group. The adult facilitator in charge explained that these were important opportunities for the children to learn about different aspects of DRR and improve the outcomes of the Safe Cuesta Grande program. In addition to this, one of the two adult facilitators had to leave the project due to lack of funding, so by the end of the year there were no time or human resources left for the focus group.

Because of this, the children at the Safe Cuesta Grande program could not help me interpret the study's findings or draw their own conclusions. Thus, there were no findings for them to report, disseminate or use to advocate for change in their community. However, they did organize a school assembly where they presented the rest of their work in the Safe Cuesta Grande program to their teachers, classmates and parents.

Feedback from facilitators and students on the levels of child agency in the Children's Araucaria study

The interviews with adult facilitators from both countries revealed that, when students had lower levels of agency than what the project had initially intended, it was due to time and organizational pressures. As the adult researcher, I tried to emphasize the importance of letting students decide how to make the materials, but the adult facilitator at the Resilient Seaview program explained that while she aimed to share power for decision-making with students, sometimes she had to take the lead:

'Yeah, I think participatory stuff, like, the kids are really capable of the full process, but

they require all the time, so when it's only a small component of the bigger process, then you have to cut, you have to, at some point, drive parts of it' (Adult facilitator, Resilient Seaview program).

Additionally, the adult facilitator at the Resilient Seaview program expressed that she sometimes felt that it was hard to keep children accountable for their decisions because they tended to forget agreements they made in previous sessions or lost their motivation when taking the lead was more challenging than they expected. She also explained that she had not been part of a project like the Children's Araucaria project before, and now that she knew the type of work that it required, it would take her less time to implement. Thus, in the future, students would have more opportunities to participate in making decisions and leading the work.

Both adult facilitators agreed that, while they were very interested in the Children's Araucaria project, implementing it was challenging due to pressures from their organizations. The Resilient Seaview program was being assessed by its funders, increasing the pressure on delivering the program's official curriculum in time. Although the program had always received positive evaluations, the adult facilitator was worried that some stakeholders may prefer a less participatory approach because they were more interested in delivering disaster risk education (DRE) to larger numbers of students in less time and across a larger geographic area. Meanwhile, since the Safe Cuesta Grande program was a pilot, it was uncertain if it was going to continue the following year (it did not). In relation to this, the adult facilitator's main concern was that community engagement and child participation was not a priority for DRR research in Chile. Also, that schools often lacked the resources like teacher training and time necessary to prioritize DRE.

The five students from the Resilient Seaview program who participated in the final focus group were critical about having little power for making decisions during the Children's Araucaria project, especially when making materials. Despite this, most students agreed that they usually had the opportunity to make decisions during the rest of the Resilient Seaview program's regular activities. Only one student disagreed: 'we don't get to make decisions, cuz, this is mostly [what] happens: we have to repeat everything and everything again. But we don't get to make decisions' (Boy, grade 5, Resilient Seaview program).

Despite having lower levels of decision-making, the students reported that they often enjoyed activities led by adults, including the Children's Araucaria project. Students in the focus group also valued the help they could get from adults for tasks like writing, filming or editing videos, and acknowledged that different children have different needs and interests in collaborating with adults. Thus, they emphasized the importance of having a choice of when to work autonomously and when to work with adult support: 'Some people work better with adults and some don't' (Boy, grade 5, Resilient Seaview program).

The students also said they would have preferred to make more decisions in how to create materials 'because then you can put your own stuff in there' (Boy, grade 6, Resilient Seaview program). For example, one student from the Resilient Seaview program felt that her group had not shared enough about how to stay safe from fires. It is possible that students' low levels of agency in making the materials decreased their sense of ownership over the video clips and pen pal letters. When I showed them these materials, some students remembered participating in activities like making questions or filling the template, but others did not: 'Umm. I can't remember. We just got given the things and to write the letter' (Boy, grade 6, Resilient Seaview program). Others remembered being photographed or filmed during the program but did not know that the footage would be sent to Chile. Yet, during the focus group, two topics emerged in students' insights about children's potential role in DRR and scaling-up participatory research in this field: children expressed interest in collaborating with peers from other disaster-risk areas, and the potential contributions that children can make to disaster education if they are given freedom of expression.

Children's interest in connecting and collaborating with peers in other locations

A strong topic that emerged in the focus group with students from the Resilient Seaview program was their interest in getting to know peers from a different country, the context where they lived and their experiences in DRR. For example, in the pen pal letters, the students from the Resilient Seaview program asked Chilean students about themselves (Table 6).

Table 6: Questions and answers that adolescents exchanged about their lives

Questions from the Resilient Seaview Program, Australia	Answers from the Safe Cuesta Grande program, Chile
• What is your favourite food? • What sports do you like to play? • What is your favourite music? • What other hobbies do you have?	• Hi, I'm Romina, in terms of sports, I like soccer, my favourite food is... well, I don't have any. I'm 13 years old. I like a lot of singers, like a lot. Romina. • Hi, I'm Betzabe, I'm 12 years old and I like to draw, play soccer and my favourite food is sushi. • Hi, I'm Agustin, I like playing soccer, I'm 12 years old, I have 2 dogs and a cat. • I'm weird and my name is Andres. I'm "Shilean" xD My favourite class is math. I study a lot and my average is 7.0⁴ I'm cool and at the same time study a lot xD I had a YouTube channel but not anymore. Bye!

Students sometimes felt nervous about connecting with strangers: 'I was scared if they were like they were just gonna say stuff that... I don't know (laughs). They might have said random stuff' (Female, Grade 5, Resilient Seaview program). Despite this, students at the Resilient Seaview program wanted to connect with the Chilean students again, but with a more active role in creating materials. Students from the Resilient Seaview program highlighted that the illustrated Mapuche story was one of the favourite materials they received from their Chilean peers and proposed using more arts-based methods to overcome time zone and language differences and get to know each other better (i.e. through self-portraits). Students also emphasised wanting to communicate more directly with peers in Chile. To achieve this, they proposed using digital platforms for messaging, videoconferencing, online translators and even learning Spanish.

The importance of freedom of expression and sense of humour

Despite their lack of decision-making over most of the Children's Araucaria project, there were moments when students went 'off-script' and used sense of humour, slang, emojis,

⁴ In the Chilean grading system, 7.0 is the maximum score (equivalent to +A).

riddles, personal quotes and jokes to get to know each other. For example, as described previously, one Chilean student described himself as 'weird' and 'cool' and added the XD emoji that denotes laughter (Table 6). Another example was when a student from the Resilient Seaview program introduced a riddle in his pen pal letter that was not in the template: 'Question - What can you feel, but cannot see, you can hear but does not have a mouth? Answer – (at end of letter)' (Appendix 14).

Also, the video shared by students at the Safe Cuesta Grande program consisted of a series of funny sketches. At the start, students from Cuesta Grande joked about not feeling scared about natural disasters. Then, they played a scene from a talk show where the hosts talked about disasters with their special guests. The hosts were rude to the guests and did not know how to stay safe during a disaster. Then, students did a funny demonstration of a 'good evacuation' and 'bad evacuation' in case of an earthquake. In the 'bad evacuation', students and teachers lost control (i.e. yelled absurdities, fell to the floor, ran without direction) while Wagner's 'Ride of the Valkyries' played in the background. The video also contained a blooper where the students failed to make a human pyramid, waving a scarf as a flag to say goodbye.

In this regard, students from the Resilient Seaview program who participated in the focus group emphasized how important it was for them to be free to express themselves. In the Children's Araucaria project, this would have meant working more autonomously and using more sense of humour. This way of working would allow them to achieve more creative, fun and enjoyable outcomes: 'Cuz the adults, they'll just be like, hum, really bossy, but the children are just like, having fun and laughing because they're not as serious as the adults because they're still having fun. No offence' (Boy, grade 5, Resilient Seaview program).

Students explained that materials about disaster resilience created by and for children could be more engaging and effective for teaching them how to stay safe in case of disaster. Students explained that they preferred to be told how to stay safe by their peers than adults, because they were more likely to interpret their advice as genuine rather than an attempt of control: 'It makes more sense because they're probably like 'I tried that, it's so scary or something'' (Boy, grade 6, Resilient Seaview program). In this regard, the students reported that 'the funny video' (i.e. the participatory video produced by the Chilean students)

effectively taught them how to protect themselves during an earthquake. Further, students explained that the video inspired them to create and send the Chilean students a video about school fire drills.

Discussion

In this study, I aimed to carry out a participatory study where child co-researchers from two DRR programs (one in Chile and one in Australia) connected to explore their experiences in building disaster resilience. Unfortunately, this pilot study was not able to achieve the necessary levels of child agency to be considered participatory research. However, there were interesting lessons about the conditions necessary to scale-up participatory research in a way that promotes meaningful child participation. There is wide agreement in the literature on participatory research that putting the principles of this methodology into practice can be very difficult. In line with the Social Justice Youth Development framework (Ginwright & James, 2002), Kohfeldt, Chhun, Grace and Langhout (2011) explained that child and youth empowerment is largely determined by the context where participatory research is carried out. They criticized that a large part of the literature on participatory research with children about the relationships between adults and child co-researchers focuses solely at the individual level, overlooking the wider social context in which these interactions are embedded. As a result, the tensions that emerge between adults and child co-researchers or between the participatory project and stakeholders are often misinterpreted only as the result of interpersonal difficulties and thus as failures of the participatory process. Instead, Kohfeldt, Chhun, Grace and Langhout (2011) proposed an ecological model of child empowerment, where tensions are understood as challenges that can inform the researcher about the social structures that facilitate or constrain child empowerment, as well as what aspects are more or less receptive to change.

Adopting an ecological model of child empowerment influences how we understand the values, goals, roles and outcomes of participatory research as a process that is bounded by its context but at the same time seeks to transform it (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). The setting of participatory research involves different elements from its social climate and organizational context such as norms, policies, procedures, roles and history. From an ecological perspective, empowerment is more than an individual or collective sense of efficacy. It must

also involve children gaining control over the resources that affect the conditions and circumstances of their everyday lives. Many of these resources are material, but they also include narratives, policies, services and discourses (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). Thus, the values and principles of participatory research are sharing power for decision making with child co-researchers, democratizing the creation of knowledge, valuing diverse perspectives, facilitating critical consciousness to identify social issues and their root causes, and mobilizing positive social change.

These values are put into practice by adults and child co-researchers with the ultimate goal of generating second order change: transforming the relationships and roles underlying the larger social structure (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). This goal is achieved by challenging the values and practices that prevent organizations from sharing power for decision making with children. In turn, participatory research is expected to generate outcomes at the individual, organizational and community levels. Individually, child co-researchers can develop skills like critical consciousness, citizenship and developing an individual and collective identity as agents of change and creators of knowledge (Ginwright & James, 2002; Kohfeldt et al., 2011). Meanwhile, organizations involved in participatory research can become more accountable and develop more sustainable and participatory structures, practices and policies. At the community level, participatory research can help allocate more resources that support children's wellbeing, generate sustainable partnerships and trigger shifts in power that benefit children.

However, Kohfeldt, Chhun, Grace and Langhout (2011) warned that sustainable second order change takes considerable time, and is a mid to long-term outcome of participatory research with children. Often, tensions emerge when differing values conflict or when there is pressure to change an organization's values, practices and assumptions about childhood. In relation to this, Shier (2001) explained that children's right to participation is the most radical aspect of the UNCRC and the most difficult to put into practice. Normally, organizations must go through a complex process of gradually transforming their structures to allow higher levels of child involvement in decision-making. To understand this process, Shier (2001, p. 110) proposed five levels of participation:

1. Organizations are ready to listen to children but do not actively seek their opinions.

2. Organizations actively support children to express their views by making sure that adults and children have the necessary time, space and skills for dialogue. This level fulfills children's right to express themselves.
3. Organizations consider children's views when making decisions and give feedback to children when their ideas cannot be put into practice. This level fulfills children's rights to have their views considered in matters that affect them.
4. Organizations share the power and responsibility for decision-making with children, based on a careful assessment of the potential risks and benefits for children's wellbeing. This level is not required by the UNCRC but is the only one that promotes children's empowerment as active decision-makers.

An organization may be located at any of these levels, making it a more or less enabling environment for participatory research with children. Within each level, an organization will also have different degrees of commitment to its participatory practices. Thus, when organizations transform their norms, values and procedures, they go from initially being open to the idea and preparing to facilitate higher levels of child agency, to creating concrete opportunities and finally making these changes an obligation by incorporating them into their organizational structure (Shier, 2001).

Based on the above, I argue that, although the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs were designed as participatory DRR programs for children, in practice they were still in the process of transforming their organizational structures to allow a more active involvement of children as decision makers. Thus, this pilot study can contribute with important insights about the tensions that arose between the participatory research project and its context.

Sharing power for decision-making with children will challenge adult assumptions about children not being competent enough to make choices in their best interest (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). Further, excluding children from decision-making processes may be seen as the only alternative to comply with organizational policies and quality standards. For example, the adult facilitator at the Resilient Seaview program expressed that she felt forced to make decisions for children because involving them would require too much time and they often changed their minds.

In this type of context, adult facilitators may face the dilemma of having to choose between listening to children or adult stakeholders (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). Thus, external mandates or expectations can severely limit participatory projects with children (Ozer et al., 2013). Moreover, when children's measurable performance is prioritized over their agency during the learning process, not fulfilling a program's curriculum can endanger a teacher's reputation and even their job (Kohfeldt et al., 2011; Ozer et al., 2013). This situation was observed in the high levels of pressure experienced by the facilitators in Chile and Australia, who were both worried about the continuity of their programs. For the facilitator at the Resilient Seaview program, not fulfilling the curriculum could mean that the project would receive a negative evaluation and lose its funding because some stakeholders preferred to focus on initiatives that could deliver disaster risk education to a large population across a wider geographic areas and in less time. Meanwhile, the facilitator at the Safe Cuesta Grande program was eager to demonstrate that children were engaging in a large number of activities with diverse stakeholders so the school and research centre would continue the program the following year. However, this left no time to carry out the final focus group in the Children's Araucaria project. Despite her efforts, the Safe Cuesta Grande program lost a large amount of funding during its implementation and was not renewed for a second year, proving that these concerns were real. These limitations can be perceived by adult facilitators as manifestations of larger political barriers and generate feelings of powerlessness and lack of support from their organizations (Ozer et al., 2013). In line with this, the adult facilitators in Chile and Australia reported feeling that participatory work with children as part of DRR was not a priority for some key stakeholders.

The tensions that the adult facilitators faced during the Children's Araucaria study were also related to another kind of obstacle for participatory research with children. Structural challenges like rigid hierarchies, the concentration of power mostly in the higher levels of the organization, rules and limited resources (money, time, space) can also limit children's agency to influence the direction of their projects (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). Although the Children's Araucaria project could overcome some pragmatic challenges of scaling-up like working across different times zones and with groups that spoke different languages, lack of time remained as the most difficult obstacle to children's agency. This was due to adult facilitator's need to demonstrate measurable outcomes that were meaningful for adult

stakeholders, but also to avoid children missing out on the rest of their program's activities outside the Children's Araucaria project, as well as other school and non-school commitments. Also, the adult facilitator at the Resilient Seaview program highlighted that although she had experience in participatory DRR programs for children, she was not familiar with scaling-up participatory research on this topic. Because of this, preparing and carrying out activities for the Children's Araucaria project took longer than she expected. This, in turn, exacerbated the project's lack of time, affecting her ability to share more power for decision-making with her students.

All the above illustrates that, like children, adults are also embedded in power dynamics (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). In addition to the constraints that the adult facilitators faced in Chile and Australia, as the adult researcher, I too did not have enough authority to secure child co-researchers' meaningful participation. From the start of the project, I was aware that it would be impossible for me to be present in both locations and work directly with all child co-researchers, so I had to share this task with the adult facilitators. Being an external researcher from a prestigious university may have given me enough influence (Kohfeldt et al., 2011) to successfully propose the Children's Araucaria project to the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs. However, as an international PhD student I had little influence over how the project was implemented. In this sense, I was also led by my own agenda, which consisted of observing the processes of scaling-up participatory research with children, but also fulfilling the requirements for the timely completion of my PhD. Thus, I experienced significant pressures in terms of time limitations and felt that I depended on the adult facilitators' willingness to work with me. For this reason, I did not feel completely free to express my opinions about how the project was being implemented and felt compelled to comply with what the adult facilitators presented as the only feasible solution to carry out the Children's Araucaria project. Meanwhile, for the children in this study, scaling-up participatory research was not their priority (or at least not their main priority), so they may have been more interested in participating in getting to know students from another country than interpreting the study findings with me.

Despite the fact that the Children's Araucaria project did not fulfill the standards of a participatory study, this pilot provided important lessons about the challenges of scaling-up

that informed my main study, Kids Contribute (see Chapter 8: Child co-researchers' experiences of agency during the Kids Contribute study). In a multimethod study, Ozer, Newlan, Douglas and Hubbard (2013) explored how children's power for decision-making can be promoted despite contextual constraints. They observed that adults can use different strategies to promote agency so child co-researchers can still experience relatively higher levels of agency in comparison with other aspects of their everyday lives. Adult facilitators can manage buy-in when some aspects of the study cannot be determined with children (e.g. choosing the broad research topic) by presenting these aspects as incomplete and offering child co-researchers an opportunity to finish them (e.g. narrowing down the research questions). In this way, child co-researchers can still have a say on key decisions about the study. The authors also found that adults can continuously create opportunities for child co-researchers to make decisions during the course of the study (e.g. taking charge over meeting agendas, leading presentations) and act as a 'buffer' between child co-researchers and contextual barriers to help them navigate social and political structures (Ozer et al., 2013).

Some of these strategies were used by the adult facilitators in this study. While the adult facilitator at the Resilient Seaview program argued that the group of students was too large for all of them to make decisions about the project in an efficient way, the facilitators at the Safe Cuesta Grande program took a different approach by giving children a broad instruction and then letting them decide the rest of the process. For example, they provided children with pen and paper to create materials and respond to the pen pal letters, but it was the children who decided what they wanted to do (e.g. making illustrations, checking for grammar) and what they said in their responses.

Additionally, it would have been useful to spend more time preparing the groundwork for the Children's Araucaria study. In this way, the adult facilitators and I would have been able to discuss potential constraints and negotiate how to implement the Children's Araucaria study without compromising their commitments with other stakeholders. This would have also served to clarify the differences between our understandings of what is meaningful child participation and how to promote it. Further, it could have been possible to include students' views of what was meaningful engagement and power for decision-making for

them.

Overall, the findings from this pilot study are relevant for scaling-up participatory research with children. This is especially important considering that involving children in decision-making at the regional or national levels can be even more difficult than in their communities (Shier, 2001) and that creating change at higher ecological levels is a long process (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). In particular, this pilot study showed that working across different study locations requires a careful examination of the constraints that each particular context may present to child empowerment. In this sense, the scale of a project is more than the sum of its study locations. Instead, researchers in scaled-up participatory projects with children must navigate an even more diverse and complex set of contextual constraints with lower levels of control. Scaling-up also presents new logistical challenges, like coordinating and communicating across communities in distant locations (Fletcher et al., 2016). Additionally, differences in adults' understandings of child agency and their experience in participatory research can lead to important differences in child co-researchers' participation in different study sites (Kornbluh, Neal and Ozer, 2016; Gibbs et al., 2020). Thus, scaling-up can magnify the contextually bounded nature of participatory research with children, and understanding its processes and outcomes requires an ecological approach.

The findings from this study also suggest that contextual constraints can damage opportunities for promoting critical consciousness when scaling-up participatory research with children. In the Children's Araucaria study, only five students from the Resilient Seaview program participated in interpreting data or drawing conclusions, and none from Chile. However, it is possible that the rest of the students did engage in critically reflecting about the project, but I could not observe them because I wasn't present or lacked signed consent to document it. Thus, another important lesson from this study was that, when scaling-up participatory research, adults should create multiple opportunities for child co-researchers to contribute to the final outcomes and applications of a study. A mistake in the design of the Children's Araucaria study was to wait for the final stage of the research to provide this type of opportunity, and only using focus groups. Instead, it would have been more effective to do this at different points during the study and offer alternatives like individual interviews

or arts-based methods. This is important considering that not all child co-researchers will be able or willing to participate across the whole research process or will engage in the same way (Kornbluh, Neal and Ozer, 2016; Gibbs et al., 2020). Additionally, if children don't develop a sense of ownership over the project, they may not be interested in sharing their views and interpretations even if they are given the opportunity. This may have been the case with some students from the Resilient Seaview program, who did not provide signed consent to participate in the final focus group.

Despite the challenges to observing how scaling-up participatory research with children influenced child co-researchers' insights about their roles in DRR, two themes emerged from the data in the focus group with students from the Resilient Seaview program. Children were interested in directly collaborating with peers from other countries to promote shared learning about hazards and how to promote disaster resilience. This confirmed previous findings by Seballos and Tanner (2011) who suggested the potential of creating opportunities for children to shape the global DRR agenda after working with child co-researchers in different communities of El Salvador and the Philippines.

This pilot also found evidence supporting the importance of opening spaces for children's free expression through play and sense of humour in DRR (Midtbust, Dyregrov, & Djup, 2018). The literature shows that humour has been successfully used in educational programs led by young peer educators in topics like sexual education (Gordon & Gere, 2016; Scott-Parker & Fox, 2015) as it can help approach difficult topics, relieve from monotony and reinforce information (Allen, 2014). A playful and humorous atmosphere can also promote creative thinking (Ziv, 1983) and lower levels of stress (Staempfli, 2007). Thus, humour could be a useful resource to communicate disaster risk to children (Midtbust et al., 2018). However, humour must be used with caution, as it can serve to reinforce conventional power hierarchies, disrupt learning, offend or discriminate (Allen, 2014).

In 2014, the United States Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched a campaign called 'Preparedness 101: Zombie Apocalypse' through social media (Fraustino & Ma, 2015; Midtbust et al., 2018). The objective of the campaign was to raise awareness in the general population about the importance of preparing for a future disaster. The campaign was successful in terms of its reach, as it quickly became viral in Twitter and

Facebook. However, Fraustino and Ma (2015) found that a humorous message could result in less intention to prepare for disasters than a more traditional non-humorous message. Further, humorous messages could be misinterpreted and have unexpected effects. Houghton and colleagues (2017) compared the effects of using a zombie-themed scenario versus a natural disaster scenario in a disaster preparedness intervention with 89 children 9 to 12 years old. They found that using the zombie scenario resulted in more children arguing that having firearms would be necessary to prepare for a disaster.

However, in their study, Houghton and colleagues (2017) may have confused the use of humour with play. From this perspective, the authors did not consider that children may have responded that guns were necessary because the adults presented a scenario where the idea of firearms is acceptable and in fact follows the 'social norms' established by a long tradition of zombie entertainment (movies, TV series, video games) and a toy industry that continues to consider toy guns as suitable for children. Thus, children may have failed to understand that the researchers' questions at the end of the study corresponded to a real disaster-scenario using real guns because they are used to engaging in play as a way of learning and socializing (Jans, 2004; Shier, 2015). Getting 'serious' about guns and zombies would have broken the unspoken rules of playing 'as if' the Zombie Apocalypse was real. Meanwhile, in the Children's Araucaria study, students from the Resilient Seaview program were perfectly capable of differentiating between the 'good' and 'bad' emergency evacuations in the 'funny video' from Chile.

Also, Houghton and colleagues (2017) did not report if they engaged in any dialogue with the children from their study where they critically reflected on their responses. In their participatory study, Kohfeldt, Chhun, Grace and Langhout (2011) found that adults often have the assumption that children are incapable of coming up with realistic or pragmatic solutions for real problems. For this reason, they don't consider the possibility that children are capable of developing effective and feasible solutions if they are given the opportunity to critically examine their initial ideas.

In contrast, authors like Mitchell and colleagues (2008) have found evidence supporting that children and young people are crucial risk communicators for their families and communities, but that risk communication models still overlook their contributions. In this

sense, the study by Houghton and colleagues (2017) did not consider that educational humorous messages for children may be misinterpreted because they are created from an adult perspective. Meanwhile, in the Children's Araucaria study, children advocated for using humour in educational materials made *for* children and *by* children. Incorporating children's perspectives would help create an engaging and effective message. More research is needed on how to achieve this goal.

Summary

In this chapter, I reported the outcomes of the Araucaria pilot study. This study focused on children's contributions to disaster risk reduction in programs located in two different countries: Chile and Australia. This study did not achieve the necessary levels of child agency to be considered a participatory study. However, it helped identify important logistical, communication and coordination challenges to scaling-up participatory research with children. Based on these findings, I argued that scaling-up participatory research with children requires an ecological approach to understand its contextual constraints and how they affect children's empowerment and critical consciousness. While it wasn't possible to carry out an in-depth exploration of how scaling-up participatory research influenced child co-researchers' insights about their roles in DRR, this study found evidence confirming that children are interested in collaborating with peers to promote shared learning in DRR, and that they value using sense of humour as an educational tool. In the next chapters, I will report my work in the Kids Contribute study.

Chapter 6: The Kids Contribute Study: Scaling-up Participatory Research to Gain a Better Understanding of Children's Contributions in their Everyday Lives

Background

In recent decades, social constructions of childhood have been interrogated and transformed. The United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) was a key milestone in acknowledging children as social actors who have the right to be protected from harm and to participate in decisions that affect them. Furthermore, children's right to participation is directly linked to their protection, as incorporating their views is fundamental for effectively securing their safety, development and wellbeing (Shier, 2015). The increased focus on children's rights resulted in a growing call for opening spaces for children to influence decision-making processes that create or improve policies, services and programs in areas like health (Patton et al., 2016), disability (Liegghio et al., 2010) and disaster risk reduction (Haynes & Tanner, 2015).

Research has shown that children are constantly engaged in their communities' social and cultural life (Corona, 2012; Corona & Pérez, 2007). Research on child development has found that children's prosocial behaviours first begin to emerge during early childhood (Dunfield & Kuhlmeier, 2013; Hammond & Carpendale, 2015; Hepach, Vaish, Grossmann, & Tomasello, 2016; Recchia, Wainryb, Bourne, & Pasupathi, 2015; Warneken & Tomasello, 2013). Further, recent developments in neuroscience also suggest that adolescents are 'wired' to help others (Patton et al., 2016).

Authors like Scott (Scott, 2014) emphasize that helping is crucial for the development of young people's sense of identity, efficacy and belonging, but research often overlooks children's contributions in their daily lives. Understanding children's everyday contributions may be crucial to support their wellbeing and mental health. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is: 'a state of wellbeing in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.' (Scott, 2014). For Keys (1998), mental health depends both on individual and social aspects of wellbeing. Thus,

people's sense of making a positive contribution to the world is closely associated with their sense of self-worth, efficacy and responsibility. Elder (1998) and Werner and colleagues (1993; 1992) demonstrated that children who help their families during times of hardship develop fundamental skills for overcoming life's challenges. Children's contributions are also shaped by the contexts they live in. Previous research has found that, in higher income contexts, children may have more opportunities to contribute through volunteering and donating to charity (Pastorelli et al., 2016), while in other contexts children enter the workforce and provide for their families (Porter et al., 2010; Stasiulis, 2002).

However, there is scarce evidence on children's own perspectives about their role as contributors (Recchia et al., 2015), including how their local contexts shape the nature and meaning of their contributions. Participatory research with children can help fill these gaps in our knowledge. In Chapter 1: Introduction and Chapter 2: Conceptual framework I explained that participatory research with children emphasizes that children are *subjects* rather than *objects* of knowledge (Jans, 2004). Recently, researchers have begun to increase the size and scope of participatory research with young co-researchers. This could help explore children's perspectives and experiences of contributing across different contexts. However, as previously discussed in Chapter 1: Introduction, there are important challenges to scaling-up participatory research with children and it's still unclear how to stay true to the principles of participatory research.

In Chapter 3: Literature Review, I discussed the pressing need to examine how scaling-up participatory research may influence child co-researchers' critical consciousness about social issues and their agency in the research. Paulo Freire's (2017) seminal work on critical consciousness focused on how it develops in adults (see Chapter 2: Conceptual framework). Since then, a growing body of research has explored how children develop awareness and critical consciousness about social issues. Using quantitative (Diemer et al., 2015; Watts et al., 2011) and qualitative (Clonan-Roy, Jacobs, & Nakkula, 2016; Ginwright & James, 2002; Hope & Bañales, 2019) approaches, researchers have found evidence confirming that childhood is a critical period for the development of critical consciousness which, in turn, is an important aspect of their overall positive development and wellbeing. Authors like Ginwright and Cammarota (2002), Kohfeldt and Langhout (2012) and Nguyen and Quinn

(2018) also explored how actively engaging in participatory research can help enhance children's critical reflections and actions in relation to issues that affect them, their communities and the world.

Methodology

Study setting

This chapter reports the qualitative and participatory component of a larger mixed-methods study called the Kids Contribute study. The Kids Contribute study aimed to gain a better understanding of how children in Australia contribute in their everyday lives and how this relates to their resilience. This project emerged from a collaboration between the University of Melbourne's Child and Community Wellbeing Unit and the Australian Broadcasting Commission's (ABC) Behind the News show. Behind the News (BtN) is an educational TV show for children that has been broadcast for over 50 years to Australian schools and homes. This TV show also regularly uses its website as a platform for viewer input using online polls that attract responses from young viewers all across the country. In 2015, BtN released the Happiness Survey which, as its name suggests, focused on what made children in Australia feel happy. The poll received around 20,000 responses. It was repeated in 2017 with input from the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit and received over 47,000 responses. The Child and Community Wellbeing Unit analysed the quantitative data collected, leading to an ongoing collaboration with BtN.

In 2017, the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit proposed a poll about children's contributions in Australia to explore and acknowledge their active role in the community. Unlike previous polls designed by adults from BtN and the University of Melbourne, the Kids Contribute Poll aimed to incorporate children and young people's views in the process of making the poll. To achieve this, the team at the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit developed a scaled-up model of participatory research where child co-researchers (also referred to in this thesis as young co-researchers) would actively participate in creating questions for the online poll, interpreting its results and reporting their findings.

The Kids Contribute study had two main components. The first one was qualitative and participatory, and consisted of collaborating with young co-researchers to explore their

views and experiences about contributing, use their insights to co-develop questions for the Kids Contribute Poll and help interpret the poll findings. Additionally, child co-researchers would have the opportunity to be involved in the reporting and dissemination of their findings as co-authors and transmit their final recommendations to a panel of adult experts from different fields and areas of practice at a National Child and Youth Forum that was carried out at the University.

The second component of the Kids Contribute study was quantitative and consisted of using BtN's digital platform to open the Kids Contribute Poll to child viewers across Australia. The poll had 17 items developed in collaboration with child co-researchers. The poll also included the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM-R), a self-report instrument that aims to assess the socio-ecological elements of resilience (Resilience Research Centre, 2016) (for the complete poll, please see Appendix 15). More specifically, the Kids Contribute Poll included the CYRM-12, a brief version designed for youth between 10 and 23 years old.

The qualitative and participatory component of the Kids Contribute study served to explore two different topics. The first topic was **child co-researchers' views and experiences of contributing in their everyday lives**. Additionally, it provided an opportunity to **explore the processes and outcomes of collaborating with child co-researchers when scaling-up participatory research**. The design of the Kids Contribute study fulfilled the definition of scaling-up participatory research that I adopted for my PhD research (see Glossary and Chapter 3: Literature Review) in the following ways:

- **Expanding the geographic scale of the research:** The Kids Contribute study progressively increased in size and scale. Our team began recruiting child co-researchers in different locations of the Melbourne metropolitan area. Gradually, new child co-researchers joined the study from across the state of Victoria, and then other states in the country.
- **Promoting child decision-making across the research:** Child co-researchers were actively involved in making decisions across key stages of the research that involved the different ecological levels of the study (local, national).
- **Promoting child empowerment:** Child co-researchers were actively involved in research and advocacy activities at the local and national levels.

- **Dialogue:** child co-researchers across study locations collaborated in an overarching study, first by working in separate teams and then gathering at the forum.

Research questions

In this context, I took part in the Kids Contribute study as the adult researcher who would collaborate with young co-researchers in the qualitative and participatory component of the study. While the overall Kids Contribute study aimed to explore children's views of contributing and their relationship to resilience, my PhD study had the objective of exploring **how does scaling-up participatory research influence child co-researchers' critical consciousness and their agency in the research?**

To achieve this aim, the following questions guided the research:

- How did being co-researchers influence children's critical reflection and critical action?
- How did scaling-up shape child co-researchers' development of critical consciousness?
- How did scaling-up participatory research influence child co-researchers' agency in their relationship with adults?

Collaborating with children as co-researchers and key informants

The child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute study were children living in different parts of Australia and from a mix of backgrounds. The maximum age for participating was 18 years old, and although there was no explicit minimum age for child co-researchers, the youngest was 7 years old. Apart from being under 18 years old, there were no other inclusion or exclusion criteria for participating in the Kids Contribute study. The same was true for child co-researchers participating in the forum, with the exception that child co-researchers who wanted to present in front of the audience had to consent (and have parent/caregiver consent) to be included in shared photos and video recordings, because it wouldn't be possible to delete them from the forum coverage that would be later used for study reports and media releases.

The children who participated in the Kids Contribute Study in this way had a double role as

co-researchers and key informants. As child co-researchers, they would share power for decision-making with the adult researchers over different stages: co-developing poll questions, interpreting results, and developing key messages and recommendations for the forum. Because of this, young co-researchers had the right to be acknowledged as co-authors of the research in some study reports and the National and Youth Forum if they wished.

At the same time, children were key informants that shared their insights on how they contributed in their everyday lives and their experience as co-researchers during focus groups and research meetings. In this sense, they had the right to privacy and confidentiality regarding what they said and did during focus groups and research meetings.

Recruitment

The recruitment process aimed to invite child co-researchers from a mixture of different ages, genders and from urban/rural, low/middle income and migrant backgrounds. It was also possible to work remotely with child co-researchers living out of the state of Victoria, in Western Australia, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory. Rather than setting up a specific strategy to scale from the local to the national level, the recruitment phase of the Kids Contribute study expanded organically as we first connected with collaborators and organizations within Melbourne, then from across Victoria and then from interstate. The names of places and organizations and other types of potentially identifying information have been changed or omitted to protect children's privacy.

A variety of different recruitment methods were used. The CCW Unit recruited 10 teams of 4 – 12 child co-researchers at seven different locations (schools, sports clubs and charity organizations). It is important to explain that, other than the potential benefits that being a co-researcher can offer children (e.g. enjoy the experiences, developing research skills), no additional incentives were offered to child co-researchers (e.g. money, gift cards) at the time of recruitment. In some study locations, adult staff at each organization invited the potential child co-researchers, explained the study to them in their own words and then gave them Plain Language Statements (PLS) (Appendix 16) and consent forms for them (Appendix 17) and their parents/guardians (Appendix 18 and Appendix 19).

In one study location, adult staff nominated one young person who were then given the opportunity to invite 3 – 4 friends from the same organization to be part of their research team. Then, I personally met with them to explain the study in my own words and deliver the PLS and consent forms. A third way for children to join the Kids Contribute study emerged when the study was covered by the media. In these cases, the lead researcher was first contacted by parents or family members because their child was keen to be a co-researcher. The lead researcher explained the project and provided the PLS and consent forms in person, by phone and e-mail. Finally, one child co-researcher was nominated by BtN, because he had previously participated in a story broadcast on this TV show.

A second stage of consent applied to the presentation of their Kids Contribute findings and recommendations to a panel of influential Australian adults and young people (two UNICEF Youth Ambassadors) representing different fields at a National Child and Youth Forum. Those who accepted were given the forum information sheets and signed consent forms for young co-researchers (Appendix 20) and their parents/guardians (Appendix 21).

The process of working with child co-researchers

In this section, I explain the process of my PhD study within the larger Kids Contribute study as well as how and when child co-researchers were involved across the stages of data collection, data analysis and the reporting of results. As previously explained, the Kids Contribute study consisted of a series of stages (Figure 14). First, I met with child co-researchers to discuss their experiences and insights into contributing. Based on these discussions, we developed and tested questions for the Kids Contribute Poll, that was launched by BtN. Then, we met again to interpret the poll findings together. After this, child co-researchers developed key messages and recommendations that they presented at the National Child and Youth Forum. Then, I met with child co-researchers one more time to ask for their feedback on the Kids Contribute study. Finally, I worked on my own to report the overall findings of this PhD research.

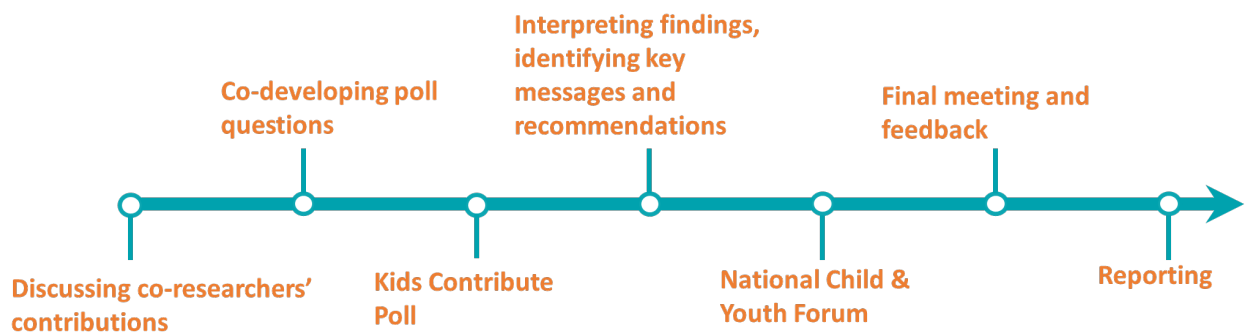


Figure 14: Stages of the Kids Contribute Study

Figure 15 presents the research components of my PhD project in more detail. The data collection stage consisted of collaborating with child co-researchers across the Kids Contribute study and exploring their insights during focus groups and research meetings. The data collected was then analysed in different ways, with varying levels of child co-researchers' involvement. Young co-researchers were active collaborators in making BtN poll questions, interpreting poll findings, developing key messages and recommendations and presenting at the forum. I also analysed the data on my own in two ways. First, I carried out a thematic analysis of child co-researchers' initial insights into how they contributed in their everyday lives and how their views were transformed after they presented the poll findings. Then, I analysed child co-researchers' feedback on their experience in the Kids Contribute Study using narrative synthesis.

The results of these analyses are reported in the next two chapters. In Chapter 7, I report my results on how child co-researchers' critical consciousness developed as they devised poll questions, interpreted results, and developed key messages that they presented at the forum. In Chapter 8 I present an analytic story of child co-researchers' experiences in the Kids Contribute study that I used as a reflexive exercise to examine my influence in the research and child co-researchers' agency across the project.

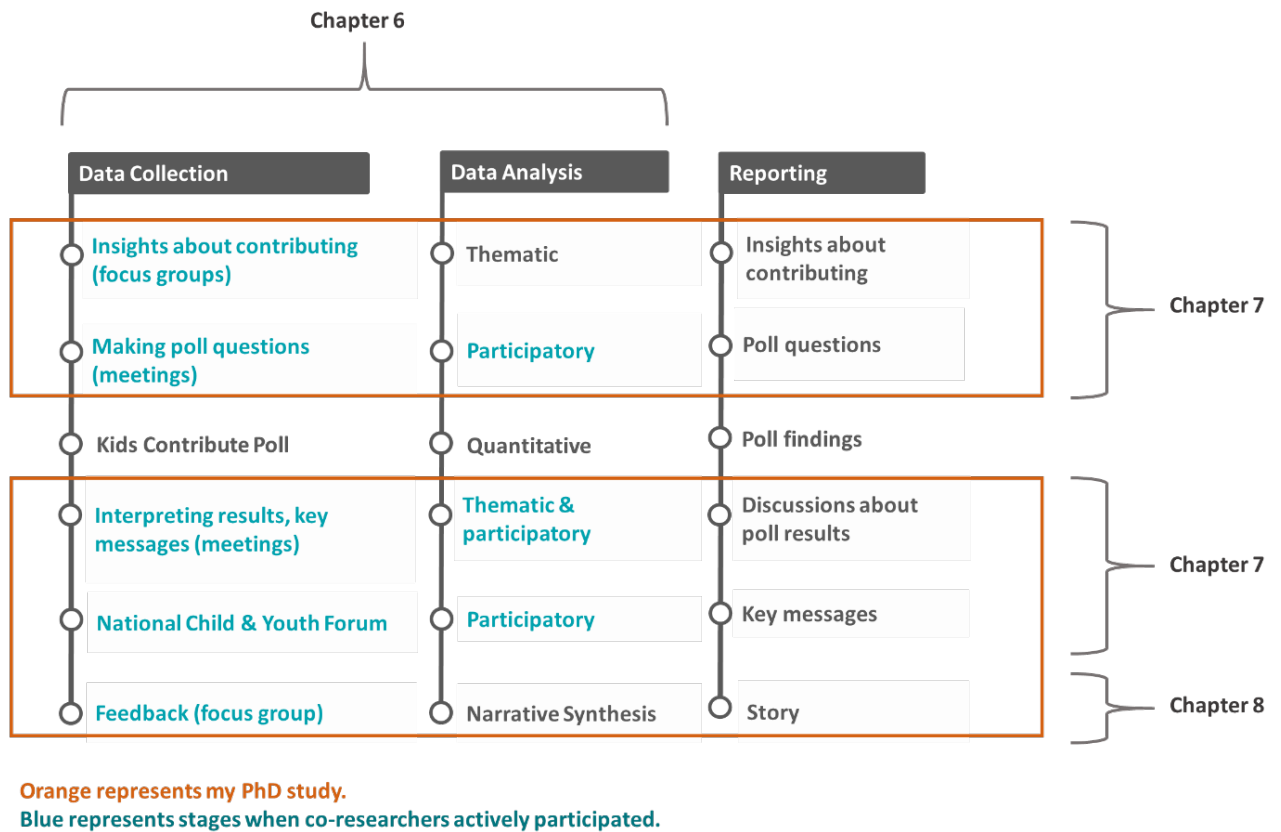


Figure 15: Research components of the Kids Contribute Study

Data collection methods

As the PhD researcher, I led almost all the initial focus groups and research meetings with child co-researchers, either in-person or via videoconference. The only two exceptions were some child co-researchers who lived inter-state and would not benefit from working remotely with me because there was not enough rapport and/or communicating via telephone or online was not feasible. All focus group or research meetings with child co-researchers lasted about one hour and were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis. I also took notes after each session with child co-researchers and developed research memos to support the process of analysing the data.

Generating mind maps and other working documents was an important part of focus groups and meetings with child co-researchers. This helped keep track of the ideas and keep a collaborative record of the work carried out by the adult researcher and child co-researchers. Often, the mind maps were used to review previous advances in the research

process. The adult researcher and child co-researchers also registered their work using lists, slides, or by highlighting and marking documents. I collected all these documents to support my analysis of the data.

As previously shown, I collected data across the following stages:

Focus groups about child co-researchers' insights into contributing:

The first focus group discussions were guided by a theme guide that explored how child co-researchers contributed in their everyday lives at home, school and community; how they felt about contributing; what motivated them to help; and how contributing changed as children and adolescents grow up (Appendix 22).

Co-developing the Kids Contribute Poll

Young co-researchers helped develop poll questions. During research meetings, we discussed what topics about contributing they were interested in asking other children across Australia. Together we worked on creating multiple-choice questions, the format required for the online poll. I gathered these questions and worked with the CCW Unit team to generate a preliminary version of the poll. This version was then tested with some child co-researchers using a Thinking Aloud approach to gather young people's impressions as they responded to the poll (Willis, DeMaio, & Harris-Kojetin, 1999). With this information, the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit team put together a new version of the poll that was reviewed by the BtN team, who made minor modifications to some of the wording. For a more detailed description of the process of making and testing the poll questions with child co-researchers, please see Chapter 7: How did being co-researchers in the Kids Contribute study influence children's critical consciousness? .

The Kids Contribute Poll

The Kids Contribute Poll went online on BtN's official website between March – April 2017 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URwlzHwyUZE>). The BtN team collected the data and delivered it in a de-identified spreadsheet to the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit team, who carried out the data analysis.

Interpreting findings, identifying key messages and recommendations

I summarized the quantitative findings of the Kids Contribute Poll in a PowerPoint

presentation (Appendix 23) that I showed to each team of child co-researchers. Child co-researchers also watched a video of how BtN covered the poll results in one of their stories (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7p39fVIYmEw>). Based on these materials, the child co-researchers and I discussed their impressions of the poll findings. Using a theme guide (Appendix 24), I asked child co-researchers if they felt that the poll findings reflected their expectations, what were the most relevant findings for them, and what were their messages and recommendations for how to support children and adolescents to contribute in society.

National Child and Youth Forum:

I met with child co-researchers 1 – 4 times to prepare for the forum (one child co-researcher from interstate worked with the help of a school staff member). During these meetings, child co-researchers continued developing their key messages and recommendations, and chose how to present them to a panel of adult and young experts (i.e. PowerPoint presentations, videos, skits). The members of the panel were selected based on how their work was related to the topics of child co-researchers' presentations and their potential to act upon child co-researchers' ideas and recommendations. A more detailed description of how the panel was formed is included in Chapter 8: Child co-researchers' experiences of agency during the Kids Contribute study. Each presentation focused on a topic that child co-researchers found to be the most relevant for them and was targeted at one or more members of the panel who would be able to respond and act upon it. The presentations carried out by child co-researchers at the National Child and Youth Forum were videorecorded and transcribed for analysis. The supporting PowerPoint files (Appendix 25) and the forum report Appendix 26) were also collected for analysis.

Child co-researchers' feedback on the Kids Contribute Study:

At the end of the Kids Contribute study, I conducted focus group discussions to explore child co-researchers' experience of the research process. For example, I asked child co-researchers about the levels of agency they experienced during the study, what topics and activities interested them the most, what level of decision-making they would prefer if they engaged in another participatory study, and what were their impressions of collaborating with child co-researchers from different backgrounds and places in Australia (see Appendix 27).

Reporting

The final stage of my PhD research consisted of gathering all the collected data and including the participatory elements of the analysis with my own interpretation of the data. As previously explained, this process was based on data and interpretations that child co-researchers and I generated in collaboration. Yet, the final outcomes of the reporting stage are the result of my individual work.

Data analysis methods

Thematic analysis:

I carried out an abductive thematic analysis of the transcribed material (i.e. focus groups, research meetings, forum presentations) to identify and analyse patterns in child co-researchers' insights about contributing before and after the Kids Contribute Poll. In an iterative process, I moved back and forth from a) deductively applying my previous frameworks and theories to the data (i.e. going from the general to the particular) to b) inductively exploring what topics, categories and themes emerged from the data (i.e. going from the particular to the general) (Liamputtong, 2013, p. 249). First, I reviewed transcript material to search for meanings present across the data to identify small categories or codes. Then, I grouped these categories into wider themes. This was an ongoing and iterative process that went back and forth between my analysis and the original data.

Narrative synthesis:

As a reflexive exercise, I also carried out a narrative synthesis analysis to gain a better understanding of how child co-researchers' experiences and views about collaborating with adults in research evolved over time. Narrative synthesis or crafting stories has been proposed as an innovative, rigorous, and trustworthy tool for researchers to analyse and present data. In this method, language is understood as a tool for creating and interpreting meanings, not a 'transparent medium' to objectively describe the world (Crowther, Ironside, Spence, & Smythe, 2017; Dan Goodley, 2004). This means that using stories is not proposed as the only and best way to analyse data, but one that can help identify meanings that could remain hidden using other strategies (Crowther et al., 2017; D Goodley & Clough, 2004).

While other approaches establish that verbatim data or text should be altered as little as possible, researchers who work with stories acknowledge that no data can provide the full

and final account of people’s experiences, and any type of analysis involves the researchers’ subjective interpretations (Crowther et al., 2017). Narratives are also constantly being renewed: no story can be a final account of an event. People can narrate a same experience in various ways, depending on contextual factors like time, audience, prompts, new experiences, new insights, and even how many times the story had been told (Crowther et al., 2017). Therefore, different stories can tell equally significant versions of the truth. Thus, instead of seeking generalizability or replicability, stories aim to be *authentic* in terms of their capacity to express and resonate with others in an engaging and plausible way (Crowther et al., 2017; Dan Goodley, 2004).

Crafting stories is an iterative and sometimes messy process. However, it’s possible to summarize this process into a series of steps that progressively generate new insights and lead to a final story (Dan Goodley, 2004). The process of crafting the stories advanced from an inductive, to a deductive and finally abductive approach to the data (Figure 16), as explained further below.

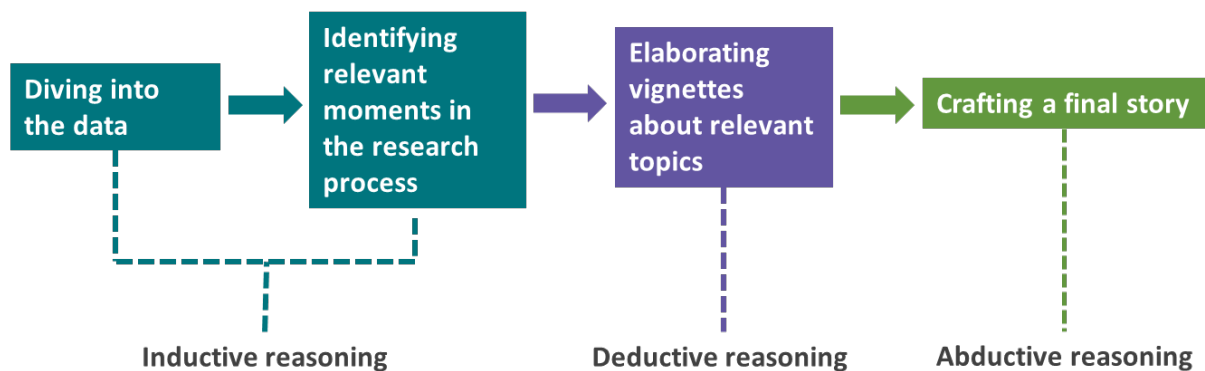


Figure 16: The process of crafting stories

The first step consisted of inductively approaching the data collected during activities with child co-researchers (i.e. verbatim transcriptions of meetings, focus groups, notes, memos). Starting from the particular to the general helped me identify important moments across the research process. I highlighted and put together these moments into a master record that reflected the experiences of each team of child co-researchers.

Then, I put together the identified bits of transcript into various short vignettes (Dan

Goodley, 2004) (Appendix 28), with each vignette representing the experience of one or more child co-researchers around topics that strongly emerged in the data in relation to their experience in the study, the development of critical consciousness and sharing power between adults and children. The different topics also reflected the different stages of the project, including how child co-researchers reflected about contributing, how they made poll questions and interpreted findings, how they drew conclusions and made recommendations, what difficulties they encountered and what support they received from adults. To keep the flow of the narration, minor adjustments were made to remove extraneous details, order ideas and correct grammar (Crowther et al., 2017). While using original quotes helped stay close to what the child co-researchers had said and done, I incorporated my adult researchers' voice as the narrator of the story. This helped me acknowledge more explicitly that the story was constructed solely from my perspective. The last stage of crafting the story was abductive, and consisted of integrating a Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD) framework (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002), the literature on participatory research with children, and findings from previous research on children's development of critical consciousness. Combining observations with theoretical knowledge provided new understandings that helped me integrate the vignettes into one final story (Dan Goodley, 2004). It's important to explain that, because stories generate new meanings, they are already an outcome of the analysis. Therefore, after finishing their stories, many researchers choose not to analyse them further (Dan Goodley, 2004). Yet, for my research, I decided that it was important to systematize a discussion where the new meanings that emerged from the story were interpreted based on the current rights-based research with children, including participatory research.

Participatory approach

In participatory research, adult researchers aim to promote children's agency by sharing power for decision-making across the research process (for more on the principles of participatory research, see Chapter 2: Conceptual framework). However, this is a broad definition, and important nuances must be identified and discussed regarding the *how*, *when* and *who* of the participatory research process (Shier, 2018).

Regarding the *what* and the *how* of child co-researchers' agency, Figure 17 illustrates the

application of Shier’s (2018) analytical tool for adult-child collaborations to the Kids Contribute study (the stages of the research were adapted to suit the Kids Contribute study). It’s important to explain that the adult researchers and members of the BtN team consciously decided to keep full control over two key stages of the research: designing the research question and developing the research design. These decisions were taken considering some very important trade-offs and contextual limitations. First, child co-researchers were invited to participate in a study that already had a defined research question. This could have prevented them from developing a different question that perhaps wouldn’t have been thought of by the adults in the study and that might have been more relevant for children and young people in Australia. However, consulting or collaborating with children from different places in Australia to develop research questions and study design wouldn’t have been possible within the time and resource limitations of this study. Instead, potential child co-researchers were invited to participate to a study about contributing where they could choose what questions would be in the poll. The adult research team interpreted child co-researchers’ voluntary and informed consent as a manifestation of their interest in this research question.

Child Co-researchers’ Level of Decision-Making					
	Not involved	Consulted	Collaboration	Child-led	
Designing research questions					
Research design/ methods					
Recruiting other co-researchers					→ 1 study site
Discussing insights about contributing					} Co-researchers from all study sites
Developing poll questions					
Recruiting poll respondents					
Interpreting findings, developing key messages					} Co-researchers from all study sites
Presenting at National Child and Youth Forum					
Providing feedback					
Reporting					

Figure 17: Analysing child-adult collaborations in the Kids Contribute Study, adapted from Shier (2018)

Designing the study in collaboration with the child co-researchers was outside the scope of this study. Thus, important elements regarding child co-researchers' agency, sense of ownership over the project and ideas for generating data may have been overlooked. For this reason, an additional stage of asking for child co-researchers' feedback was added to the research process as a way of incorporating their views in the further development of this model for future efforts to scale-up participatory research.

Despite the limitations to child co-researchers' agency at the start of the Kids Contribute study, there was a high level of collaboration between young co-researchers and adult researchers during the rest of the research process. Child co-researchers were actively involved in sharing their views about contributing, developing questions for the poll, interpreting findings, and identifying and presenting key messages and recommendations for the forum. Some child co-researchers at one location were also involved in recruiting peers for their research teams. In this way, it's possible to argue that child co-researchers had levels of agency that allowed them to be actively involved in generating knowledge and advocating for change.

However, it's important to explore in more depth how this collaboration took place, as participatory approaches to research don't necessarily imply that adult researchers and child co-researchers share the same responsibilities and tasks (Gibbs et al., 2020). This is in line with Shier's (2018) recommendation to reflect not just on *what* activities are carried out in collaboration with young co-researchers and *how*, but also *who* is involved and who is excluded. This dimension is included in Shier's analytical tool but, due to lack of space, the information is presented in more detail separately in Table 7.

Overall, the qualitative and participatory component of the Kids Contribute Study lasted from May 2017 to October 2018, and I met with each child co-researcher between two and eight times. I worked with a total of 55 child co-researchers. All of them participated in making poll questions, but during the course of the project, some decided to withdraw from the study or weren't available. Thus, 18 child co-researchers presented at the forum and 16 provided their final feedback. During this time, all child co-researchers were invited to

participate in the research activities of a participatory nature, and different measures were taken to facilitate their involvement, such as scheduling meetings at a time and place that suit them, using technology to work remotely and giving them control over how many sessions they needed to prepare for the forum. Additionally, child co-researchers outside of Victoria could work with the help of other adults if they preferred to do so (one child co-researcher took this option) and travel expenses for child co-researchers and their parents attending the forum from interstate were covered by a grant.

Because of this, when child co-researchers did not participate in an activity it was because they preferred not to be involved in that specific task, withdrew from the Kids Contribute Study or were not available because of their schedule. Additionally, in one study location, it was not possible to reconnect with child co-researchers because they did not continue participating in the collaborating program. In another study location, our main collaborator had to withdraw from the study due to the serious illness of a close family member, so it wasn't possible to arrange more meetings with child co-researchers.

Table 7: Activities carried out by child co-researchers and adults in collaboration

Stages of the research process that involved child co-researchers	Activities carried out by child co-researchers	Activities carried out by adults
Co-developing poll questions	All child co-researchers helped create poll questions. Five child co-researchers helped test the preliminary version of the poll.	Adult researchers: supported the process of making poll questions; classifying questions and proposed a unified preliminary version of the poll; incorporating CYRM. BtN team: minimal adjustments to the final version of the poll (i.e. wording, presentation).

Recruiting other child co-researchers	Child co-researchers at one sports club nominated peers to be part of their research team.	Adult researchers: invited schools, sports clubs and charity organizations to participate; suggested criteria for nominating child co-researchers. Adult staff at collaborating organizations: nominated child co-researchers.
Participating in focus groups about their insights on contributing	All child co-researchers participated in generating data about their experiences contributing.	Adult researchers: led focus groups, collected materials.
Interpreting poll findings, identifying key messages and recommendations	All teams of child co-researchers except one participated in interpreting the quantitative findings of the poll.	Adult researchers: carried out quantitative analysis of poll data, presented poll results to child co-researchers, analysed qualitative data from focus groups, meetings and forum.
Presenting at National Child and Youth Forum	All child co-researchers who remained in the study were invited to present at the National Child and Youth Forum. 18 child co-researchers accepted.	Adult researchers: supported child co-researchers in making presentations and organized the forum.
Providing feedback on the Kids Contribute Study	16 out of the 18 child co-researchers who participated in the forum provided feedback on the study.	Adult researchers: led discussion.

The Kids Contribute Study was designed so child co-researchers would have similar opportunities to become involved at different stages of the research. Nevertheless, this did not mean that all child co-researchers participated in the same research activities. As would be expected, the number of child co-researchers participating in the study decreased across time. Likewise, child co-researchers' views were not included in the decision-making

processes reflected in this application of Shier's analytical tool. Therefore, it's necessary to explore their perspectives on their experiences of agency as child co-researchers.

Summary

In this chapter, I explain that the Kids Contribute Study was the wider research context where my PhD project took place, with my work focusing on the qualitative and participatory component of the Kids Contribute Study. The Kids Contribute Study's objective was to explore how children contribute and how it relates to their resilience. Meanwhile, my aim was to gain a better understanding of child co-researchers' insights into their contributions, how their views were transformed across the research process and young people's perspectives on being child co-researchers. I did this by collecting different types of data during our research activities and analysing it in two different ways. First, I applied an abductive thematic analysis to explore child co-researchers' development of critical consciousness during the Kids Contribute study. Then, as an exercise of reflexivity, I used narrative synthesis to craft a story about the process of collaborating with child co-researchers. The results and discussion of these different approaches to the data will be presented in the next two chapters.

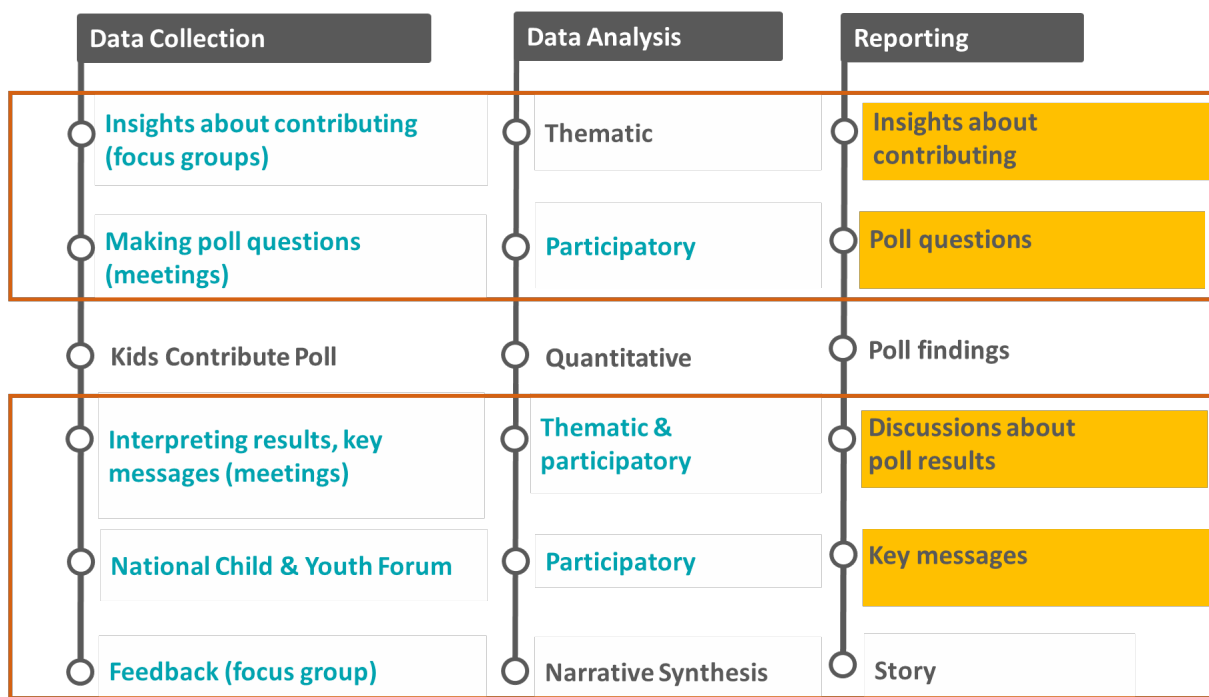
Chapter 7: How did being co-researchers in the Kids Contribute study influence children's critical consciousness?

Introduction

The Kids Contribute study was a mixed-method study that aimed to explore how children in Australia contribute in their everyday lives and how it relates to their resilience. This study was carried out with a team of young co-researchers to identify core themes and then extended to children and teenagers across Australia through a nation-wide online poll that was developed in collaboration with the child co-researchers. Then, child co-researchers interpreted the poll results to identify the key messages and were invited to present their findings and recommendations to a panel of experts at the National Child and Youth Forum, co-hosted by the University of Melbourne and the National Children's Commissioner.

Within the Kids Contribute study, my PhD project focused on exploring the qualitative and participatory component of the research. More specifically, I aimed to gain a better understanding of child co-researchers' views about their contributions and explore how scaling-up participatory research with children shaped child co-researchers' critical consciousness and agency in the research process. This chapter will focus on the former objective, and report on child co-researchers' insights about contributing, the poll questions they helped develop, their responses to the Kids Contribute Poll and the final key messages they presented at the National Child and Youth Forum.

As shown in Figure 18, my findings on child co-researchers' insights about contributing before the Kids Contribute Poll are the results of my thematic analysis. The questions that went into the Kids Contribute Poll and the key messages presented at the forum are a result of my collaborative work with the child co-researchers. Finally, the analysis of how child co-researchers' views of contributing were changed by their involvement in the Kids Contribute study and the National Child and Youth Forum is based on my thematic analysis in combination with the participatory work carried out with them.



Orange represents my PhD study.

Blue represents stages when co-researchers actively participated.

Yellow highlighting represents elements reported in this chapter.

Figure 18: Elements of the Kids Contribute Study reported in this chapter

In the following sections, I will provide details about the child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute Study. I also will report my results on how the research process influenced child co-researchers' views about contributing and how scaling-up influenced the development of critical consciousness across increasingly wider contexts.

Who were the young co-researchers in the Kids Contribute study?

Overall, 55 children and adolescents were child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute Study: 25 (45.5%) male and 30 (54.5%) female. Child co-researchers' ages ranged from 7 to 17 years old. The average age for the whole group was 11.9 years old, with 11.7 years old for males, and 12 years old for females (data on age was missing for two child co-researchers, one male, one female). Table 8 details child co-researchers' age ranges, showing that most of them were between 10 – 12 years old.

Table 8: Child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute Study according to age range

	Total number of child co-researchers	
Age Range	Number of children	Percentage
7 – 9 years old	10	18.1%
10 – 12 years old	24	43.6%
13 – 15 years old	12	21.8%
16 – 17 years old	7	12.7%
Missing data	2	3.6%

Child co-researchers came from a diversity of contexts, including rural/urban communities (65% urban and 35% rural) and migrant/non-migrant background (approximately 36% of child co-researchers were second generation migrants). A large proportion of child co-researchers were recruited from a sports clubs (71%), and the 18 (33%) child co-researchers who were recruited in other settings (schools) often participated in sports clubs and other types of clubs. A majority of the child co-researchers lived in the State of Victoria (N = 46, 83.6%). The remaining nine child co-researchers (16.4%) were from other States (Queensland, Australian Capital Territory and Western Australia). In order to protect child co-researchers' privacy, more detailed information relating to background and organizational memberships has been withheld.

Child co-researchers were free to choose their level of involvement in the Kids Contribute Study (see Figure 19 for a summary of how many child co-researchers participated in each stage of the research). While a larger number of child co-researchers were keen to be involved in the early stages of the study, only a smaller number were willing and able to make the additional considerable commitment required to participate in the National Child and Youth Forum. In some cases, child co-researchers preferred not to continue participating due to lack of time or interest, or because unexpected circumstances obstructed our adult supporters from supporting their continued involvement. In other cases, attempts to contact

child co-researchers after the Kids Contribute Poll weren't successful. Additionally, new child co-researchers joined the study after the launch of the Kids Contribute Poll.

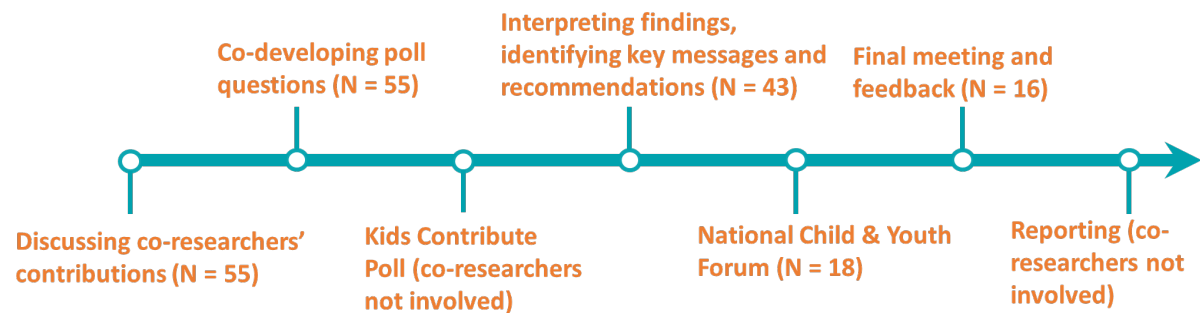


Figure 19: Number of young co-researchers across the stages of the Kids Contribute Study

The following section reports the findings of my thematic analysis of child co-researchers' initial insights about contributing and how they were shaped by the research process (see Appendix 29 for the corresponding codebook).

Young co-researchers' insights into contributing

Broadly speaking, child co-researchers tended to agree with each other that contributing meant 'helping out', being altruistic, doing something for others' benefit, having a positive impact on one's environment or being a positive leader. Helping actions had to be relevant enough to be appreciated by others, however, contributing did not have to consist of grand gestures of generosity or self-sacrifice. Instead, they suggested that contributing could consist of doing 'normal things' in child co-researchers' everyday lives, such as having a collaborative attitude, listening to others, behaving well and contributing to maintaining harmony: 'When you go to a holiday program, instead of being bad, be good, and you listen to what they say, so you're fitting in with the group' (Roberto, 11 years old).

Contributing was also closely related to acting out of a sense of commitment, loyalty and altruism, even if the outcomes were uncertain. For example, child co-researchers who coached others at sports clubs weren't always certain that their advice would lead others to improve their skills and win games. Other times, child co-researchers said they could make

mistakes such as breaking dishes or burning food when helping at home. Despite this, having the intention of helping was considered as important as the final outcome: ‘even if you don’t think you did really well, you still participated and gave it a try’ (Sophia, 11 years old).

Based on these understandings of contributing, child co-researchers reported doing a myriad of activities to help (for the whole list of activities, see Appendix 30). At home, child co-researchers often helped with cleaning and other chores like cooking. Meanwhile, at schools and clubs, child co-researchers often participated in extracurricular activities, behaved well and had a collaborative attitude towards adult staff. As shown by the following dialogue, a strong topic that emerged in the data was some child co-researchers’ eagerness to mentor, coach or teach their peers:

Katitza: Why do you want to coach?

Fernando (16 years old): It's fun, teaching.

Richard (17 years old): I think it'd be fun teaching people and showing them good plays, how to get better, go and watch their game, cheering them on.

Fernando (16 years old): You feel like you've accomplished something when they get better.

Child co-researchers often contributed at home, school and clubs, but tended to help less in the wider community (face-to-face or online). The exception was contributing to the environment by taking care of trees, plants, animals or recycling, which was frequently done at home or school.

Why did child co-researchers contribute?

For child co-researchers, offering help and being asked for help were equally valuable ways of contributing. Most of the time, child co-researchers were keen on volunteering: ‘Well, I have a school, and I choose to have a lot of jobs. If my teacher asks me, ‘what kind of jobs do you want to do?’ I really put my hand up for most of them. So, I get chosen’ (Angela, 11 years old). Child co-researchers also appreciated being asked to help because they did not always know when their help was needed or felt they lacked motivation to do some chores.

A strong theme in the data was that children and teenagers had the duty of helping others. Further, contributing was an important way of maintaining reciprocity: 'It's very cool, you do good things, good things happen, like, you do a good thing and good things happen to you' (Connor, 8 years old). For example, some child co-researchers argued that children should help at home because of the sacrifices their parents have made for them. Getting paid for helping outside home was not necessarily desirable. Although rewards were an important source of motivation to contribute, these did not have to be material:

'I umpire the lower grade. I don't get paid anymore; I don't want to get paid. I used to get paid 5 bucks per match for umpiring. It's fun, and I really want to get to the Grand Final, it's big for me. I wanna win the Grand Final' (Adam, 11 years old).

Child co-researchers also appreciated being rewarded, for example, by going out with family and friends. At school, awards and good marks were an important motivation to contribute. Being thanked was also a powerful source of encouragement:

'Even just your mom telling you that you're great at this is a reward too. You don't need again an object to be happy. Even your mom saying you've been such a good person; I wish I could get you something, but I can't because there are bills... Just getting that from your mom, even saying 'great work' is a reward' (Angela, 11 years old).

In contrast, another theme that strongly emerged was receiving money for helping at home or other places. At home, pocket money was perceived as a fair compensation for having to do unpleasant, boring or more difficult chores, especially as child co-researchers became older:

"Cause when you're 10 there may be a few chores that you can't do because you're too small or it's like you're not strong enough for something and then as you get older you could probably be doing a lot more housework. And 'cause you're doing more you should get more money' (Chloe, 11 years old).

Getting money for chores was also child co-researchers' main source of income, although

some did obtain money through other channels (i.e. as allowance, gift for birthdays or traditional celebrations, having a job). Child co-researchers used this money to purchase things for themselves such as clothes, toys, food, video games or going out. Other times, getting paid for doing jobs outside the home (e.g. clubs) meant child co-researchers could help their parents by asking them less for money. Additionally, getting money for helping was an important pathway to learning how to manage money.

Fostering resilience

Promoting positive feelings and a higher sense of efficacy

Contributing made child co-researchers feel happy and good about themselves. Moreover, contributing helped child co-researchers identify their own strengths to develop their confidence and a sense of efficacy. By contributing, child co-researchers felt trustworthy, capable, mature, and important for their family and friends.

Promoting a sense of connection and positive relationships with others

Contributing made child co-researchers feel compassionate and capable of having a positive impact in the wider world around them. At the same time, contributing helped foster a sense of collective identity and belonging to schools and clubs. By helping others, child co-researchers could also build friendships. As 15-year-old Anita explained, contributing made her ‘feel like others around you think that you are needed, kind of useful.’

Having positive relationships with parents, family and the community motivated young people to contribute more in these spaces. However, a stronger theme in the data was that contributing itself promoted positive relationships in child co-researchers’ lives. Child co-researchers emphasized that they often helped family and friends feel better when they were angry or sad, and stood up for peers who were being bullied. As Angela (11 years old) expressed: ‘I actually love cleaning with my mom. (...) And I can just be a helping hand with my mom. And, so, she enjoys it, so all the stress is gone, and I like cleaning.’

At school and clubs, child co-researchers reported that contributing helped them develop a sense of belonging to the community (e.g. at school or clubs) and obtain the acknowledgement of adults and peers. Further, contributing opened opportunities for child co-researchers to become leaders and role models for peers and younger children. Activities

like coaching and mentoring helped child co-researchers become more sensitive to other people's needs (e.g. moods, styles of learning) and be more collaborative with adults.

Sameera (13 years old) explained how coaching helped her overcome shyness:

'you need to know how to talk to people, because you don't want to be shy. (...) Try to become comfortable with them. (...) Do, like, games, like, knowing your name games, and what's your favourite food. (...) They might feel like, 'Oh, we're the same. Yeah, I'm fine – feel comfortable around you.'

Developing a sense of responsibility

Another strong theme that appeared in the data was that contributing promoted child co-researchers' sense of responsibility, perseverance and discipline:

'I don't enjoy cleaning and tidying up but when it comes to that stuff, I don't mind it because I know it's for the greater good. Cleaning and tidying up, that's something that, like, I feel like everyone should contribute' (Aamira, 15 years old).

In this way, child co-researchers reported that contributing helped them develop the capacity to finish what they started and solving problems in a positive way (e.g. without violence). For one young co-researcher, contributing through his school's community services program helped him feel acknowledged by his teachers and understand the importance of getting a good education. Child co-researchers were also creative to develop strategies to enjoy jobs they disliked (e.g. playing music while cleaning):

'And, I'm happy because you have to enjoy it, you know, because there's no point – because I have to do it every day so I might as well enjoy it' (Grace, 15 years old).

Child co-researchers suggested that the different experiences that young people gained from helping could also make them more organized for managing their time and money. In contrast, not helping with everyday chores could make people more self-centred and less prepared for being independent.

Building a good future

Contributing at home, school and clubs helped child co-researchers develop skills for

overcoming future challenges and achieving their goals. For example, helping out at clubs was a fun and exciting way for child co-researchers to develop skills related to their personal interests. In addition to this, helping others prepared child co-researchers for adulthood. In the short-term, contributing could open opportunities for young co-researchers to get their first job. Other child co-researchers highlighted that contributing helped them become more capable of keeping a home and raising a family.

Further, child co-researchers reported that contributing helped them build the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for achieving their dreams:

‘Yeah, what encourages me, me getting better... me getting somewhere in life. Me just helping around the world, me just being a better person’ (Angela, 11 years old).

For example, contributing at school could also help have a successful career in the future by improving school engagement and academic performance. Meanwhile, contributing at sports clubs was crucial for those who aspired to be future professional athletes.

Limitations to how contributing can help foster resilience

Child co-researchers’ experiences of contributing were mostly positive but contributing could also be accompanied by negative feelings. Child co-researchers placed a great value on feeling appreciated by others when they helped, but they did not always receive the acknowledgement they hoped for. This could lead young people to feel that their efforts did not matter in detriment of their confidence and resilience, as evident in the following dialogue:

Adam (11 years old): Because you’re helping other people be happy that will also make you happy so you could become a more happy person and so - - -

Corey (10 years old): More proud.

Adam (11 years old): So, if you’re happier then it’s easier to overcome stuff like that. (...) Because, like, if you do stuff and they say good job, (...) like, it might make you get...

Corey (10 years old): More encouragement. (...)

Katitza: Do you think there are – most children feel that appreciation when they contribute?

Adam (11 years old): (...) I don't get told – tell that because every – whatever my – me and my dad did he'd swap stuff around my mum doesn't like that because she's grumpy all the time. And, saying that for good reasons and puts everything back. (...)

Katitza: So, if you don't get that feeling of appreciation you might be a little bit less resilient?

Corey (10 years old): You'd be a bit, like – like trying to do and that work. No one cares.

Child co-researchers also reported feeling used or forced into contributing, especially when they perceived that the task was meaningless or lacked justification:

'If they're making you do it for no reason and you don't want to do it but they force you, that's bad' (Shakir, 11 years old).

This often happened when house chores kept child co-researchers from doing other activities like homework, playing videos games or using social media. Furthermore, doing chores could be experienced as a form of punishment. However, even feeling forced to help could be accompanied by positive feelings:

'you do sort of feel good that you're doing something to help your parents (...) even if they told you to do it and you couldn't get out of it' (Sophia, 11 years old).

The Kids Contribute Poll questions

After discussing child co-researchers' perspectives and experiences of contributing, we worked on developing questions for the Kids Contribute Poll. Based on their previous insights, child co-researchers reflected what they wanted to learn about how children contribute in Australia. In addition to serving the goal of collecting data, a topic that emerged during my conversations with one group of child co-researchers was that the poll was itself a type of action. According to Angela and Adam (11 years old), answering the poll could make respondents reflect about how they contribute and think of ways to help others

even more. This was consistent with the comments that respondents left on the website after completing the poll.

To devise poll questions, I encouraged child co-researchers to start by brainstorming questions in any format they wanted (e.g. open, yes/no). Then, I helped them transform those questions into multiple-choice items (the format used by BtN in their online polls). Due to lack of resources to analyse the large amounts of qualitative data that would result from a national poll, it wasn't possible to include open-ended questions.

In total, the different teams of child co-researchers helped develop an initial set of 83 poll questions. I sorted these questions into categories (e.g. questions about helping at home, questions about preferred and least preferred activities). With the rest of the adult researchers in the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit, we synthesized the poll by combining and merging questions from different child co-researchers that were similar. We also identified those questions that did not address contributing and were more suitable for a different poll. This exercise resulted in nine questions.

We contacted the young co-researchers, who at that time were taking a break from the study until the poll results were ready. We asked them if they were available and interested to help test the poll, and four female child co-researchers of different ages agreed to participate (most child co-researchers were unavailable because the testing took place during summer holidays). During the testing, we timed how long it took each child co-researcher to fill the poll and used a cognitive interview approach where each young co-researcher 'thought-aloud' while responding to the survey (Willis et al., 1999). This allowed us to explore their impressions of the questions, how they understood them and if there were any elements that made the questions more difficult to respond. Then, we asked child co-researchers to what degree they believed that children of different ages could understand the poll and if the amount of time that it took to fill the poll was reasonable. Finally, we asked child co-researchers to identify the questions that they thought were the most important for the Kids Contribute Poll, and which should be eliminated or used in a different survey. We then used this information to generate a new version of the poll.

The final version of the Kids Contribute Poll had 17 multiple-choice questions about how

children contribute (for the complete Kids Contribute Poll, see Appendix 15). Among these questions, seven were developed with the child co-researchers. Child co-researchers asked how often children contributed at home, school, clubs and the community in different ways (i.e. cleaning up, volunteering, helping others feel better). They also asked how much respondents liked contributing through different activities, how they felt about helping others in general and what were their main motivations to contribute. Additionally, child co-researchers asked poll respondents if they believed that girls and boys contribute by doing the same things, at what age they started doing chores and if they received pocket money for it (and, if so, how much). Meanwhile, the adult researchers at the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit added demographic questions and the CYRM (to measure resilience), as agreed by the child co-researchers.

The Kids Contribute Poll findings

The collection and analysis of the quantitative data collected in the Kids Contribute Poll was outside the scope of the PhD research. Instead, this chapter aims to explore how making questions for the Kids Contribute Poll and discussing its findings influenced child co-researchers' critical consciousness and experiences of agency. For this reason, this section summarizes the preliminary poll findings that the child co-researchers helped interpret and that informed their forum presentations.

The Kids Contribute Poll was launched on the BtN website between late March and early April 2018. BtN delivered the de-identified data to the researchers at the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit who carried out the quantitative analysis. After the preliminary results were ready, I met again with the child co-researchers. I showed them a PowerPoint presentation that I prepared to synthesize the poll's main results (see Appendix 23) and a clip that BtN prepared to cover the Kids Contribute Poll findings (<https://www.abc.net.au/btn/classroom/kids-contribute-results/10489168>).

In summary, 10,817 children across Australia responded to the Kids Contribute Poll. The quantitative analysis showed that 80% of the poll respondents were between six and 11 years old and approximately 20% were between 12 – 18 years old. Most poll respondents spoke English at home (86%) and were born in Australia (88%). Respondents came from

across all Australian states and territories: New South Wales (39%), Victoria (21%), Tasmania (21%), South Australia (13%), Western Australia (12%), Queensland (6%), Australian Capital Territory (3%) and Northern Territory (1%).

The poll found that almost all poll respondents (99%) contributed in one way or another at home, school, clubs and elsewhere in the community. Contributing was also associated with higher levels of resilience. A large number of poll respondents reported feeling happy (63%) or proud (59%) when they contributed and enjoyed helping others feel better. Only a small proportion of respondents reported feeling pressured (6%) or annoyed (5%). Almost half of respondents said they sometimes did not feel their contributions were appreciated.

Most respondents reported contributing without expecting a reward. Respondents' most frequent motivations to contribute were because it was fun, interesting, helped others feel better and made the world a better place. Children and young people also contributed to learn new things and become leaders. In addition to this, half of the poll respondents received pocket money for doing chores at home.

The poll also found differences in how children contributed depending on their age and gender. Younger children (6 – 11 years old) tended to report contributing more often at home, school, clubs and the community. Meanwhile, older respondents (12 -18 years old) helped more often with technology, by being leaders and supporting others online. They were more motivated to help for rewards or because they had no choice. Female poll respondents tended to help more often in different contexts and to have more positive feelings towards contributing than males, except online. Girls also started doing chores at a younger age than boys. Additionally, male and older poll respondents tended to receive more pocket money for doing house chores than females and younger poll respondents.

Young co-researchers' responses to the poll: interpreting poll results, identifying key messages and recommendations

This section focuses on two themes that strongly emerged during the interpretation of the Kids Contribute Poll: expressing diverse views on the fairness of giving pocket money for chores and dialoguing about gender inequality in contributing. These themes reflect two different ways in which child co-researchers reacted to the data when their experience in

the Kids Contribute study scaled-up from a local project to a nation-wide poll and then to a national forum.

The way that child co-researchers addressed the topic of getting pocket money for chores reflected how scaling-up participatory research helped them express their different perspectives without one necessarily dominating over the rest, thus highlighting the diversity of the group. In contrast, child co-researchers' reactions to the poll results on gender differences manifested a process of dialogue that transformed their initial views and addressed inequity and discrimination in progressively more inclusive and global ways. I argue that this process of problematizing gender differences and questioning their root causes corresponds to what popular educator Paulo Freire (2017) defined as the process of *conscientização* or critical consciousness, and that scaling-up participatory research with children made this process advance from the individual to the local and then to the global level as explained by the Social Justice Youth Development framework (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002) (see Chapter 2: Conceptual framework).

Expressing diverse views on the fairness of getting pocket money for chores

Scaling-up the Kids Contribute study helped gather different perspectives without necessarily having to reach a final consensus or one voice dominating over the rest. Child co-researchers had differing views about getting pocket money for chores from the start. However, it was after seeing the Kids Contribute Poll results that these differences became more apparent, leading them to present different and sometimes opposing recommendations at the National Child and Youth Forum.

Child co-researchers helped make questions about pocket money and contributing. Once the poll results were ready, child co-researchers were surprised to find such a wide range in how much money some children received. Some expressed 'shock' to learn that some young people received up to \$25 a week for doing their homework. These findings lead to discussions between child co-researchers who were in favour and against getting pocket money.

Child co-researchers explained that, as they grew older, children's motivations for contributing with chores evolved. Those who reported starting at an earlier age (seven years

or under) explained that, at first, they felt eager to participate in house chores and experienced opportunities to help around the house as new and exciting. However, as time passed, older children began feeling less keen to do chores. As two siblings explained:

Carrie (10 years old): When we were, like, three and four we really wanted to help. And, it was, like, fun to us and we used to, like – like, clean the dishes and the forks and knives and –

Joey (12 years old): Now we don't really like it as much.

Child co-researchers argued different reasons for this shift in motivation. Some child co-researchers suggested changes in mood due to puberty or having competing interests and responsibilities outside home (i.e. hobbies, social media, school, clubs). Carrying out the same chores at home for a long time could also make older children feel that those activities were 'childish.' Instead, older children would feel more motivated to contribute outside their homes in ways that helped them 'stand out' (e.g. coaching) or doing chores in exchange for rewards like getting permission to go out or pocket money.

Child co-researchers tended to agree that younger children often felt more motivated to help, but that it was older kids who contributed more often because they are expected to be more responsible. As they grow older, some children begin to demand compensation for increasing the amount and complexity of their chores. Other child co-researchers disagreed and argued that children and teenagers should help at home without expecting any money or rewards in return. In response, child co-researchers who supported getting pocket money for chores explained that it was important to learn how to manage money. As they grew older, children started feeling the need to save money and spent it on more expensive items, such as clothing, phones, video games, other forms of entertainment or gifts:

'I probably spend, like, five - \$10 on treats for my family or for myself or something. Because, I usually buy sweets a lot but now I don't do that anymore. I'm more buying books and clothes and things like that' (Angela, 11 years old).

Child co-researchers who were against pocket money for chores responded that teenagers

who needed money should get a job instead of asking their parents. However, younger co-researchers argued that they could not get jobs until they were older. In the end, child co-researchers in favour of pocket money specified that, for them, the real problem was when pocket money was given unfairly. If children received pocket money for chores, the amount they receive should be based on the amount and difficulty of the work. Also, children should not get pocket money for doing things that should be their responsibility, like doing their homework.

The debate between views in favour and against pocket money for chores wasn't resolved in terms of deciding who was correct and who was wrong. Instead, both perspectives were presented and defended at the National Child and Youth Forum as equally valid. Child co-researchers presented their different views and recommendations and asked the panellists about their own views on the subject.

Dialoguing about gender differences in contributing

Discussing gender inequities in how boys and girls contributed at home, school, clubs and the community was one of the strongest themes that emerged after the Kids Contribute Poll. However, gender wasn't child co-researchers' focus when they first discussed their experiences of contributing and made questions for the poll. In fact, the Kids Contribute poll only had one question that directly addressed gender differences (Do you think girls and boys contribute by doing the same things?). This changed after child co-researchers saw the Kids Contribute Poll findings.

Child co-researchers' first reaction to the Kids Contribute Poll results was comparing them to their own experiences and observations in everyday life. Child co-researchers agreed with poll findings showing that girls tended to do more house chores (e.g. cleaning, washing, cooking) while boys did more physical and outdoors work (e.g. gardening in urban areas, taking care of animals and larger properties in rural areas) and helped more with technology. Some child co-researchers also said they were aware that males sometimes receive more pocket money than females. However, other child co-researchers said they did not observe gender differences in how girls and boys help at their own homes, where siblings of different genders worked together or took turns doing chores. Rather than their gender, the amount of pocket money they received depended on their age.

Some child co-researchers questioned the poll results showing gender differences in contributing arguing that social desirability or age differences influenced how children responded. Kyle (15 years old) explained that young girls may have a different style for answering poll questions in comparison to older male teenagers like him. In this context, it's important to explain that the Kids Contribute Poll used a five-point Likert scale to measure how often respondents helped at home, school, clubs and elsewhere (with 1 = not all, and 5 = a lot). In Kyle's opinion, younger female respondents may tend to respond with higher scores and overestimate how often they helped:

'Personally, when I take a survey similar to – I can imagine that they've had – I don't respond five much. Like, I only respond if I'm (...) like really passionate about it. Like, I usually respond three or four if um – if I do it, because I don't want to seem like – like – I don't want to say like arrogant, but I don't want to be seen to be misleading with what I do, because I know that some people do that more than I do.' (Kyle, 15 years old).

Meanwhile, Chloe (11 years old) and Piper (10 years old) argued that male respondents may tend to report receiving more pocket money because they saw it as a sign of status: 'because they want the popularity in the results, going 'I'm a cool kid'' (Piper, 10 years old). They also argued that teenage male poll respondents would be more likely to be open about their negative feelings because they were less worried about other people's opinion:

Katitza: Did you think that maybe there was a reason why boys tend to say that they feel more tired, more pressured?

Piper (10 years old): Maybe because they – the girls don't want to diss their parents more and, like, say that their parents force them, they are just like 'I don't care.'

Other child co-researchers argued that more research was necessary to confirm the poll's preliminary findings before drawing any conclusions. Sophia (11 years old) stated that it could be possible that, in houses with only girls or boys, parents would unconsciously end up giving more money to boys because it was harder to get them to do chores. However, in her opinion, it was unlikely that in the same family, parents would intentionally give different amounts of money to siblings of different gender for the same work. Therefore, future

surveys should compare families with only male children, only female children, and different combinations of siblings. Another female child co-researcher suggested that twin studies could be useful to explore differences between siblings of the same age but different gender.

Once there was general agreement that the poll results reflected the experience of many children in Australia, child co-researchers moved on to discuss whether these differences were fair or, on the contrary, presented a problem that needed a solution. For Angela (11 years old), being the one who helped the most at school, club and home was a source of pride. Therefore, it was OK for her to be the sibling who helped the most with house chores:

‘So, I have older brothers, I only have brothers. My two older brothers, they work, so, my other brothers, they’re a little hard to talk to when they wanna do something, but they’re really good at helping with the dishes. And they just like to do their own things and clean their own spaces. (...) If I need more help, they’ll probably say no but it’s OK. They need their own space to do their own things, but yeah, it’s OK. I usually do all of it for them.’

However, as the conversation advanced, her teammates Adam and Corey admitted that boys sometimes helped less than girls, and Angela appeared to change her mind. She revealed that, although she did not mind helping her eldest brothers, she expressed her frustration that her slightly younger brother did not help her mother other as much as she did.

Meanwhile, in a team of 15-year-old female child co-researchers, most argued from the start that it was unfair that they were expected to do more chores and be more responsible than boys:

Grace (15 years old): I have two brothers and I have, like, one brother older than me and, like, we’re expected to do everything around the house. And, they’re just like – they’re, like, expected not to do anything, sit in their rooms on their laptops, on social media and everything, and the girls are expected to clean, cook, or I don’t cook but, yeah, my mum says that girls should be more responsible than boys. That’s like, my culture.

Katitza: And how that does make you feel?

Grace (15 years old): Annoyed, it's not fair.

Anita (15 years old): To be honest, I actually don't care.

.....

Aamira (15 years old): You know what confuses me? We're the ones doing the cleaning, and if the house gets dirty, like whose fault really is it? Is it our fault or the ones who made it dirty?

Anita (15 years old): Exactly. Exactly. That's what I'm trying to say. You just took it out of my mouth.

Aamira (15 years old): You're welcome. I'll put it back.

From the extract above, it's possible to observe that not all child co-researchers agreed at the start, but that exchanging ideas with the group led to a dialogue where new ideas emerged. Identifying the root causes of gender inequity was closely related to determining if differences between boys and girls were fair. Initially, some child co-researchers stated that gender differences in contributing could be unfair, but that they occurred naturally and were difficult to change. Angela and Carrie, both 11-years old, argued that girls were naturally more helpful than boys, who, in turn, were naturally lazier and, therefore, needed more pocket money to be convinced of doing chores. There were also some male and female child co-researchers of different ages who suggested that boys and girls naturally developed interests for doing different types of chores, and that since fathers and mothers had different roles at home, it was natural that girls would want to follow the example of their mothers, while boys would tend to imitate their fathers.

Yet, as group discussions progressed, child co-researchers began to question these beliefs. The following dialogue shows the moment when Adam (11 years old) began to realize that although he often helped his father at his sports clubs, he did not do as much to help his mother with house chores. Child co-researchers also began to critically analyse their parents' role in perpetuating gender stereotypes with house chores. These conversations revealed that child co-researchers' parents often modelled gender stereotypes, even when they tried to promote egalitarian gender roles among their children. For example, they could divide

chores equally among siblings, but mothers would still carry out most of indoor house chores while fathers did work outdoors.

It is possible that older child co-researchers felt more compelled to question their parents and social norms, and are more open to being influenced by their peers (Erikson & Erikson, 1997). Aamira, Rebeca, Grace and Anita (15 years old) criticized that their parents perpetuated a cycle where the older generation teaches the younger one that girls are expected to do more around the house than boys. Their criticism did not focus on wanting to do fewer chores. They explained that although they did not enjoy having to do more than their male siblings, they were grateful for learning how to become more responsible and capable of taking care of a home and family. Meanwhile, boys who did not develop the habit of doing chores, would not be able to 'take care of themselves' (Grace, 15 years old). Because of this, they wanted to break the cycle with their own children:

Rebeca (15 years old): When I'm older? I'm going to make sure all my kids clean.

Grace (15 years old): All my boys and girls have a balanced, like, balance them out.

Rebeca (15 years old): Boys would do the dishes too and, like, they will do everything as what the – yeah.

Grace (15 years old): And, start them at a young age so when they're growing up, they know.

Anita, Aamira, Rebeca and Grace (15 years old), who came from migrant families, also reflected on how the discourse of culture determined gender differences in helping:

Katitza: And why does she say that girls have to be more responsible?

Grace (15 years old) Because – because it's part of your culture.

Rebeca (15 years old): Yeah, they don't give us a reason. (...)

Katitza: And how do you feel about that?

Grace (15 years old): Annoyed. It's not fair.

These child co-researchers were aware of important nuances and contradictions that did not make the division of labour between men and women as straightforward as their parents appeared to explain. Grace explained that her father was raised to be very involved with doing chores because he was the eldest son, but this changed after migrating to Australia. This team of child co-researchers also observed that there were important differences in how the men in their extended families helped at home, even though they shared the same culture. Additionally, Rebeca observed that the unequal division of chores was also present in Australian families of different backgrounds and other factors like socioeconomic status had to be considered. For example, she argued some high-income families often go out to eat or order take out and cooked less at home.

Child co-researchers also began to criticize how sexism in the media and sports portrays girls and women as weak, fragile and less competent than men for different jobs. This, in turn, perpetuated the pay gap between men and women and prevented girls from freely deciding through what career they wanted to contribute to society, especially for girls aspiring to become professional athletes. Yet, not all female child co-researchers were against how culture shaped the way they contributed. Angela (11 years old) explained that although she did not like that boys were 'lazier' than girls, having the role of her mother's only helper during the preparation of a traditional dinner for a religious celebration made her feel important and special. She was more concerned about Australian society being tolerant of the values and traditions of girls and young women from different backgrounds. For child co-researchers like Angela, fairness in how girls and boys contributed did not necessarily have to do with doing the same activities. Instead, fairness was when children had the opportunity to contribute to society in their own way.

In the end, child co-researchers agreed that gender differences in contributing were a problem that needed a solution. Child co-researchers approached the problem of gender differences in different ways, emphasizing different issues, root causes and potential solutions. The final result at the forum was a coherent body of presentations that called for greater gender equality.

The National Child and Youth Forum was held at the University of Melbourne on 7 September 2018 and was chaired by the Australian Children's Commissioner. During the

forum, 18 young co-researchers presented to a panel of experts and an audience of approximately 200 people. The panel consisted of seven members, five adults and two UNICEF Youth Ambassadors⁵, who were influential in different areas related to child co-researchers' presentations. Meanwhile, the adult panellists came from organizations related to the topics of child co-researchers' presentations: TV and media, education, parenting, sports and multiculturality.

Throughout nine presentations, the young co-researchers addressed a wide variety of topics related to how children and teenagers contribute in their everyday lives (see Appendix 25). Each presentation was backed by data collected in the Kids Contribute Poll. At the end of each presentation, child co-researchers addressed the panel with questions and recommendations. Then, the Australian Children's Commissioner invited panellists to share their views on the topic and explain how they would incorporate child co-researchers' key messages into their work.

Child co-researchers emphasised that most children often contribute at home, school, clubs and the community. Child co-researchers' presentations focused on four main topics: supporting children to contribute, social inclusion, gender equity and pocket money for chores. A strong topic that emerged in the data was that children need adults' acknowledgement and support to contribute. Educators, parents and organizations that supported parents were asked to open more spaces for children to contribute. Two male 11-year old child co-researchers explained that adults should support children to contribute more because it helps them become more resilient:

'If you go out and help someone (...) you feel happy and being happy makes you feel proud that you're helping someone. And being proud leads to becoming more resilient.'

Two female 11-year-old co-researchers asked for school anti-bullying programs to be

⁵ UNICEF Youth Ambassadors are young people between 15 and 24 years old who are trained to engage with children and young people and advocate for their rights locally, nationally and internationally (<https://www.unicef.org.au/our-work/unicef-in-australia/young-ambassadors#:~:text=The%20UNICEF%20Australia%20Young%20Ambassador,with%20children%20and%20young%20people>).

designed *for* and *with* students. Finally, two siblings advised parents who volunteered in the community to include their children in those activities.

Child co-researchers' presentations also associated securing spaces for children to contribute in society with promoting greater gender equity and social inclusion. Key messages on gender equality were developed by female and male child co-researchers, but more females focused on this topic. Regarding the home context, one team of child co-researchers stated: 'Parents need to know that there should be equality among girls and boys in terms of how much they do and how much they get paid.' Adults were also called to support girls and young women in having equal opportunities to pursue their dreams. Meanwhile, a team of 15-year-old co-researchers focussed on addressing Australian media and sports: 'The way women are sometimes perceived in the media, the lack of strong successful women in careers we aspire to follow discourage us.'

Child co-researchers also emphasized that opportunities to contribute in society should be open for children from all backgrounds. To achieve this, one group of male co-researchers between 11 and 17 years old promoted their club's social inclusion program as a positive example of how sports can promote the social inclusion of migrant youth. Another child co-researcher shared his experience helping on his family's farm to call attention to the contributions of rural youth. Also, an 11-year-old female co-researcher called for protecting the right of Muslim girls and women to contribute to Australian society according to their religion and traditions.

The last topic that powerfully appeared in child co-researchers' forum presentations was whether children and teenagers should get pocket money for doing chores. As previously explained, there was no agreement among child co-researchers. This manifested in a team of child co-researchers of different ages. Some members of the team argued against pocket money:

'Children should help without being asked for. Jobs should be done for love, not money. Children should feel happy when they're asked for help. Doing chores helps you later in life and to be more grateful.'

In contrast, other child co-researchers from the same team preferred to recommend parents

that they should be fair and just when giving pocket money:

‘Pocket money should be given sometimes, and payment should be given depending on the level of difficulty and time, not gender or age. Everyone should be appreciated for their work.’

Child co-researchers providing feedback on their experience

After the forum, I met with 16 of 18 child co-researchers who participated in the event. Across six focus group discussions, I asked them about their overall experience in the project (for a more detailed analysis of child co-researchers’ feedback on their agency during the project, see Chapter 8: Co-researchers’ experiences of agency during the Kids Contribute study). A strong topic that emerged in the data was that child co-researchers felt that during their participation in the Kids Contribute study and the National Child and Youth Forum they enjoyed more power for decision-making than they normally did in other spaces of their daily lives (e.g. school), and that they valued collaborating with adults. Child co-researchers felt supported by the adult research team but felt that the panellists at the forum weren’t always actively listening to them.

Despite this, many were keen to start another project the following year and present their findings at a forum. A strong topic that emerged during our final meeting, was that child co-researchers were very interested in continuing to collaborate with other children from other places and backgrounds in doing participatory research. Child co-researchers’ research interests also expanded beyond their local communities. For example, child co-researchers mentioned focusing on climate change and working with child co-researchers from different countries.

After the forum, some child co-researchers continued to expand their reflections about inequality. A child co-researcher from Metropolitan Melbourne shared how listening to another child co-researcher’s presentation made her question her assumptions about the life of rural youth. During our final meeting, a team of child co-researchers discussed, for the first time, how their lives were not only affected by gender inequity, but also by racial discrimination. Their conversation expanded from how racism affected their local community to how it affects children and youth from different social groups in Australia.

They planned a new research project, where they would collaborate with child co-researchers from different backgrounds to study racism across Australia.

To finish our meetings, I gave each child co-researcher a reference letter that described their contributions to the project as a group and individually. Child co-researchers also reported feeling more capable of doing research and engaging in a meaningful dialogue with adults. Child co-researchers wanted to create their own research questions, design their studies and collect their own data. Yet, they still wanted to ask the adult researchers for help when they needed it and to work with an adult facilitator who could help guide group discussions.

Discussion

Freire's work (2017) on critical consciousness focused on how it develops in adults who engaged in popular education efforts (see Chapter 2: Conceptual framework). Since then, a growing body of research has explored how critical consciousness develops during childhood and particularly during adolescence. Authors like Diemer, McWhirter, Ozer and Rapa (2015) and Watts, Diemer and Voight (2011) argued that the way children gradually learn to critically reflect and act on the world is a key aspect of their wellbeing and healthy development. The available evidence has proven that adolescence is a critical period in the life course for individuals' development of a sense of identity around themselves, society and the political dimensions of social life (Erikson & Erikson, 1997; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Seider & Clark, 2019; Youniss & Yates, 1997). Further, Clonan-Roy, Jacobs and Nakkula (2016) argue that critical consciousness must be at the centre of interventions that aim to empower children. This is particularly true for those experiencing social marginalization and oppression, because their experiences of resistance, resilience, social contributions, connectedness, competence and confidence are mediated by their ability to analyse how large social forces affect their development and opportunities for self-determination.

Ginwright and Cammarota (2002) and Watts, Diemer and Voight (2011) argued that participatory research with child co-researchers can provide conditions (i.e. reciprocal dialogue and adult facilitation) that are crucial to promote children's development of critical consciousness. The findings of the Kids Contribute study support that being co-researchers promoted children's critical consciousness, and that scaling-up helped shape this process. In

line with the Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD) (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002) framework, as the study increased its scale, child co-researchers' reflections and ideas for action progressively developed from individual awareness, to social awareness and then to global awareness. This should not be interpreted as one level of awareness being replaced by the next one as the project advanced. Instead, the development of each new level of awareness was accompanied by further developments in the previous levels.

The literature on the development of critical consciousness in children defines this concept as the combination of critical reflection and critical action that manifest together as praxis (Diemer et al., 2015; Diemer, Rapa, Voight, & McWhirter, 2016). Freire (2014, 2017) also emphasized the importance of curiosity and hope for critical consciousness, leading to a growing body of research on children's critical curiosity about social justice (Clark & Seider, 2017) and sense of socio-political efficacy for making social change (Diemer & Li, 2011; Diemer & Rapa, 2016; Watts et al., 2011). In the following sections, I will address how the different components of child co-researchers' critical consciousness were influenced by their participation in the Kids Contribute study and the National Child and Youth Forum.

Initial focus group discussions: focusing on a positive approach to individual awareness

My initial discussions with child co-researchers served to promote their individual awareness, understood as children's evaluation and exploration of their individual and cultural identities that result in a positive sense of self and belonging to their community (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). Child co-researchers began focusing on their individual self and everyday lives to examine their experiences of contributing at home, school, clubs and elsewhere in the community. During our first meetings, child co-researchers started to articulate ideas about how and why contributing was important, to reflect on their own and others' positions in their households and communities, and to think about the importance of recognition.

Participatory research can promote child co-researchers' reflections about how their identities (in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, class, sexuality) are related to the larger social structures affecting their self-determination (Clonan-Roy et al., 2016; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). My work with child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute study began focusing on their everyday lives in relation to their identity as important contributors of

society. This positive framing is similar to the one that Kohfeldt and Langhout (2012) adopted in their study with child co-researchers between 10 and 11 years old from a working-class and ethnic minority background in the USA. The project had the objective of promoting children's critical consciousness about how issues of race and social class affected their education, but Kohfeldt and Langhout (2012) chose to focus their initial discussions with child co-researchers on their hopes and dreams for their schools rather than their problems.

Framing the participatory study in a positive way can give more time to develop rapport, trust and children's sense of empowerment before diving into potentially more distressing topics (Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012). The complexity of exploring intersectional identities can also be too overwhelming for young co-researchers to do at the start of a project (Clark & Seider, 2017), and child co-researchers need time to become familiar with the research process and its activities (Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012). Additionally, this approach gave me the opportunity to learn more about the contexts where child co-researchers lived their everyday lives and the different local issues that would be later integrated as the Kids Contribute study continued to scale-up. It was later in the study, when child co-researchers began interpreting the poll results, that they began to develop individual awareness about how issues of social injustice like gender discrimination affected their personal experiences.

Child co-researchers' initial reflections about how they contributed in everyday life were in line with previous research showing that contributing promotes resilience (Elder Jr, 1998; Werner, 1993; Werner & Smith, 1992). At the individual level, child co-researchers discussed that contributing generated positive feelings and helped them develop a higher sense of self-efficacy and a more positive identity. Contributing also helped child co-researchers develop skills necessary to overcome present and future challenges. However, child co-researchers explained that contributing would not result in higher levels of resilience if it became a burden by generating stress, frustration and fatigue, or if child co-researchers felt forced to help.

Child co-researchers also reported that contributing helped them develop a sense of belonging, promoted positive relations with others, and made them feel that their actions had a positive impact in the world. Contributing also helped child co-researchers develop a

sense responsibility towards others. These reflections are in line with Keys' (1998) five-dimensional model of social wellbeing, which states that having a sense of contributing to one's society is a key aspect of mental health. Yet, child co-researchers emphasized that the gains they obtained from contributing were largely determined by the recognition they received from people in their everyday lives (e.g. parents, teachers, coaches, peers). In contrast, if others did not validate their contributions, child co-researchers felt less competent, valuable and resilient.

Helping make poll questions: initial manifestations of social awareness

Devising poll questions was a key step in promoting child co-researchers' social awareness, understood as people's understandings of the issues affecting their immediate communities (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). Ginwright and Cammarota (2002) did not establish a clear boundary between the social and the global levels. In the Kids Contribute study, reflecting about children's experiences at the national level was more closely related to child co-researchers' social awareness than their global awareness. This was manifested, for example, in how our discussions and child co-researchers' presentations at the National Child and Youth Forum addressed social issues without differentiating between the local and national levels except for one child co-researcher who focused on the unique experiences of rural children in Australia. Thus, I've included child co-researchers' critical consciousness about their country as a manifestation of their social awareness.

As child co-researchers developed questions for children across Australia, they began to expand their reflections to the national level and to think about children from other backgrounds and with different experiences. Social awareness requires cognitive skills for doing research, analysing information and problem solving (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002, p. 89). Child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute study put these skills into practice when they began making questions for the Kids Contribute Poll. They were aware that their questions had to be relevant, engaging and appropriate for all poll respondents. During the testing of the poll, child co-researchers explored how easy it was for them to respond to their own questions. Based on their observations, they imagined how responding to the poll would be for someone with a different experience. However, a topic that emerged was that children preferred not to speak on behalf of all children, because they recognised that

everyone's childhood experiences are unique.

The role of critical curiosity in promoting child co-researchers' critical consciousness

Making questions for the Kids Contribute Poll was the first moment when child co-researchers decided what they specifically wanted to learn about children's experiences as contributors. Thus, elaborating questions was a crucial moment for promoting child co-researchers' critical curiosity, understood as their eagerness to develop a better understanding of social issues (Clark & Seider, 2017, p. 125).

In a longitudinal study with African American and Latinx students between years 9 and 11, Clark and Seider (2019) confirmed that critical curiosity was positively correlated to children's critical reflection and involvement in social action. Freire (2017) described critical curiosity as both a catalyst and outcome of dialogue, and an important source of motivation in the development of critical consciousness in adults. Recently, researchers have found evidence showing that children are also curious about dialoguing with peers with different perspectives and, in turn, being exposed to other points of view increases their critical curiosity about the world (Clark & Seider, 2017). In the Kids Contribute study, child co-researchers were often curious about the daily lives of their team members (e.g. knowing how much chores they did at home). This curiosity gradually expanded to wanting to learn about the lives of children in Australia and later children around the world.

My findings support that making questions for the poll was a crucial opportunity to promote child co-researchers' reflections at the social awareness level. Additionally, a topic that emerged when making the poll questions was that the poll could help other children reflect and become more aware about their role as contributors in society. Thus, making the poll could also be considered a way of critically acting upon the world to transform it. This finding confirmed that critical reflection and action cannot be separated in practice (Freire, 2017) and that the children don't necessarily distinguish between them during the development of their critical consciousness (Watts et al., 2011).

Interpreting poll results and preparing for the forum: critical curiosity about social injustice and problem-posing at the level of social awareness

As previously explained, making poll questions helped guide child co-researchers' critical

curiosity to identify what aspects of children's experiences as contributors interested them the most. Meanwhile, helping interpret poll findings engaged child co-researchers' at a deeper level, motivating them to critically reflect on wider social issues and propose potential solutions that they later presented at the National Child and Youth Forum.

Child co-researchers were curious to find out what answers they got for their poll questions about how children contribute in Australia, why and how it made them feel. Yet, at this point of the Kids Contribute study, child co-researchers had not engaged in a problem-posing dialogue about the social forces that affect how children contribute. To promote a new cycle of critical reflection, the adult research team at the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit carried out the crucial task of presenting the poll data in a way that was meaningful for child co-researchers and engaged their critical curiosity.

According to Clark and Seider (2017), children's critical curiosity is triggered by exposure to new information that shows alternative perspectives and challenges their previous learnings. In addition to providing novel information that catches children's attention, adult facilitators must also promote discussions where children critically reflect about the meanings that the new information has for them in order to maintain their interest. In relation to this, my presentation of the quantitative analysis of the Kids Contribute Poll results answered child co-researchers' initial questions, but also delivered new information that was surprising and important for them.

In addition to the descriptive results of the poll, two members of the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit explored the effects of age and gender on children's experiences of contributing. Also, the Behind the News TV show prepared a video where they reported the poll findings that included the stories and opinions of other children that were interviewed for the show. In these materials, child co-researchers found evidence confirming their initial insights about the benefits of contributing for children's wellbeing and resilience. However, they also concluded that the conditions in which children contribute weren't always fair.

In a study with urban students, Clark and Seider (2017) interviewed 60 children between 13 and 16 years old and found that they felt more curious about social inequity when it was related to their own personal experiences and cultural context. This explains why female

researchers in the Kids Contribute study who had to do more chores than their male siblings felt strongly motivated to use the poll findings to continue exploring issues of gender inequity. Also, child co-researchers who did not receive pocket money or did not receive as much as other children were keen to discuss whether kids should receive pocket money for helping at home and, if so, how much.

However, children's critical curiosity is not necessarily limited to topics they have directly experienced, and as children critically reflect about the social issues affecting them, they become more interested in the struggles of other people in their community and beyond (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). Clark and Seider (2017) found that children feel curious when they perceive that a social issue is contingent to the wider society, including people living very different realities. For example, in the Kids Contribute study, a group of child co-researchers focused on how sports clubs can help promote social inclusion for migrant youth, but only one member of the team came from a migrant background.

Clark and Seider (2017) found that another trigger for children's critical curiosity was dialoguing with peers with different perspectives about social issues. I had the opportunity to observe this when working with teams with both female and male child co-researchers. At first, boys tended to be more interested in learning about differences in contributing between children of different ages. Yet, as they listened to their female teammates talk about how they had to do more house chores because of their gender, they became more interested in the topic.

Child co-researchers' reactions to my presentation of the Kids Contribute Poll results prove the important role that adults have in codifying and re-representing child co-researchers' reality by systematizing and reordering the data and reflections that child co-researchers bring to the table (Freire, 2017). In this way, adult researchers can help expand and renew the themes that emerge during the participatory process. Child co-researchers were not passive recipients of this re-presentation. On the contrary, they critically assessed the data obtained from the poll and contrasted it to their own experiences. They also critically examined how the poll data was obtained and analysed and discussed alternative explanations for our findings. Once child co-researchers reached the conclusion that the poll findings reflected the experiences of children in different parts of Australia, they felt in a

better position to critically reflect on the social issues that emerged in the data.

Engaging in problem-posing

After meeting with child co-researchers to discuss their impressions of the poll results, I helped those who decided to participate in the forum prepare their presentations. This was the most intensive stage of the project in terms of promoting social awareness, as child co-researchers actively engaged in identifying social problems, exploring their root causes and thinking of solutions. However, for the purpose of ordering my discussion, in this section I will focus on the stage of identifying problems and their root causes. I will refer to child co-researchers' advocacy for change in the following section when I examine how participating at the forum served to promote their critical action.

Child co-researchers compared the poll findings about children's experiences as contributors in Australia and compared it to their personal experiences. This helped expand their critical awareness from the individual and local community level to the national level. In the Kids Contribute study, child co-researchers' reflections first focused on their homes, schools, clubs, church, public spaces and the digital world (e.g. social media sites that child co-researchers used to connect with friends and family). Then, they used the poll data to compare their personal experiences with the experiences of other children in the country. For example, child co-researchers sometimes criticized their parents' role in perpetuating gender stereotypes and their schools' failure to include children's views in programs meant to decrease bullying. Another group criticized how Victorian media and sponsors in a specific sports league that they followed supported male athletes more than female athletes. At the forum, child co-researchers addressed these problems as manifestations of wider issues that affected children across all Australia.

When children engage in critical reflection, they gradually advance from blaming specific groups or individuals to examining the systemic causes of social problems (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). In this way, they address the social structures and ideologies that perpetuate inequity (Diemer et al., 2006, 2015). Initially, child co-researchers had different views about whether it was a problem that girls and boys helped at home in different ways. After dialoguing about the underlying causes of this situation, child co-researchers agreed that it was unfair. Child co-researchers first tried to explain the differences between how girls and boys helped at

home as the result of individual attributes like girls naturally preferring to do house chores. When these explanations failed, child co-researchers began to discuss the influence of larger societal forces like cultural parenting practices, gender stereotypes and discrimination that limit girls' self-determination and recognition in society.

The National Child and Youth Forum: critical action to address the root causes of social problems

Our team at the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit organized the National Child and Youth Forum as a way of supporting child co-researchers in disseminating their findings and advocating for change. Thus, this stage of the project emphasized the action component of child co-researchers' critical consciousness. Critical actions are the concrete efforts that individuals and groups carry out to change their social reality, transform society and abolish inequity (Diemer et al., 2015; Freire, 2017). Critical reflection and critical action are closely related and potentiate each other. In a longitudinal study with urban adolescents, Clark and Seider (2019) confirmed the reciprocal relationship between critical reflection and critical action using multivariate latent growth modelling. In line with this, Diemer and Rapa (2016) found that becoming aware of social inequalities led adolescents to have more expectations of social change and engage in different forms of political action. At the same time, having the experience of critical action promoted adolescents' reflections about social justice even further. Similarly, in the Kids Contribute study, reflecting about the poll results motivated some of the child co-researchers to participate in the forum as a form of action and advocacy. In turn, the experience of the forum triggered further reflections at the global awareness level that I will discuss in the following section.

By engaging in dialogue, children progressively develop solutions aimed to transform the social structures that perpetuate inequity (Hope & Bañales, 2019; Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012). For example, in the Kids Contribute study, one of the first solutions that child co-researchers proposed to tackle the unfair division of house labour between boys and girls was raising their own children to understand everyone should help equally. In contrast, at the forum, child co-researchers proposed more systemic solutions meant to stop gender stereotypes from being perpetuated in the wider society, like portraying girls and women in a more empowering way in the media.

Child co-researchers' participation at the forum indicated their interest in advocating for second-order change, understood as transforming power relationships, social roles and the values that underlie them (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). Addressing a panel of adults who were meant to actively listen to and act upon their child co-researchers' recommendations itself was an act that challenged the traditionally asymmetrical adult-child relationships. In their presentations, child co-researchers emphasized children's role as active contributors of society, and advocated for adults to create more opportunities for children to participate in decision-making that affected them. For example, one group of child co-researchers addressed the Director of a National School Principals' Association to collaborate with children in creating anti-bullying programs.

At the forum, child co-researchers proposed systemic change at different ecological levels, suggesting that they perceived changes at the micro and macrosystem as equally relevant. Usually, child co-researchers began focusing on the microlevel and then continued to reflect on the macrolevel. At the microsystem level, children examine individual or systemic attributions about problems in their immediate contexts (Hope & Bañales, 2019). Some of the child co-researchers' forum presentations focused on issues they identified at home (pocket money for chores), school (bullying) and community (the everyday life of rural children). Meanwhile, other presentations focused on the macrosystem, consisting of institutional and governmental structures (Hope & Bañales, 2019). These presentations focused on issues related to the media, educational curriculum and the social inclusion of migrant children and proposed solutions that involved changes in policies and programs.

When giving feedback on the Kids Contribute study and National Child and Youth Forum: manifestations of global awareness

The final stage of my work with child co-researchers was meant to be an opportunity to dialogue about their personal experiences in the Kids Contribute study and the National Child and Youth Forum and their ideas for future research. Evaluating the whole process of the study and the forum generated new insights at the level of global awareness. According to Ginwright and Cammarota (2002, p. 90), children and young people 'accomplish an effective and complete praxis through the last level of awareness, which we refer to as *Global Awareness*.' At this level, children learn about and empathise with the struggles of

people across the world and history, develop a sense of connectedness to others and feel motivated to support their resistance to oppression.

During our final meeting, children manifested critical reflections at the global awareness level. When asked about what topics they would like to continue researching, child co-researchers responded mainly with issues that affected children nationally and globally, like climate change, education, war and discrimination. One group of child co-researchers from a migrant background began discussing their interest in researching how their community was affected by racism. Gradually, they began to identify other groups of young people who suffer racial discrimination in Australia. For example, they shared their concern at how other young Aboriginal people are often treated unfairly across the country and the world. They decided that, in a future study, instead of only focusing on the racism suffered by their community, they would collaborate with young people from other ethnic backgrounds to address the wider problem of racism in Australia.

This example also demonstrates how global awareness enhances empathy and a sense of connection to others across geographic borders and history. It also demonstrates that child co-researchers' critical curiosity expanded to domains and contexts where they did not have direct personal experiences. This group of child co-researchers also intended to study social issues by collaborating with child co-researchers from different backgrounds and places as a form of critical action. They planned to present their findings at another forum, where they would address not only adults who supported their cause, but also adults from the media who they identified spreading negative stereotypes about ethnic minorities.

In the Kids Contribute study, child co-researchers from different study locations began working separately. Child co-researchers did not collaborate across study locations when doing research. However, some child co-researchers had the opportunity to collaborate with peers outside their team. Sameera presented on behalf of a group of child co-researchers who could not attend the forum. Another group accepted a younger boy from another group when the rest of his team withdrew from the study. This confirmed previous evidence on participatory research with children showing that older or more experienced child co-researchers can be effective facilitators and mediators (Porter, Hampshire et al. 2010). Then, the National Child and Youth Forum gave all the contributing child co-researchers the

opportunity to meet and learn about each other's work.

Participating in the forum exposed child co-researchers to new perspectives. At the beginning of the project, child co-researchers focused on their own experiences of contributing. They began to think of other children in Australia when they devised poll questions and discussed the poll results. At the forum, child co-researchers listened to each other's presentations and had the opportunity to socialize. These experiences led child co-researchers to reflect on the similarities and differences between children's lives in Australia, promoting their critical consciousness at the individual, social and global levels (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002).

One child co-researcher also reported that listening to another child co-researcher from a remote region challenged her assumptions about rural youth, suggesting that participatory research could help question cultural stereotypes. Nguyen and Quinn (2018) carried out a participatory study with migrant Vietnamese youth between 14 and 21 years old. The objective was to address and reduce interracial tensions between Vietnamese and African American youth in the community. Their study was based on Freire's (2017) notion that oppressive social structures can put social groups against each other, and that developing critical consciousness about the root causes behind these conflicts can help promote understanding and collaboration. Nguyen and Quinn (2018) concluded that participatory research can be used to critically reflect about the shared history and struggles of people from different social groups to reduce prejudice and intergroup tensions. Being part of the study helped question racial stereotypes and challenge ideas of competition between the Vietnamese and African American people. Nguyen and Quinn (2018) did not connect youth from different backgrounds and only worked with Vietnamese child co-researchers, but their findings may still be applicable for larger scale participatory studies where child co-researchers come from social groups that have a shared history or tensions between them.

The Kids Contribute study showed that exposing child co-researchers to other child and youth perspectives when scaling-up can promote their critical consciousness and motivate them to collaborate with peers from different backgrounds. However, the Kids Contribute study provided only one occasion for child co-researchers to connect across study locations. Since child co-researchers had to wait till the forum to meet and listen to each other's

perspectives, I wasn't able to explore how it would have been for them to collaborate at earlier stages of the research and for a longer period of time.

Overall, the Kids Contribute Study showed that scaling-up participatory research influenced child co-researchers' critical consciousness by promoting individual, social and global awareness at different points by exposing them to different child perspectives and experiences. However, more research is necessary on how connecting child co-researchers at different points of the research influences their critical consciousness and agency.

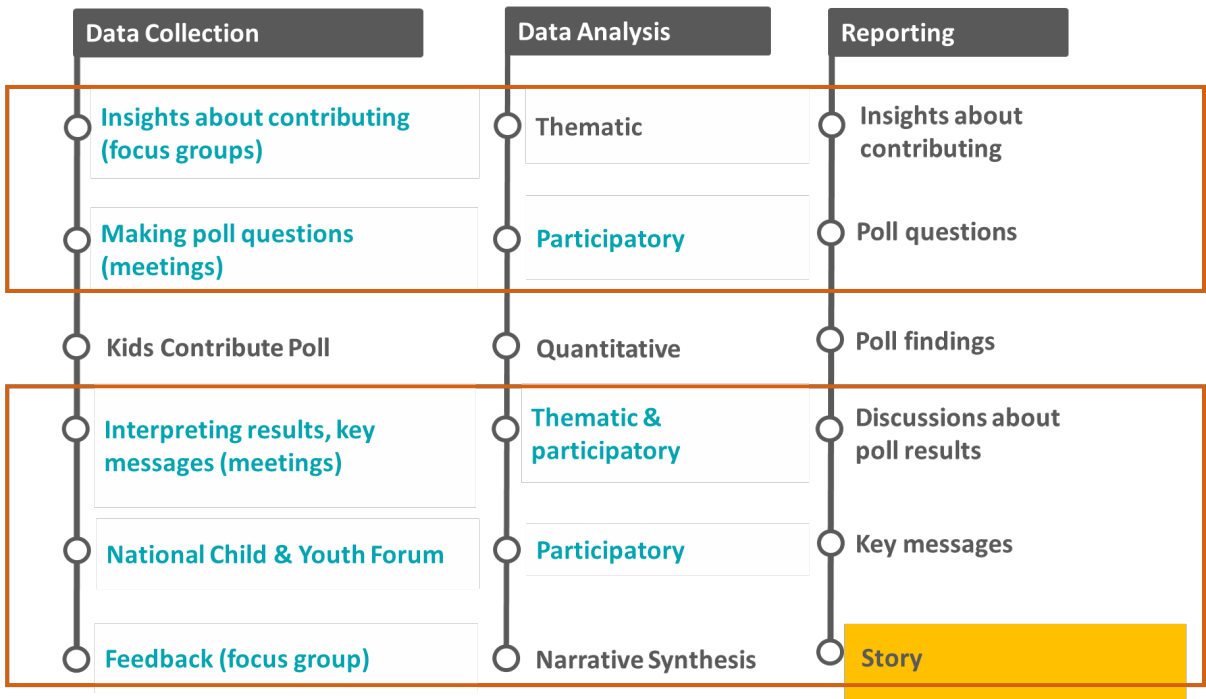
Summary

Child co-researchers initial insights about their contributions suggest that contributing can benefit children's resilience and social wellbeing. Engaging in making poll questions, interpreting results and developing key messages for the forum influenced child co-researchers' critical consciousness at the individual, social and global levels of awareness. In the following chapter, I reflect on child co-researchers' experiences of agency as the project developed and scaled-up, and my role as an adult facilitator.

Chapter 8: Reflecting on child co-researchers’ experiences of agency during the Kids Contribute study

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I examined child co-researchers’ development of critical consciousness across the Kids Contribute study and the National Child and Youth Forum. In this chapter, I focus on how scaling-up influenced child co-researchers’ experiences of agency during their collaboration with adults. As shown in Figure 20, my analysis is based on data that was generated with child co-researchers and that incorporates their feedback and interpretations of their experiences in the Kids Contribute project.



Orange represents my PhD study.
Blue represents stages when co-researchers actively participated.
Yellow highlighting represents elements reported in this chapter.

Figure 20: Elements from the Kids Contribute Study reported in this chapter

As previously explained, I created a story using a narrative synthesis approach (Crowther et

al., 2017; Dan Goodley, 2004) (for the full description of my methods, see Chapter 6: The Kids Contribute Study: Scaling-up Participatory Research to Gain a Better Understanding of Children's Contributions in their Everyday Lives). The process of writing, reading and rewriting this story generated new meanings that I captured in memos and analysed using abductive thematic analysis (see Appendix 31 for the corresponding codebook). I identified codes and categories and progressively arranged them into wider themes as I went back and forth between my interpretations and the original data (Liamputtong, 2013).

I decided to create a story as an exercise in reflexivity about my relationships with child co-researchers throughout this study and how my role as an adult facilitator helped shape their experiences in the project. In participatory research with children, adult researchers must continuously reflect on their influence over the research process and its outcomes (Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012). If they want to effectively share power with child co-researchers, adults need to question their underlying values and understandings about childhood and actively monitor their natural tendency to retain control over the research (Grace & Langhout, 2014; Liegghio et al., 2010; Ozer, Ritterman, & Wanis, 2010; Shier, 2001, 2015; Wong et al., 2010).

Reflexivity is an ongoing and recursive process (Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012). Similarly, the process of creating a story is never fully finished and new meanings emerge every time a person narrates a personal experience (Crowther et al., 2017). Because of this, one of the main strengths of narrative synthesis is its emphasis on exploring the researchers' subjective interpretations. Additionally, stories are an effective tool for representing the temporal dimension of participatory research. Throughout the Kids Contribute story, I intended to show the progressive development of child co-researchers' agency and critical consciousness as the study scaled-up. Approaching the data in two different ways (thematic analysis and narrative synthesis) in my PhD study meant that there was some repetition in the presentation of this set of results. However, doing this was necessary to present the findings of this chapter as a complete story.

The Kids Contribute Story

Discussing contributions with child co-researchers

In May 2017, I was invited to be part of a project called the Kids Contribute Study, where

child and adolescent co-researchers would help develop a poll in collaboration with the University of Melbourne and ABC's Behind the News TV show. My role as the adult facilitator consisted of working with the child co-researchers at each study site to create poll questions, interpret findings and disseminate child co-researchers' final conclusions and recommendations. The first step in the project was to meet with each team of child co-researchers, get to know each other and talk about how they contributed in their everyday lives. These meetings were framed as focus groups, meaning that I was the main person leading the conversation and asking children about their experiences contributing. Despite not being able to share power for decision-making with children yet, I explained that there were no right or wrong answers, that this was their project and that our goal was for them to actively participate in making poll questions, interpreting findings and reporting them to the community. These first meetings helped introduce the research, build rapport and an atmosphere of trust. This was facilitated by the fact that most child co-researchers already knew their other group members, and some had even helped recruit their team.

Child co-researchers were keen to talk about how they contributed at their home, school, club and community. Jason, who was 8 at the time, mopped his floor by wrapping towels around his feet and using them as skates. Steve shared how he helped his parents on their farm. Many child co-researchers from sports clubs highlighted that their contributions went beyond sports and extended to the community.

- I don't mind being asked for help by adults, I see it as a sign of trust that gets me respect. – said Anita.
- Helping also teaches me to be more independent and prepared to look after my children, have a job, achieve my dreams. – added Grace.
- I think that's it: life skills, having fun and you think that you're making a difference. – concluded Anita.
- But if kids do too much, they'll get tired and out of their mind. Because you'll have no time for anything, you'd have to go there and there and there, and you have no time for friends or your family. You can get really crazy, bonkers. – said Jason.

Overall, child co-researchers described that contributing to an appropriate degree helped

them feel better about themselves, connected them to others and taught them important skills.

Making poll questions

After my first discussions with the different child co-researchers, it was time to start making questions for the poll. This was the first time that child co-researchers directly influenced the research. Child co-researchers had not been able to participate in deciding our research question or the study design. I acknowledged this fact in my meetings with child co-researchers and asked them in what ways they thought making a poll would be useful. Angela and Adam thought that answering the poll questions might help other kids understand how to fix problems, learn new ways of contributing and therefore become better people. Child co-researchers also found making a poll for a television show interesting. However, devising questions was not straightforward.

- I want to find out how kids want to make the world a better place. I don't think everyone helps in the same way. But to be very honest, I don't get it. What type of questions are we trying to ask? – said Anita.
- Well, you could write what we do, why we're doing it, and where. – said Xavier.

I tried to emphasize that, as child co-researchers, they could make questions about what they wanted to find out. I also tried to help by providing examples from other teams and reviewing the mental maps we made on previous meetings. But it was difficult not to suggest my own questions and explain, in plain words, how researchers make polls. Sometimes, I felt I was confusing the child co-researchers even more. Sameera also pointed out that it would have been easier to make the questions right after our first meeting, because she had forgotten our first conversations. I was afraid this situation could make the child co-researchers feel confused, frustrated or insecure.

Brainstorming and drawing mental maps as a group were useful techniques, and child co-researchers began to feel more confident. Often, child co-researchers started with open questions that we progressively adapted to the format required by the online poll. Sometimes, child co-researchers surprised me with questions that I couldn't have made

myself. For example, one group was interested in the difference between feeling *used* versus *useful* when helping others. Although most questions were based on child co-researchers' own experiences of contributing, we discussed how to make them so they could be answered by children of different ages and from different backgrounds and places in Australia.

After this, I gathered everyone's questions and categorized them, so I could merge those that belonged to a similar topic. Some child co-researchers were available and agreed to help test the final version of the poll. Sophia, who was 11 years old, said she felt the poll was good because it was about things kids knew and experienced. However, she was very careful in making sure that kids from all ages could understand the questions. It was also important for her that the poll was not too long. I was surprised that she decided to take out many questions she made herself because they were not directly related to the original research question. We suggested that perhaps we could use them later in a separate poll. Sophia also mentioned that she did not like it when questions asked her to respond in the name of all children: everyone was different, and she could only respond for herself. I had not thought about that.

Interpreting results

It was some months before the poll was launched around Easter 2018. Sasha, a member of our adult research team at the University, did the quantitative analysis. Then, I went back and presented the results to the child co-researchers. I was disappointed to find out that most child co-researchers did not know when the poll went online, even though I had informed all our collaborating organizations. Additionally, some child co-researchers did not continue in the project. The group from Western Australia did not meet again because we tried to reconnect with the child co-researchers' parents via e-mail but didn't get a response. Also, our youngest group of child co-researchers' (grade 3) preferred not to continue in the project. Nevertheless, I was able to meet with most child co-researchers and got the impression that they were interested in seeing their poll results. My plan for these meetings was to present the poll findings and discuss them with child co-researchers at the same time. For example, before presenting a finding (e.g. how poll respondents said they felt when they contributed), I would ask child co-researchers what results interested them the most, what

findings they expected and why. Then, after presenting each finding, I asked child co-researchers about their impressions of these results, and if they thought they were different or similar to their personal experiences.

The poll got over 10,800 responses from across Australia, and reflected that children and adolescents were highly committed to help others at home, school and the community. In fact, 99% of the poll respondents said they contributed in one way or another. Cory said he knew a lot of children contributed, but the results were a lot more than he expected. Results also showed that contributing was related to higher levels of resilience. Overall, the poll got very positive comments from viewers on the website. Some viewers said they enjoyed responding to a poll made by peers their same age. Others said that answering the poll made them become aware of how much they helped, and this made them feel better about themselves. The poll results gave a very positive view about children in Australia, but they also revealed some more controversial aspects.

The first one was related to getting pocket money to do chores. Almost half the children in the poll reported receiving different amounts of money for helping at home. When the poll results were presented on TV, a boy who was interviewed said he received 25 dollars for doing his homework. Some child co-researchers did not think that doing homework could be considered as part of doing house chores, because it was part of children's responsibilities at school. Also, the amount of money that the boy in the Behind the News story received shocked some child co-researchers, like Chloe, Fernando, Ben and Steve, but for different reasons. While some child co-researchers rejected the idea of getting money for helping, others saw it as a positive incentive that they wanted to receive from their parents.

- I can't believe he gets 25 dollars; I get nothing for helping at home! – said Chloe.
- But kids shouldn't get paid to do chores because they should do something to help their parents! – said Ben.
- I also think it's pretty silly. I reckon they should wait until they're old enough to earn their own money. Parents try hard enough each day just to go to work and make money just for their kids to live. – said Steve.
- Yeah. I used to get pocket money, but I didn't really need it. – said Fernando. – I've got a business now, making cupcakes. At the moment, it's fundraising, because we've

got a sports tour coming up.

- Well, I think it's good to get pocket money for chores. Because it helps kids learn about money. [Chloe was unapologetic and humorous. Sometimes, she gave me the impression that she enjoyed diverging from other's opinions] And, you know, it's all about money these days. It would make me feel happy that I could persuade my kids to do heaps with some money.

There was also another result that even surprised our all-female team at the University. Girls reported contributing more often and from a younger age, but also receiving less pocket money. In fact, girls as young as 8 years old received less pocket money than boys the same age. Despite this, girls showed higher levels of resilience. I expected that many female child co-researchers would want to discuss these results, and I was right, but I was surprised when I found out that they had very different opinions.

- Do you see this in your everyday lives? – I asked.
- Yeah. Because I have brothers and sisters, and girls are expected to do everything around the house. Specially me, because I'm the oldest. My mum says that girls should be more responsible than boys. That's, like, my culture. They don't give us a reason. They say, 'It's your culture'. It's not fair. – said Grace.
- To be honest, I don't care. – said Anita.
- Yeah. Like, I'm used to it, it's part of my nature. I don't enjoy cleaning and tidying up, but I don't mind it because I know it's for the greater good. – added Aamira.
- Boys are lazy, so I do most of the cleaning with my Mom. Cuz I take charge. Meanwhile, my brothers clean their own spaces. They need to do their own things, but yeah, it's OK. Cooking also helps me celebrate our traditions with my family. If you don't help out, it means the food's not going to be ready. That's why I come home and spend the whole time helping. – said Angela.
- I'm going to make sure all my kids clean. If you're a boy, you should know at a young age that we're all equal. – said Rebecca.
- Yeah. My brother and I sort of do the same things around the house. Although sometimes we do different things. – said Carrie.

These conversations felt very animated and enthusiastic, and often took place with

teams who only had female child co-researchers. Our team at the University was also motivated to talk about this topic. During one meeting, Gaby, our project leader and I found ourselves sharing examples from our own lives with a team of female child co-researchers. However, I was not sure how to address these results with the male child co-researchers in the project because it didn't make them look very good. Additionally, I found that most male child co-researchers were more interested in comparisons between younger and older poll respondents than gender differences. There were some male child co-researchers, like Fernando and Jason, who spoke about regularly helping their mothers at home. However, after enquiring a little further, some male child co-researchers began to identify with the poll results when we began to explore how male respondents felt about helping.

- The poll also found that boys feel more nervous, tired, pressured or annoyed when they're helping. Is that how you feel sometimes? – I asked.
- That's fair enough. – said Ben.
- Yeah, you kind of feel like you don't want to do it, and you're forced to help. It makes me feel mad. Especially when I'm concentrating on something else, like homework, video games or social media. – said Fernando.
- Personally, I'm always tired. – said Kyle.

No male child co-researchers explicitly said that they wanted to change how they contributed at home or that they felt less resilient in comparison to girls. However, I began to observe that Adam slowly began to question his role at home and how this situation could be related to how he felt:

- What did you think of the poll results? – I asked him.
- They just made me feel the same. – he responded, but then began to hesitate. – I don't like doing that much stuff around the house. I help a little bit at home, but most boys go into the sports direction. They might be sitting down watching sports all the time. I watch a lot of TV with my dad when mom's working. Meanwhile, girls grow up to become moms... well, I guess boys also grow up to be dads. I guess that if you do stuff and people say, 'good job,' it will make you happy and proud. Then it's easier to overcome stuff, be resilient. But my mum doesn't like whatever me and my

dad do and puts everything back. She's grumpy all the time... for good reasons. I'm still trying to figure it out.

Even though everyone agreed that the amount of pocket money kids got from helping should depend on the difficulty of the task, not your age or whether you are a boy or girl, not everyone was against having different roles at home. Also, not everyone agreed on the root causes behind the differences between how boys and girls helped in Australia. I was wondering why no one had mentioned the words 'sexism' or 'patriarchy' yet, but thought that if I mentioned those terms, I might be imposing my own views, so I decided not to use them and instead continue asking questions:

- Um, sometimes boys get asked more to do more physical stuff. – said Fernando. – And girls get asked different stuff like cleaning, washing, cooking. I don't mind, it doesn't really matter.
- Boys do more outdoor stuff, like mowing the lawn. – said Marilyn. – Maybe it's nature.
- No. Everyone's born different. It's the way you're raised. – said Jen.
- I think girls may help more because their mum's a role model to them. – said Carrie. – Maybe males don't enjoy things that females do. But yeah, girls do a lot more around the house than boys do. It makes me feel a little bit proud, because girls are the best.
- Sometimes girls help more with some things, and boys more with others. I think it just depends. I can't think of a reason. Maybe boys are more stubborn and unwilling to help, so they need an incentive. – said Kyle. – I also think it's a bit unrealistic to say girls help at school by being leaders, stopping bullying, and then help people with their homework and make students feel better. Sure, some people would be able to do that, but it'd be really hard for just one individual to be able to do all those things. I can imagine like a 7 or 8-year-old girl ticking all these boxes. Personally, if I took a survey like this, I don't want to be misleading, because I know that some people do that more than I do.
- Well, I think it's easier for boys to say that they feel bad when they are helping because they don't mind making their parents look bad. – said Chloe, when I asked

her why she thought boys tended to report helping less at home.

After these conversations, I told the child co-researchers that there was a possibility for them to present their findings and ideas at a national forum. From the start, our adult research team emphasized that the forum would be about the child co-researchers and what they wanted to say. We were also careful to transmit that our aim was to support them to prepare for the forum and make sure that everyone had a role they enjoyed. Also, that adult panellists at the forum would have to give feedback on what they planned to do with what the child co-researchers told them.

I told child co-researchers that they did not have to answer right away if they needed time to think whether they wanted to participate in the forum or not. Some child co-researchers accepted right away. Adam and Corey wanted to think about it, but Angela intervened and convinced them to accept right away. However, not all child co-researchers were keen to participate in the forum, particularly the youngest ones and most of our male child co-researchers. When I asked Ethan why he thought so many boys from his club had stopped participating in the project, he said he thought that there was such a big gap between our meetings, that they did not know that the project was still going. One group could not continue participating because our adult contact had a family member who was seriously ill and had to withdraw. In the end, 18 child co-researchers decided to remain in the project, and all of them chose to present.

Preparing for the forum

Child co-researchers began working on their presentations for the forum around July 2018. During these meetings, we discussed child co-researchers' ideas for their presentations, prepared slides and skits, rehearsed and coordinated aspects like transportation and catering. Often, child co-researchers used large pieces of paper or a whiteboard to create mental maps that helped organize ideas. It was interesting to observe that, as child co-researchers prepared for the forum, they began to take the lead in our meetings. I started asking them to decide how many times we should meet, when and what should be our agenda. At the same time, I often let them work on their own, and only intervened when I was asked for help.

Even if child co-researchers were enthusiastic about the topic they chose to present, it was not easy to develop a message. I tried different strategies to help. Often, we discussed the potential root causes of a problem to think of potential solutions. I found it interesting to observe that many child co-researchers preferred to talk from their personal experiences and to dialogue with the audience instead of seeking conflict.

- I know we have been talking about gender equality all the time, but what's our message? What do we want the panel to do for us? What should be our first line? – said Anita.
- Maybe you can think about one thing that angers you, something that concerns you or that you think is urgent. – I suggested.
- You could also think about something that works really well and should be used more often. – said Gaby.
- We don't want to go off as aggressive, just to go as concerned. Because you don't win in that way. It's unpleasant and we'd be proving the other side is right. – concluded Anita [this made me realize that, like an adult facilitator working with child co-researchers, children can also be strategic in their dialogue with adults] – Also, I think we can expand on our own lives more than provide information.
- Yeah. I want to talk about how girls grow up and have to change their career choice. I have always wanted to be a professional athlete but knew I wouldn't get paid as much as men. Women are seen as delicate and not fit to do the same jobs as men. – said Aamira.
- And who do you think influences these beliefs? – I asked.
- The media. – said Grace. – Women should get the same recognition as men in the media.

Other times, child co-researchers struggled to prepare their presentation until they were sure that the forum was a place where they could freely express themselves and demand change. This happened with Angela. Although she was always confident, I felt that she tried to present herself in a way that was pleasing to adults. During our meetings, I tried to show her she could ask me any questions about the project, take the lead and even make fun of me (i.e. of my bad drawing skills). Then, one meeting, when we were working on her

presentation just the two of us, she shared how she felt about the attacks that she saw against her Muslim religion.

- This is not just in Australia; it happens in other countries as well. In some countries, they have banned parts of religions that women have chosen to do. It hurts people, traps them at home. I wanna make a change in this, cuz some people try to make other religions sound bad. – said Angela.

I was glad that she had opened up but was also worried about what would happen if the forum was public and there were people who would be hostile. Or that she might be disappointed if she did not get the outcome she expected. I discussed this with other members of the team at the University, who agreed that different measures were being taken to make sure that the forum would be safe space.

Not all child co-researchers wanted to make recommendations for the adult panel members. Some, like Tabitha and Chloe, wanted to ask what they thought about inequity, its causes and how to make change. There were also child co-researchers like Sameera, Ethan and Kyle, who preferred to support other child co-researchers in making their presentations. This made me remember how, earlier in the project, they had told me about how children and young people could be leaders, help other kids develop and contribute to community development. In this way, they supported child co-researchers who had more difficulty concentrating during meetings or that wanted to participate in the forum but could not continue attending our activities. In fact, I observed that sometimes meetings ran more smoothly and had better results when they led the work.

It's important to highlight that I was not the only adult supporting child co-researchers make their presentations. Gaby and Jane, from the University, participated in some meetings with the child co-researchers and me. Both contributed with different ideas on how to make and rehearse the forum presentations that helped them be more positive. Gaby frequently made suggestions that would help foster better communication with adults (i.e. highlight effective solutions, be more positive, rehearse your first line), while Jane invited the child co-researchers to think of ways to make their presentations more fun (i.e. making skits). Adult collaborators from each organization were also crucial in helping communicate with child co-

researchers and organize our meetings. Also, child co-researchers working far from Melbourne received help from their parents and schools, and sometimes even worked more with them than me.

The day of the forum

The National Child and Youth Forum took place on 7 September 2018. This event was the first time that all child co-researchers came together. To help child co-researchers relax and feel more confident on the day of the forum, we held a general rehearsal without the audience, and Jane led some relaxation exercises. The forum was carried out at the University, and approximately 200 people attended. Guests included child co-researchers' family and friends, schoolteachers and Principals, academics, collaborators and even one well-known politician with his family.

The members of the panel came from diverse organizations working with children and adolescents, and represented different areas and target populations: parents, schools, sports, non-governmental organizations, social inclusion and the media. In total, the panel listened to nine presentations from child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute project. The forum also included videos from child co-researchers who worked with the Children's Commissioner to make a poll about children's rights in Australia. A grant awarded to organize the forum allowed child co-researchers from the Kids Contribute study who lived in other states to travel to Melbourne with members of their family.

Child co-researchers' recommendations and questions spanned a wide range of topics and contexts. They recommended parents to be fair and equal between siblings of different ages and gender, and to listen to their preferences when doing chores. Sometimes, child co-researchers recommended not to give pocket money for chores. Child co-researchers also advised parents and adults in general to acknowledge children's contributions and to give them more opportunities to help outside home. Schools were advised to include students in developing programs to prevent and stop bullying, because they are the ones who know about what works and what does not. Meanwhile, child co-researchers told representatives from governmental and non-governmental organizations to respect children and young people's culture and religion so they can actively contribute to society, and to replicate sports programs that help promote social inclusion. Additionally, child co-researchers

recommended representatives from the media and sports to advocate for equal pay and opportunities, independently of gender, and to promote a more positive and empowering representation of women. Finally, child co-researchers from rural communities shared how different life in the countryside can be.

After the forum, child co-researchers and their guests gathered together for photos and snacks. The forum was recorded and uploaded on the research program's website. The footage could only be accessed by people who received the link. Although this reduced the potential viewers, it helped protect child co-researchers from potential trolls. One news channel interviewed one of our child co-researchers for its website. All the child co-researchers received a copy of the forum recording, their presentations and the pictures of them taken during the event. Finally, a booklet produced by our team summarized the forum and main findings of the Kids Contribute and Kids' Rights polls (see Appendix 26). It explicitly acknowledged all the child co-researchers who presented at the forum. This booklet was distributed among the forum attendees and other collaborators.

Evaluating the Kids Contribute project

Evaluating the research process

Between October and November 2018, I met with 16 of the 18 child co-researchers who presented to ask for their feedback, corresponding to six groups. Even though I was using my recorder and prepared a set of questions, I wanted our meeting to take place more like an informal conversation rather than a focus group. Because of that, I brought snacks as well as the pictures and video footage from the forum to look at together. I began asking child co-researchers about their experience of doing the research. I was especially interested in whether they identified as researchers and felt ownership over the project. Many child co-researchers reported enjoying the experience and getting recognition from their friends, family and teachers. Corey and Sophia, for example, said they felt they were making an important contribution.

- It's probably one of the biggest things I've done, and it'll be fun to do it again. Normally, at school, you don't really get to say much. When we got to do this project, we got to speak about everything, about what we want to happen in the future. – said Corey. – We were one big team. And a good team.

- I liked that we got to think of the research, and we were a big part of it. – said Sophia.
– I liked how I got to look at the questions and say, ‘I don't know if it'd be a good idea.’
- Although, sometimes, I probably felt more like a helper. – reflected Piper. – Because a researcher finds out all the information, and we were just like helping out. But I prefer it that way.
- Yes. I think it was good that you chose the topic, and the survey was probably the best option. And it wasn't making a survey in the sense of just asking and getting an answer. It was elaborating on the question, the answers and everything. – argued Ethan. – I think it'd be good to have more choice or more control but, I don't know how well it would end up. We would have to be a bit more organised.
- And how much help would you like to receive from adults? – I asked.
- Every now and then we can ask for an adult to help us, like if you're a bit stuck. – added Joey.
- Maybe we can skip a couple of stages just so it's not pressuring us. – said Adam.
- And how can we make sure that that it's not adults telling children what to do? – I asked.
- By talking to me. – responded Steve, succinctly.

I was aware that, at some points of the research, many had struggled because it was unfamiliar territory. So, I asked child co-researchers how we could improve this. Although some liked the idea of an initial training in research, others preferred to learn along the way. Rebecca and Anita explained that, in this way, they were able to start from their own ideas and then expand with the support of the adults. In fact, some child co-researchers said that overcoming the challenges of making poll questions and preparing for the forum helped them feel ‘strong and smart’ from being able ‘to put this off the ground.’ Some researchers, like Ethan, suggested that going through examples from other participatory projects could give them inspiration. However, he also emphasized that adults couldn't change the fact that research would be a new experience for most people, and that not everyone would be interested. Despite the difficulties, some child co-researchers said they enjoyed doing the research more than the forum because it felt more like a natural conversation and they didn't need to think too much about what to say. They also enjoyed and found it useful to

brainstorm and create mental maps to organize and develop their ideas.

Evaluating the forum

Meanwhile, other child co-researchers were more focused on talking about their experience at the forum. Most had felt nervous but also excited and enjoyed having the choice of what to present. On one hand, the forum and its preparations had demanded a large amount of time and energy, so many felt tired and relieved when it was over. On the other hand, they also felt happy and empowered. However, although child co-researchers had a positive impression of some panel members, many didn't feel satisfied with the responses they received.

- What did you think about the responses you got from the panel? – I asked.
- I was a little sad that I didn't get an answer to my question. – said Angela.
- Maybe they just didn't know what to say. – said Adam.
- I didn't pay that much attention. I don't think they answered our questions. I couldn't understand, they were using really big words. And they were just telling us what we wanted to hear. They were just playing us, they were just saying the same thing we did, in different words. – said Aamira. – The two young UNICEF ambassadors were easy to relate to, because they were our age and spoke language we could understand.
- How could we improve this? – I enquired.
- Maybe the panellists should get a tiny bit more information on the topic that they're going to answer. – suggested Joey.
- And next time, it can be more like an open debate. I can't wait to stand up and take questions. – said Grace.
- I said to you on the day, 'is it okay if people ask you questions,' and you were, like, 'no way.' – said Gaby.
- We didn't have enough knowledge of this. – said Aamira. – I am very confident now.
- It's a learning path for all of us. I just thought you guys did an amazing job. I was really impressed. And, I just think the next one is going to blow it out of the water. – said Gaby.

Did scaling-up help child co-researchers encounter different perspectives?

Although child co-researchers could not remember all the other group's presentations at the forum, they valued getting to know each other and their work. One presentation in particular, Steve's, was highlighted by most child co-researchers and adults that attended the forum. Many celebrated the artistic quality of his work but, for Rebecca, it also meant learning about life in rural Australia and confronting her assumptions.

- My favourite presentation was that guy, Steve, the one that lives on a farm. He looked so chilled, so unbothered. He was just interesting to listen to. I might just say it... I felt like he would be like the ones like you see on TV. You know, with those hats, a small house, like, in the middle of nowhere. – said Rebecca.

In turn, Steve also said that coming to Melbourne for the first time and working with the University had been a very important experience. He said his passion was sharing his experience of rural living, especially with city kids. He said he would like to continue the next year and present on how the drought had affected him and his family. He also suggested working with other people from different perspectives, perhaps communicating with video chats if it was not possible to get together in the same place. Other child co-researchers had similar ideas about wanting to connect with others during the research process.

Like Steve, many child co-researchers wanted to continue with a new project the following year, hopefully with their same team. I noticed that the topics that child co-researchers proposed for the next year were more global. Child co-researchers mentioned issues like the environment, climate change, poverty, world peace and education. Donald Trump was also mentioned. I observed that child co-researchers' interests also evolved. During our last meeting, one group talked, for the first time, about the racial discrimination they had directly experienced or witnessed towards their community. Gradually, their conversation expanded to the discrimination suffered by other groups in the country.

- Actually, I think we're trying to go for racism in general. Asian and Muslim communities are also affected. – said Grace.
- And Aboriginal youth. This country has done them wrong in so many ways. They can just be sitting down, I can see police coming to them, putting their gloves on,

checking on them, you know what I mean. They feel they have drugs and stuff like that. They're not treated right. – added Rebecca.

This was not the first time that child co-researchers had criticized the discrimination suffered by people from other ethnic or religious backgrounds. Corey, for example, criticized politicians who acted to the detriment of Aboriginal peoples in Australia. However, this was the first time that a team of the child co-researchers proposed making a project with young people from different contexts and backgrounds around one common social problem.

Child co-researchers had been very positive about scaling up their projects from their immediate community to the national level, and I wanted to know what they thought about going even further. They found the idea of expanding the project to different countries interesting and fun. Even though language and not being able to travel were important barriers, child co-researchers mentioned different ways in which scaling-up internationally could benefit the research. It called my attention to the fact that most of these reasons were also mentioned by adult researchers in the literature about scaling-up participatory studies.

- I would learn a lot more about kids and how they live in their country and they'd learn about how I live in my country. – said Steve. – We could do a worldwide survey.
- Maybe we can have one or two meetings with everyone who's doing the research. You could bounce ideas off each other and work together as a team. – added Joey.
- If there's more researchers from other countries, the more accurate the report will probably be 'cause there's more answers or whatever. Also, because life in other countries can be so much different to here in Australia. So that'll be pretty helpful because you'll get information from here, in other places of Australia and even other countries. – said Corey.

Reference letters, thanks, and closure

I wanted to finish our last meeting by focusing on the different skills that adults and co-researchers brought to the table. I started by asking child co-researchers what skills they valued the most in the adult facilitators. I did not want to ask them directly about my way of working with them, because the child co-researchers might not say what they were really thinking or worry that I might not like it. So, instead, I asked about adults in general.

- What would you recommend to adults who work with children in doing research? – I asked.
- Adults need to have an open mind and be able to open their ears and listen to what we have to say. – responded Sophia.
- They should be funny and humorous and not tell us off or say that our idea's wrong. And they shouldn't be serious. – added Chloe.

Then, I gave each child co-researcher a reference letter that I wrote thinking of each one's strengths and contributions during the project. Gaby proposed it as a way to give back something that would be useful for the child co-researchers in the future, like applying for jobs or programs. I also thought it could be an important way for the adult researchers to acknowledge child co-researchers' unique contributions to the project. I also intended the letters would help give a positive sense of closure. However, I did not expect that the child co-researchers would react by giving me positive feedback in return.

- So, I wanted to say a little bit about what you've done and all your skills. It was very difficult to condense it. – I said.

I gave each one their letter and explained a little bit about its context and contents. Sometimes, child co-researchers asked to read the letters in silence before talking about them. After reading them, I asked child co-researchers what they thought about the letters.

- I'm very happy with that. I like the bit that says that I have strong sense of justice and fairness. That really... you just touched me. – said Rebecca.
- 'She was highly capable of facing unexpected problems.' That'll look really good on my resume. – said Anita.
- And also, the dynamic in this group was so special that you guys were so great at working together, you made a really good team and each one put their own skills. It was a really great privilege to work with you guys. – I said. – So, before we wrap up, is there anything you would like to say? – I said.
- Like, thank you so much. – said Aamira.
- Thank you, like, you've done a lot, you helped us go through the stuff, you organised it. – said Rebecca.

- You always kept your patience with us as well. – said Anita. – We never were on time, and you never said anything.

Child co-researchers also thanked everyone else in the team at the University and some explicitly asked me to pass their thanks to Gaby and Jane. I was very touched. During these meetings, I felt emotional and happy, and a little sad that in the future I might not be the person working with them as the adult facilitator. I was also a little anxious about what would really happen the following year and if we could provide opportunities for those child co-researchers who wanted to continue.

The outcomes of the project

Even though the Kids Contribute project finished, the story is not complete without looking at its impact. In general, child co-researchers valued the experience of being in the project. However, some didn't feel that they had the impact they expected on the panel members at the forum. When I asked Ethan what he thought he had gained from the project, he said that he did not think there was a lot to benefit from it, 'but I guess you don't really need a benefit.'

Many child co-researchers reported being acknowledged by their families, friends, school and community, or making their parents proud. Steve, for example, was invited to other forums and events in his hometown. However, some child co-researchers did not like getting a lot of attention, especially when they were asked to talk about their experiences in front of their school. Also, they sometimes felt uncomfortable that their parents shared news and photos about them on social media. For this reason, I offered child co-researchers the opportunity to select the pictures they wanted to share with others.

We took care to let child co-researchers know about the impact of their work in other places. For example, I explained to everyone that Kids Contribute had expanded into a new project, where child co-researchers in different parts of Australia, Chile, Colombia and the United Kingdom were going to see their work to make their own polls. Another outcome of the Kids Contribute study was the incorporation of some of its findings in the National Children's Commissioner's report to the United Nations about the state of childhood in Australia. The Commissioner chaired the forum and cited the Kids Contribute poll as

evidence of children and adolescents' participation and commitment in society. She also worked with children in a similar way to make a poll about children's perceptions of their rights in Australia. In total, the report contained the opinions of more than 20,000 children and adolescents, making it unique in its kind. Child co-researchers expressed their excitement about how their work had influenced people in other parts of the world and were keen to give suggestions for how to work with child co-researchers from different countries.

We agreed with the child co-researchers to take a break and continue next year with a new project. Even though it was not possible to carry out a second forum the next year, the team at the University continued to work on ideas that could be interesting for those child co-researchers who wanted to do their own projects. But staying in touch can be difficult. Also, some child co-researchers are now in their senior years or transitioning to secondary school. This might mean they do not have the same availability or interest in being child co-researchers. Yet, a few child co-researchers responded to a call from the Children's Commissioner to participate in a consultation about how Australia should protect human rights in the XXI century. I got an e-mail from Carrie and Joey's dad, telling me they had an interesting conversation about human rights in Australia that extended to other countries of the world. Carrie and Joey had made a poster about it and were going to send it to us.

Discussion

Child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute Study interacted and collaborated with a large number of adults. The story above showed that child co-researchers became progressively more empowered and made more decisions about the research when adults helped promote their freedom of expression, agency and empowerment: first at the local level, and then in increasingly wider contexts.

Promoting child co-researchers' freedom of expression

As an adult facilitator, I tried to promote child co-researchers' sense of being free to express themselves in the research rather than having to comply with what adults expected to hear from them (Lundy, 2007). One way of promoting child co-researchers' freedom of expression was embracing diverse ways of communicating (Punch, 2002b) during the research process

and the forum. For example, making a space for jokes and informal conversations during meetings helped child co-researchers who found humour useful to express their ideas more easily and feel more at ease with adults. During the forum, child co-researchers chose what they wanted to present and how.

There is wide agreement in the literature on participatory research with children on the intrinsically relational nature of the participatory process (Mannion, 2007). In the Kids Contribute study, building positive rapport between the child co-researchers and me was also crucial to support their freedom of expression (Bushin, 2007; Irwin & Johnson, 2005; Spyrou, 2011). It was helpful that my first conversations with child co-researchers were about their everyday lives because this topic was interesting for them and they felt comfortable talking about it. Sometimes, adult facilitators also shared their experiences and perspectives. In this way, child co-researchers and I got to know each other better. As the project developed and scaled-up, it was necessary to also foster positive relationships between child co-researchers and the rest of the research team and collaborators. At the end of the project, it was important to provide a space for child co-researchers to reflect on the whole experience, anticipate the end of the project and generate a positive sense of closure.

Child co-researchers' feedback confirmed previous evidence showing that keeping an open mind to children's ideas is one of the most important skills in participatory research (Kohfeldt et al., 2011; Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012; Ozer et al., 2013). When adults cease to see themselves as the only experts, they are more capable of learning about children's worlds (Kellett, 2010). Opening up to child co-researchers' ideas helped me develop new learnings and understandings about childhood and challenged my previous assumptions. At different moments, I realized that despite my best efforts as a participatory researcher, I still tended to view children as a homogeneous group. For example, Sophia's insights helped me understand that it was inadequate to devise poll questions that ask children to respond on behalf of children in general, because their lives are very different. When we discussed the poll findings, I had not expected that child co-researchers would have such different opinions about gender roles at home. When I helped child co-researchers prepare for the forum, I also learned that child co-researchers can be as effective as adults in facilitating

meetings or even more, and that children can also be skilled advocates who strategically dialogue with adults. Perhaps child co-researchers were more aware than me about the diversity of children's experiences, skills and interests because, in our adultist society, children often experience being treated as a homogenous groups, expected to be passive recipients of knowledge and face a backlash from adults when they raise their voices, especially in marginalized communities (Hope & Bañales, 2019; Ozer et al., 2013; Shier, 2015).

Building rapport also requires adults to be aware of child co-researchers' emotions and potential distress (Bushin, 2007; Powell et al., 2012). Since most child co-researchers did not have experience in projects like the Kids Contribute study or the National Child and Youth Forum, they could have felt nervous, insecure or frustrated. As the project expanded and required more time and energy, child co-researchers may have also felt overwhelmed or exhausted. It was also possible that child co-researchers would experience some discomfort or even distress when discussing issues related to oppression and privilege (Freire, 2017; Middleton, Anderson, Banning, & Paguyo, 2009).

For this reason, adult researchers must promote an atmosphere of trust in the research setting (Clark, 2010; Kellett, 2010; Maglajlic, 2010). Building trust is an ongoing process, and adults need to give children the necessary time to feel empowered enough to talk about important or sensitive issues (Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012). Because of this, in the Kids Contribute study, some child co-researchers waited until they felt ready to address and develop their critical consciousness about gender, racial and religious inequities.

As previously explained, scaling-up the Kids Contribute Study allowed child co-researchers to engage with wider adult audiences. At the start of the project, child co-researchers knew that they would have the opportunity to present their findings in their local community if they wished to do so. The Kids Contribute Poll and the National Child and Youth Forum scaled-up the project to the national level. At the international level, the National Children's Commissioner, who chaired the forum, mentioned child co-researchers' findings about children's role as contributors in Australia in her report to the United Nations.

According to Lundy (2007), promoting children's right to express their views in matters that

affect them requires space, voice, audience and influence. Our team at the Child and Community Unit designed the forum so child co-researchers could choose how to express their views and tried to make sure that the panellists and audience members actively listened to child co-researchers and were willing to act upon their recommendations. To achieve this, we asked child co-researchers to help us decide who would be in the panel and the audience. The variety of topics covered by the child co-researchers' forum presentations required an audience that was influential across a wide range of topics related to childhood and youth. It was also key that panellists confirmed their interest in listening to child co-researchers' recommendations and incorporating them into their work. Child co-researchers wanted to present to adults and young people. Thus, two members of the panel were UNICEF Youth Ambassadors.

It was also important to guarantee that all the spaces where child co-researchers expressed themselves were comfortable and safe (Lundy, 2007; Powell et al., 2012). Thus, the audience invited to the forum consisted of adults interested in listening to the children and youth (e.g. academics, practitioners) and child co-researchers' parents, friends and family. Adults must also make sure that advocacy activities do not negatively affect children's safety, privacy and wellbeing (Powell et al., 2012; Shier, 2015). It was important that child co-researchers did not feel exhausted or stressed from participating in the Kids Contribute study or the National Child and Youth Forum. For example, at the forum, our team at the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit tried to promote a friendly atmosphere for child co-researchers by getting to know them in advance when possible. We carried out a general rehearsal without the audience and relaxation exercises with child co-researchers. Also, we had food and beverages so they would be refreshed before beginning the forum. To protect child co-researchers from the backlash that children sometimes receive for speaking up (Shier, 2015), only people and media representatives who were invited could attend the forum, and only those who received the link could access the forum footage online.

We provided briefing notes in advance to all the panellists to give them notice of the topics that would be covered and asked them to be prepared to indicate how they planned to respond to the research findings and key messages. Unfortunately, a strong theme that emerged in child co-researchers' feedback was that they weren't satisfied with the adult

panellists' responses to their presentations and felt that some weren't really listening to them. In contrast, child co-researchers felt more listened to and able to communicate with the two young members of the panel. Despite this, child co-researchers still wanted to organize a future debate with adults, hoping to have a meaningful dialogue with them, and suggested ways to improve communication between them. Furthermore, they expressed feeling more confident and wanting to have open debate with adults. Nonetheless, it's possible that feeling unheard during the forum may have affected them later, when I tried to reconnect with them the following years and they didn't respond to the invitation.

Facilitating child co-researchers' agency and empowerment

The Kids Contribute study scaled-up in a way that allowed child co-researchers to gradually gain more control over the research process. When possible, our team at the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit tried to include child co-researchers in deciding *when*, *where* and *how* they participated in the study (Shier, 2018). Yet, at the same time, we acknowledged that in large participatory studies, not all children will be able or willing to engage in the same activities and with the same level of decision-making (Gibbs et al., 2020).

Authors like Ozer, Newlan, Douglas and Hubbard (2013) discussed the complexity of putting participatory principles into practice in real-life contexts where children's agency is normally constrained by hierarchical power dynamics and social inequalities. They argued that child co-researchers' agency can be constrained across different stages of the research process, particularly when choosing a research question and determining action steps to advocate for social change. In the Kids Contribute Study, it was not possible to include child co-researchers in the design of research questions or methods, as well as data collection (see Chapter 6: The Kids Contribute Study: Scaling-up Participatory Research to Gain a Better Understanding of Children's Contributions in their Everyday Lives).

Despite constraints to their power for decision-making during the research, child co-researchers can feel more empowered and freer to express themselves than in other contexts of their daily lives (Ozer et al., 2013). In the Kids Contribute Story, Corey highlighted that being a child co-researcher gave him more opportunities to have a say than he usually had at school. Ozer, Newlan, Douglas and Hubbard (2013) argued that even when child co-researchers' agency to influence some key decisions is limited, there may be other important

aspects where adults can offer them more power to influence the research process. In the Kids Contribute Study, adults defined the broad topic of the poll but, by helping make questions, child co-researchers helped narrow the focus of the study. Then, the forum emerged as an opportunity for child co-researchers to focus on a topic of their choice.

A strong topic that emerged from the Kids Contribute Story was that, by the end of the project, children felt more empowered as co-researchers. Although some co-researchers preferred to describe themselves as ‘research helpers,’ they were aware of their important contributions to the study. At the same time, in line with previous research, child co-researchers valued collaborating with adults and having the option of asking them for help when necessary (Shier, 2015).

Adults provide logistical support for child co-researchers to engage in the dissemination stage of the research (Shier, 2015). In the Kids Contribute study and the forum, our team at the Child and Community Wellbeing Unit organized and coordinated research activities and helping child co-researchers from interstate travel to Melbourne to attend the forum. Adults also have a crucial role as facilitators who provide scaffolding in how to do research (Wong et al., 2010). As an adult facilitator, I tried to promote child co-researchers’ critical consciousness using techniques from the literature on participatory research with children. For instance, as I discussed in the previous chapter, I tried to catch and retain child co-researchers’ critical curiosity about children’s experiences as contributors by providing new and meaningful information based on the poll findings (Clark & Seider, 2017). This proved to be an effective way of engaging child co-researchers in critical reflection.

To help guide child co-researchers’ reflections without imposing my own views, I tried to apply Freire’s (2017) approach to problem-posing, where facilitators make questions that promote critical reflection about the structural root causes of social problems. In participatory research with children, Kohfeldt and Langhout (2012) explained that turning a problem into a question makes it more difficult to blame it on specific individuals or groups. They suggested using the ‘5 Whys’ technique, where the facilitator asks child co-researchers to identify five potential causes of a problem and to choose the most important one. Then, the facilitator asks them to identify five causes behind the newly identified problem. This cycle is repeated five times, or until child co-researchers identify the larger social forces

behind their initial problem.

I tried a similar approach with child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute study. For example, a group of female child co-researchers explained that they felt that they could not follow their dream of being professional athletes because women in sports are still viewed as less competent than men and hence get paid less. In turn, I asked them why women are still viewed as less competent in sports. Child co-researchers responded that it was the media that continued to spread negative stereotypes about women and decided to advocate for more empowering representations of girls and women at the forum.

Asking child co-researchers to reflect on the links between different ideas and concepts using tools like mental maps (Fernández et al., 2015) led to interesting insights about the relationship between child co-researchers' contributions and resilience. Facilitators can also promote children's critical reflection by asking them what information they find the most important, how does it relate to their experience, what it teaches them about themselves and how they can apply it in real-life scenarios (Grace & Langhout, 2014). When we were interpreting the poll findings, I encouraged child co-researchers to discuss what poll findings were more relevant to them and if they reflected their personal experiences of contributing. When we were preparing their forum presentations, I asked them how they wanted to apply what they learned from the Kids Contribute Poll to address the panel.

These approaches to asking questions share in common that child co-researchers are free to critically examine their ideas on their own terms. Kohfeldt, Chhun, Grace and Langhout (2011) emphasized that, in participatory research, it's not adults' role to tell child co-researchers that their ideas aren't feasible or appropriate. For example, adults should encourage child co-researchers to critically examine the advantages and disadvantages of their proposed solutions to social problems and reach a final conclusion themselves. This approach to making questions can also be used to connect the different ecological levels involved when participatory research is scaled-up (Gibbs et al., 2020) (for more information see Chapter 3: Literature Review). For example, in the Kids Contribute study, asking child co-researchers about the differences and similarities between their individual experiences and the results of a national poll served to connect the individual and national levels.

Acknowledging child co-researchers' skills, competencies and the impact of their work contributes to their empowerment (Darbyshire, MacDougall, & Schiller, 2005; Kellett, 2010; Maglajlic, 2010). There were different moments when child co-researchers received positive feedback about their involvement in the Kids Contribute study. A large number of poll respondents left positive reviews of the Kids Contribute Poll, celebrating that the poll was *for* and *by* children. Child co-researchers who participated in the forum reported feeling recognized by their family, school and friends. At the end of the project, I prepared reference letters to recognize child co-researchers' individual and collective contributions and let them know their work was mentioned in the National Children's Commissioner report to the UN and inspired a new international project in our Unit.

Finally, asking child co-researchers for their feedback was an important part of acknowledging their ownership over the project (Punch, 2002a; Shier, 2001, 2015). In general, child co-researchers reported having a positive experience, and some expressed feeling empowered and motivated to continue the following year. Yet, scaling-up also presents challenges to promoting child co-researchers' agency and empowerment (Gibbs et al., 2020), some of which manifested during the Kids Contribute study. Difficulties in communication and coordination resulted in child co-researchers not knowing when the Kids Contribute Poll went online. Having long gaps between meetings with child co-researchers sometimes affected their interest or availability to continue participating in the project. Our team hoped that we could continue working with this cohort of child co-researchers the following year. However, the ongoing funding necessary to sustain participatory projects for a longer time is not always accessible. The ethical challenge of securing sustainability for participatory research with children over time can become even more difficult when it is scaled up due to the larger amount of resources it requires (Gibbs et al., 2020).

Summary

In the Kids Contribute study, scaling-up participatory research with children influenced child co-researchers' empowerment in their relationship with adults through two main processes: promoting child co-researchers' freedom of expression and agency in increasingly wider contexts and with progressively larger numbers of adults. Yet, scaling-up also presented challenges and obstacles to child co-researchers' active sense of agency in the project, due

to the impact of logistic and communication issues on their sense of ownership over the project at the local level and as the overall group of child co-researchers.

The following chapter comprises my final discussion and conclusions about how scaling-up participatory research with children influences their critical consciousness and agency.

Chapter 9: Discussion

Participatory research with children is a wide and diverse field of approaches that share the aim of collaborating with children as co-researchers in creating knowledge that improves their lives (Gibbs et al., 2018). There is a growing trend to scale-up the size and scope of participatory research with children to gain a better understanding of how different issues affect their lives locally, nationally and globally and to expand the impact of the research. Scaling-up participatory research has also been suggested as a way of gathering diverse child perspectives and empowering children as agents of change beyond their local communities (see Chapter 3: Literature Review).

My literature review showed that the number of scaled-up participatory studies with children has increased in the last ten years. These studies show overall high levels of child agency, but there is scarce information on the process of collaborating with child co-researchers across increasingly wider ecological levels. Authors like Ginwright and Cammarota (2002) and Kohfeldt and Langhout (2012) stated that engaging in participatory research can contribute to promoting children's critical consciousness, understood as the combination of critical reflection and transformative action for a more equitable society (Freire, 2017). However, little is known about how working across a wider geographic area influences child co-researchers' critical consciousness. In response to this, my PhD research aimed to answer the question of how does scaling-up participatory research with children influence child co-researchers' critical consciousness and their agency in the research?

To answer this question, I carried out two scaled-up qualitative participatory studies. The first one, Children's Araucaria, aimed to connect children in two disaster risk reduction programs, one in Chile, the other one in Australia (see Chapter 5: Children's Araucaria, a pilot study to explore how children contribute to disaster risk reduction). First, children exchanged materials created by them about their local experiences in building disaster resilience. Then, children were intended to be co-researchers and help me discuss and interpret the materials to draw conclusions about children's role in disaster risk reduction in different places. Even though the project didn't achieve the expected levels of child agency in the research process, children were able to connect across geographic and language

barriers and learn about each other. The findings from this pilot study provided valuable lessons on the importance of building enabling environments to scale-up participatory research with children that I applied in my next study.

My second study was part of a larger mixed-methods study, Kids Contribute (see Chapter 6: The Kids Contribute Study: Scaling-up Participatory Research to Gain a Better Understanding of Children's Contributions in their Everyday Lives). This project had the objective of exploring children's role as active contributors at home, school, clubs and elsewhere in their communities, and to examine the relationship between children's contributions and their resilience. My research focused on the qualitative and participatory element of the Kids Contribute study. Child co-researchers from different backgrounds and parts of Australia discussed their personal experiences of contributing. Then, they helped make questions for a poll about how children in Australia contribute, why and how it made them feel. After this, they helped interpret the poll findings and presented their ideas about how to support children's role as active contributors of society during the National Child and Youth Forum.

In this chapter, I synthesize the overall findings of my whole PhD research and discuss its contributions to the field of scaling-up participatory research with children. I also acknowledge some of the limitations of my work and suggest an agenda for future research. Since children in the Araucaria study didn't participate in the project as child co-researchers, when I discuss how scaling-up influences child co-researchers' critical consciousness and agency in the research, I will mostly focus on the Kids Contribute study.

Adopting an ecological approach to scaling-up participatory research with children

The social and cultural context determines local constructions of childhood (Porter et al., 2010). Children's contexts will affect adults' attitudes towards children's agency and freedom of expression and the availability of spaces for children's active participation in research (Langhout & Thomas, 2010; Maglajlic, 2010; Porter et al., 2010). Because of this, an ecological approach is critical to understanding the larger social framework affecting child co-researchers' experiences in participatory research (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). Similarly, my findings showed that applying an ecological and systems approach is necessary to address

the implications of increasing the geographic scale of scaling-up participatory research for child co-researchers' critical consciousness and agency in the research.

An ecological perspective helps us understand why scaling-up participatory research with children requires a careful and thorough understanding of the different contexts where the research takes place, the links between them and how they work together as a whole. The local context determines the ethical and methodological issues of any particular study (Kohfeldt et al., 2011; Ozer et al., 2013). Under certain circumstances, participatory approaches may not even be appropriate or feasible. Thus, adult researchers and stakeholders need to collaborate in building enabling environments where child co-researchers can address issues affecting them in a meaningful and safe way (Shier, 2015).

The crucial importance of building enabling environments for participatory research at each study location was revealed during the Children's Araucaria study. Depending on the local context, different obstacles to children's agency as co-researchers emerged in both study locations. In one study location, the Resilient Seaview program (Australia), children's agency was constrained due to lack of time which, in turn, was caused by organizational pressures to fulfill a tight curriculum. Often, educational programs and educators themselves are assessed mostly based on performance measures associated with an official curriculum (Kohfeldt et al., 2011; Ozer et al., 2013). Failing to fulfill the curriculum can have serious implications for the continuity of these programs and educators' reputations and employment. These pressures can lead adults to conclude that the only way to carry out the project despite time restraints is to limit children's agency over the project. At the Resilient Seaview program, these circumstances resulted in students having little power to decide and directly engage in making materials for children in the other country. This lack of agency affected children's sense of ownership over the project and may be a reason why such a large proportion of students didn't provide informed consent to participate in the final focus group.

In the other study location, the Safe Cuesta Grande program (Chile), children actively participated at the start of the project, but they could not engage as child co-researchers in the rest of the project due to lack of funding. This, in turn, was associated with the fact that children's active engagement in disaster risk reduction is not a priority for many schools and

academics in the field of disaster risk reduction. According to Peek (2008) and Muzenda-Mudavanhu (2016) this situation is not uncommon, and promoting children's active role in disaster risk reduction is still a challenge in many parts of the world. At the Safe Cuesta Grande program, this meant that children's experiences and views in relation to the Araucaria project couldn't be incorporated into the findings of this research.

How did scaling-up influence child co-researchers' critical consciousness?

A number of studies have begun to examine how engaging in participatory research can promote child co-researchers' critical consciousness (Fernández et al., 2015; Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012). Engaging in participatory research has also been found to enhance child co-researchers' skills in research, communication, critical thinking, planning and group work. Being co-researchers can also benefit children's sense of self-esteem, efficacy, community engagement, empowerment and citizenship (Kellett, 2010; Wong et al., 2010).

An ecological approach helps understand how children's critical consciousness is shaped by their contexts (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002), including when they engage in research as co-researchers (Fernández et al., 2015; Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012; Nguyen & Quinn, 2018). According to the Social Justice Youth Development framework (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002), children's critical consciousness transitions between the individual, social and global levels of awareness. First, children and young people critically reflect and act upon their individual identity (individual awareness). Then, children's critical consciousness expands to how their personal and cultural identity relates to the conditions and issues present in their communities (social awareness). As they become more aware of the social structures shaping their lives, they also become more interested in the experiences of people in other contexts, the social issues affecting them and the connections between people's struggles in different places and moments of history (global awareness).

In line with previous findings from participatory research with children (Kohfeldt et al., 2011), child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute study gradually shifted their focus from individual problems and solutions to identifying the social root causes of those problems. As the project advanced, children discussed how problems (e.g. gender stereotypes) affected other children in increasingly wider geographic scales (neighbourhood, national,

international). In this way, participating as co-researchers' progressively promoted children's individual, social and global awareness. By the end of the project, children were interested in collaborating with peers from different places and backgrounds to address issues like racism and environmental degradation from a global perspective using participatory research.

Figure 21 illustrates how child co-researchers' individual, social and global awareness developed in relation to the different stages of the research and child co-researchers' increasing exposure to diverse child experiences and perspectives.

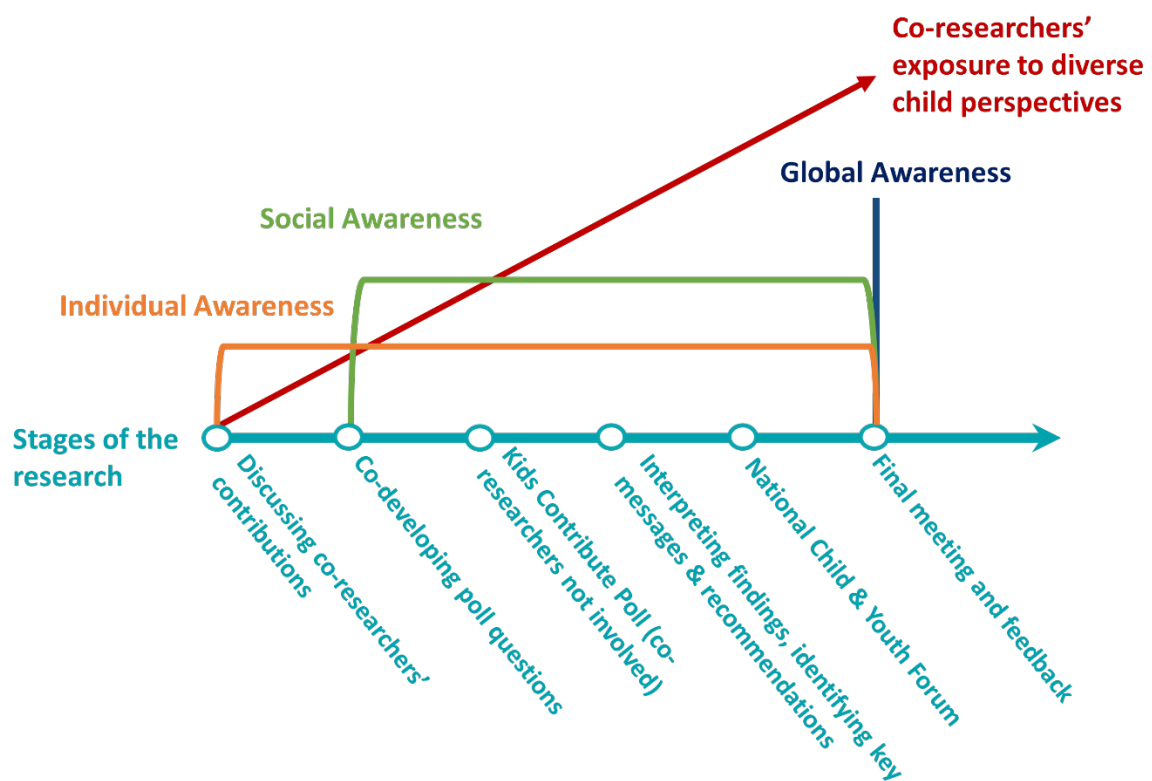


Figure 21: Timeline showing relationships between stages of the research, exposure to different child experiences and perspectives, and the development of critical consciousness at different levels

The different stages of the Kids Contribute study were associated with progressively wider levels of awareness. First, children reflected on their personal experiences as active contributors to society. This positive framing helped build rapport and familiarity with the

research before they focussed on more sensitive topics (Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012). In line with previous research (Seider & Clark, 2019; Seider, Tamerat, Clark, & Soutter, 2017), focusing on child co-researchers' experiences in their everyday contexts helped raise child co-researchers' curiosity and initial awareness about children's role as contributors in other places.

Based on these reflections, children helped create an instrument to collect data about the lives of children across the country. For some child co-researchers, making the Kids Contribute Poll was itself a form of critical action that could help transform the lives of other children. Making poll questions also promoted child co-researchers' curiosity to learn about children's lives in other parts of the country (Clark & Seider, 2017; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). Thus, helping interpret poll data collected at the national level helped develop child co-researchers' social awareness. Instead of just focusing on issues they could observe in their daily lives, co-researchers linked their personal experiences to those of children from different contexts but with whom they still shared an identity as children living in the same country. In line with previous evidence (Seider et al., 2017), having access to new and unexpected information that was relevant to them (like girls in Australia tending to receive less pocket money but doing more chores at home) was key to sustaining some child co-researchers' interest in the project.

As suggested by the Social Justice Youth Development framework (Ginwright & James, 2002) and the literature on children's social action (Watts et al., 2011) becoming aware of issues that affected children within and beyond their communities encouraged child co-researchers to participate in the forum as a way of engaging in social action. Lundy's (2007) work emphasizes the importance of creating spaces where children can freely express their voices to attentive adult audiences willing to act upon their ideas. In line with this, the forum was meant to be a meaningful form of action for child co-researchers by giving them the power of deciding what to present to a panel of influential adults.

Attending the National Child and Youth Forum triggered new developments in child co-researchers' critical consciousness by increasing their direct exposure to other child perspectives. So far, child co-researchers had learned about other children's lives through the poll data. At the forum, child co-researchers from different study locations met in person

and listened to each other for the first time. Child co-researchers reported that this experience helped them reflect on the differences and similarities between children’s experiences in different parts of Australia and question stereotypes they learned from the media.

When child co-researchers and I met one final time to evaluate their overall experience in the Kids Contribute study, child co-researchers manifested signs of global awareness. Child co-researchers expressed empathy towards children and young people experiencing adversity in other places of Australia and the world. Their reflections motivated them to express a desire to collaborate across geographic and cultural contexts to address similar issues affecting children and young people in different places.

My research has shown that being exposed to diverse child perspectives was engaging for child co-researchers and promoted their critical consciousness. Dialoguing with teammates who had different opinions and experiences and engaging with data that reflected the diversity of children’s experiences allowed child co-researchers to gain better understandings of how similar issues affect children in different ways across different contexts. Further, connecting and collaborating across study sites was crucial for child co-researchers’ to develop critical consciousness at wider levels.

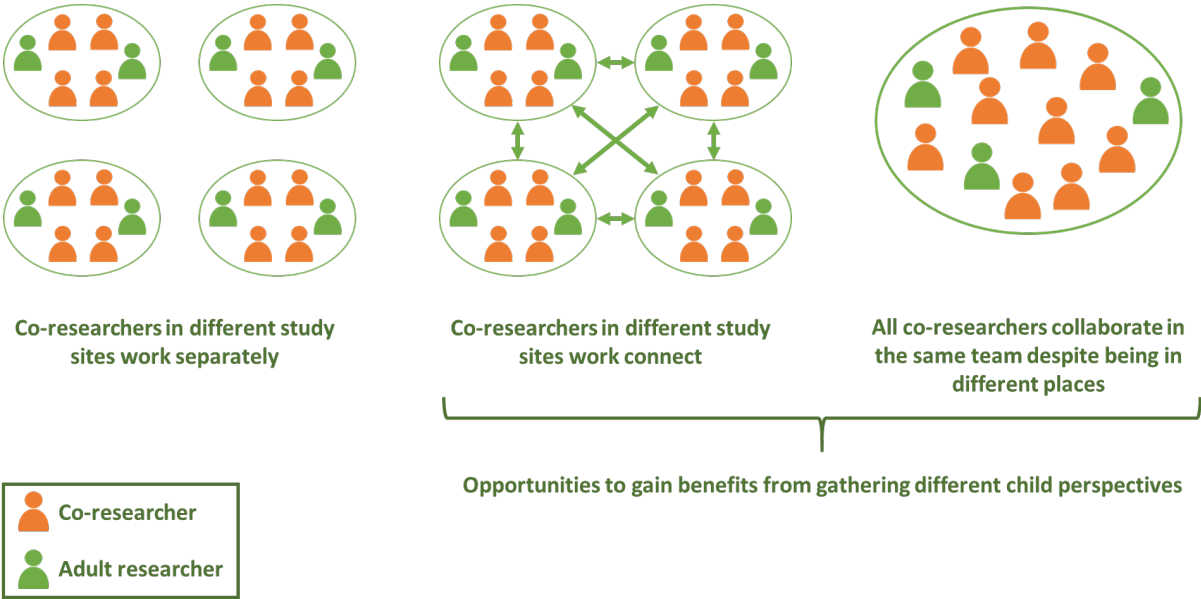


Figure 22: Opportunities for connecting child co-researchers across locations depending on study design

Figure 22 shows different ways in which child co-researchers can connect and collaborate when scaling-up participatory research that I identified during my work. If groups of child co-researchers work separately across the whole research process and never engage in directly dialoguing with each other, the benefit from gathering different child perspectives would be reduced (see Chapter 3: Literature Review). This approach also means that child co-researchers are not involved in drawing the final conclusions of the study. This disempowers them and obstructs their ownership over the final outcomes of the research. Thus, this approach cannot be classified as scaling-up *participatory* research. In contrast, participatory research will gain from gathering diverse child perspectives when co-researchers are organized into separate teams that collaborate at different points of the research, or when they work together as one team (in person or online). In the Kids Contribute study, child co-researchers were only able to connect during the National Child and Youth Forum. Because of this, later in this chapter I discuss the potential to carry out further research about the benefits and outcomes of connecting child co-researchers when scaling-up participatory research with children.

How did scaling-up influence child co-researchers' agency in the research?

Children's agency in the research manifests when they take part in decision-making, freely express their views and decide when and how to become involved (as well as choosing not to participate in research) (Clark, 2010; Liegghio et al., 2010). Gains in agency serve to empower children as co-researchers and agents of change (Kellett, 2010; Kohfeldt et al., 2011; Ozer et al., 2013). Yet, participatory studies may aim to put a participatory discourse into practice but end up serving the interest of adult stakeholders, without generating any real changes in power relationships between children and adults (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008; Grace & Langhout, 2014). As I discussed earlier in this chapter, sharing control over the research with children is only possible in an enabling environment, where child co-researchers have the necessary time, resources and support from the adults in the research and their wider organization (Shier, 2015).

My findings from the Araucaria study proved that increasing the scale of the study does not immediately translate into high levels of child agency across the different stages and levels of the research. Instead, child co-researchers' agency over the research is largely shaped by

decisions taken by the adult researchers and their collaborators (Shier, 2018). As previously discussed in Chapter 3: Literature Review, some researchers have carried out separate local participatory studies and then gathered their findings to reach a final conclusion (Rademacher & Patel, 2002; Seballos & Tanner, 2011). However, adding up findings of local studies is not the same thing as scaling-up participatory research. Instead, my findings confirmed that, when the research is scaled-up, sharing power with child co-researchers across different stages of the research is important to maintain participatory principles. In this way, child co-researchers can have a say on the final conclusions and applications of the overall scaled-up participatory study (see Glossary and Chapter 3: Literature Review). The findings from the Children's Araucaria study also confirmed previous research showing that, depending on the local conditions, there can be important differences in child co-researchers' roles and levels of agency within study sites (Clark, 2010; Franklin & Slope, 2006) and when the research is scaled-up, across study locations (Gibbs et al., 2020; Kornbluh, 2017). At the start of the Children's Araucaria project, children in the Safe Cuesta Grande program had more agency than students at the Resilient Seaview program when they created and exchanged materials about their experiences in disaster risk reduction. However, no students from the Safe Cuesta Grande program were able to participate in the Children's Araucaria study as child co-researchers. There were also differences between students' engagement in the Resilient Seaview program. Few students had an active role in making video clips about the program (as actors or narrators) and only five participated in the final focus group.

Often, research and advocacy activities take place at different geographic scales (e.g. neighbourhood, municipal, national, international). When it is possible and appropriate, child co-researchers should have a choice to become involved at each one of these scales. Working at larger scales (state, national, international) often requires building spaces for children's voices in contexts that are less child-friendly (Ross, 2011). If this task is fulfilled, child co-researchers can become empowered as creators of knowledge and agents of change locally and beyond their immediate communities, at the city, regional, national or international levels. In line with this, the Kids Contribute study gave child co-researchers the opportunity to actively participate in making and interpreting a national poll and a national forum. Both activities were organized by a team of adult researchers who worked according

to participatory principles, in collaboration with stakeholders whose work was closely related to empowering children to freely express their views on matters that affect them (the Behind the News TV show and the National Children's Commissioner).

The evolution of child co-researchers' level of decision-making over key aspects of the Kids Contribute study reflected how children's empowerment as co-researchers is a dynamic and ongoing process (Kohfeldt et al., 2011). In line with the literature on participatory research with children (Ozer et al., 2013; Shier, 2001), adult facilitators had a crucial role creating opportunities to increase child co-researchers' agency during the Kids Contribute study. Adult facilitators set the necessary conditions (Shier, 2015), rapport (Green, 2015) and scaffolding (Franklin & Slope, 2006; Maglajlic, 2010) to progressively share more power over the project with child co-researchers. This was done in accordance with child co-researchers' age, development and maturity (A. Clark, 2010; Wong et al., 2010). In the Kids Contribute study, as children became more confident in their role as co-researchers, they began to make more decisions in relation to key aspects of the research (interpreting findings, advocating for change). I also offered child co-researchers more control over smaller elements of our work together, like setting the agenda for our meetings and deciding when to ask for my help.

An important part of the literature about participatory research with children has focused on adult facilitators' key role in transforming adult-child power asymmetries and promoting children's critical consciousness in the research setting (Fernández et al., 2015; Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012). In relation to this, one of the most important duties of adult facilitators is promoting dialogue about social justice issues (Watts et al., 2011). Figure 23 illustrates that, when participatory research is scaled-up, the dialogue between adults and child co-researchers involves multiple topics.

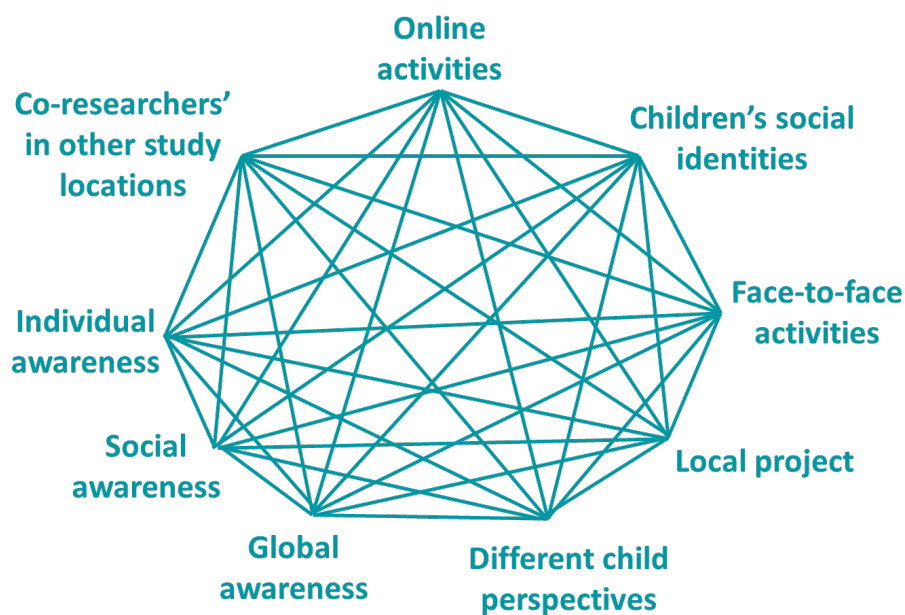


Figure 23: Different topics that facilitators can integrate when dialoguing with child co-researchers in scaled-up participatory studies

During group discussions, adult facilitators should help child co-researchers link and integrate different ecological levels and geographic scales involved in the research (Ross, 2011; Suleiman et al., 2006). Children have multiple social identities (Balakrishnan & Claiborne, 2017; Clonan-Roy et al., 2016; Diemer et al., 2016) and their critical consciousness varies across different domains (e.g. gender, race, social class) (Diemer et al., 2006, 2015). Thus, facilitators should guide discussions across different domains and that address children's different social identities in an empowering way. Facilitators should also consider that the complexity of intersectional identities can be overwhelming (Clonan-Roy et al., 2016) and guide children's exploration of their different social identities in an engaging and child-friendly way.

Additionally, facilitators should encourage child co-researchers to consider issues from different child perspectives (Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016). If digital platforms are being used to increase the scale of the study, facilitators should integrate ideas and experiences from both online and face-to-face activities in their discussions with child co-researchers (Gibbs et al., 2018; Kornbluh et al., 2016). Balancing all these topics requires skilful and balanced adult facilitation.

In my research, I found that a useful approach is for adult facilitators to incorporate different topics in their dialogue with child co-researchers at different stages of the research. As I explained in the previous section, the different stages of the Kids Contribute study provided information and experiences that served as prompts for child co-researchers to gradually develop and link their individual, social and global awareness. Sometimes, child co-researchers came up with critical reflections about the relationships between their lives and those of other children in Australia. In other cases, I tried to guide our discussions by using questions that helped link different ideas, as recommended by Grace and Langhout (2014). For example, when the Kids Contribute Poll results were ready, I asked child co-researchers about the similarities and differences between those findings and their personal experiences. Then, at the end of the project, I asked child co-researchers how they imagined it would be if a study like Kids Contribute scaled-up further from the national to the international level.

Scaling-up the Kids Contribute study also promoted child co-researchers' agency by allowing them to address a larger adult audience. Often, in participatory research with children, child co-researchers focus their advocacy and dissemination efforts in their communities, while adult researchers take on the task of doing this with academics and policy makers at the national and international audiences (Shier, 2015). In contrast, when participatory research is scaled-up, the aim is to expand the impact of the research (Gibbs et al., 2020) and give child co-researchers the opportunity to address adult audiences at higher levels of decision-making (Ross, 2011). At the National Child and Youth Forum, the audience included representatives from diverse fields (education, health, research, NGOs) who were influential in the state of Victoria and the rest of Australia. Further, the forum was organized in collaboration with the Australian National Children's Commissioner, who cited child co-researchers' work in her report to the United Nations.

The Kids Contribute study findings confirmed that addressing adult audiences at higher levels of decision-making is an important source of child co-researchers' engagement in the research (Ross, 2011; Suleiman et al., 2006). However, higher levels of decision-making often are not child-friendly spaces (Ross, 2011). Lundy (2007) emphasized that promoting children's right to freedom of expression and participation requires attentive and influential

audiences, who are willing to actively listen and act upon children's perspectives. The National Child and Youth Forum was organized to fulfill this requirement by inviting panellists and audience members whose work was related to the different topics of child co-researchers' presentations, and who expressed their openness to acting upon children's ideas. Child co-researchers decided what they wanted to do and say at the forum and who they wanted to invite to the event. Other measures taken to help child co-researchers feel comfortable during the forum included having a say on some of the equipment used during presentations (microphone, type of stage) and the catering. To help child co-researchers' feel less nervous, before the forum, a general rehearsal was held without the audience. This activity also included ice-breaker and relaxation exercises.

After presenting at the National Child and Youth Forum, child co-researchers reported feeling more confident and capable of debating with adults, despite not always feeling heard by the adults panellists. Further, some child co-researchers approached these difficulties as part of a learning process and made suggestions for how to improve the debate between adults and children like giving more time and information for panellists to prepare and allowing children and adults to ask each other questions and respond to each other's arguments. This confirms previous evidence showing that, even in research settings where child co-researchers' agency is constrained, children can feel comparatively more empowered in participatory research than in other contexts of their everyday lives (Ozer et al., 2013).

Increasing the size and influence of children's audiences should not be interpreted as placing less emphasis on local audiences. Scaling-up participatory research can help open spaces for children's voices at different geographic scales and levels of decision-making. For child co-researchers who presented at the National Child and Youth Forum, local and familiar audiences were equally important as representatives from regional or national organizations. Child co-researchers who presented at the National Child and Youth Forum were keen for the audience to include academics, policy makers and representatives from the media, government and NGOs at the regional and national levels. At the same time, they invited their family, friends, teachers and coaches. Another topic that emerged in my analysis of the National Child and Youth Forum was that child co-researchers felt they could

relate better with the two younger members of the panel (the two UNICEF Youth Ambassadors) because they were friendly, acknowledged the quality of child co-researchers' work and expressed themselves in a more informal and less technical language. Based on these findings, I argue that the outcomes of scaling-up participatory studies benefit when a) child co-researchers can address peers and adults, and b) when child co-researchers' audiences include people who have a direct influence on their everyday lives as well as those who can mobilize changes that benefit children across a wider geographic area.

Limitations of this study

My PhD research had important limitations that must be considered. Overall, these limitations are mostly related to the degree to which my findings can be generalized to other experiences of scaling-up participatory research with children. My PhD research shows one way of scaling-up the size and scope of participatory research, that involved working with diverse teams of child co-researchers from different locations and contexts. The teams of child co-researchers sometimes worked separately, and sometimes collaborated, although most of the time child co-researchers from different study sites did not directly interact with one another. Also, I had the opportunity of being the main adult facilitator with most child co-researchers and working with child co-researchers across different study locations. This is one potential way of scaling-up participatory research with children, and its specific characteristics may have influenced child co-researchers' experiences in a different way from other approaches. Other studies may increase the size and scope of the research with a different number of child co-researchers, adult facilitators and study sites. There are also different ways of promoting (or limiting) collaboration between child co-researchers from different places and backgrounds.

As my research findings show, when participatory research with children is scaled-up across different study locations, each study location will be embedded in a particular context that determines the process and outcomes of the research. My PhD research examines how it was to scale-up participatory research with child co-researchers from a specific number of places and backgrounds in Australia. Thus, my research cannot be expected to represent what it is like to work with child co-researchers from a large number of social groups and contexts. For example, I did not work in contexts that involve other methodological and

ethical considerations like working with children with disabilities, children who have experienced trauma, Aboriginal children or children in out-of-home care.

Examining the full range of ways in which participatory research with children can be scaled-up and the contextual implications of working with child co-researchers from different places and backgrounds was outside the scope of my PhD research. The biggest limitation of my PhD research was the degree to which I was able to incorporate child co-researchers' perspectives into my work. Children's participation was very limited in the Children's Araucaria study, and I was only able to ask feedback from a small group. Meanwhile, I was able to incorporate child co-researchers' insights and interpretations at different points of my reporting on the Kids Contribute study. However, I was not able to ask for their feedback on the final outcomes of my study about how scaling-up influenced their experiences as child co-researchers. Additionally, the aim of a PhD thesis requires that the researchers' work is an individual contribution to scientific knowledge. There is tension between this requirement and the principles of participatory research with children, where adult researchers are meant to share authorship over the research findings and outcomes with child co-researchers (Kellett, 2010; Porter et al., 2010).

As argued by Gallacher and Gallagher (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008) and Shier (2018), adults always retain the final say on the final outcomes of participatory research with children. I addressed this intrinsic limitation of my work by aiming to be as transparent as possible regarding the real levels of children's agency in the Children's Araucaria and Kids Contribute studies. Often, participatory researchers find it difficult to report the nuances of co-researchers' level of agency in their work (Gibbs et al., 2020; Shier, 2018). I was able to overcome this obstacle by applying an analytical tool (Shier, 2018) to systematically report the nature of adult-child collaborations within and across study locations in both of my studies. Additionally, I used narrative synthesis in an exercise of reflexivity, hoping that approaching the data in different ways would help me examine my own influence over the research in more depth.

Future directions

My PhD contributed to the field of scaling-up participatory research with children by

identifying how this approach can help promote child co-researchers' critical consciousness about social issues at the individual, social and global levels, and becoming empowered in the research setting, their communities and beyond. Based on my findings, I argue that one of the most promising contributions of scaling-up participatory research with children is exposing child co-researchers to diverse child perspectives in the context of critical and democratic dialogue. In the Kids Contribute study, I was able to explore how child co-researchers' exposure to data that reflected the lives of children in wider geographic areas triggered the development of children's critical consciousness and its gradual expansion from the individual to the social and global levels. I was also able to observe how child co-researchers' experience of directly interacting with each other during the National Child and Youth Forum was crucial for their motivation to reflect and act upon social issues affecting children in different parts of the world. However, in my research, child co-researchers only encountered each other at one point of the research process. Because this encounter happened at the stage of dissemination and advocacy for change, it wasn't possible for me to observe how connecting across study locations would have influenced child co-researchers' critical consciousness during the stages of identifying social problems and addressing their structural root causes.

This limitation in my research raises different questions. For example, if child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute study have had the opportunity of collaborating across locations from an earlier stage, would their global awareness have developed sooner or in a different way? If so, how would child co-researchers' global awareness have influenced their critical consciousness at the individual and social levels? If critical reflection and social action feed into each other (Freire, 2017), could it be that, rather than a linear progression from the individual to the social and global levels as suggested by the Social Justice Youth Development framework (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002) child co-researchers' awareness at each level enhances each other?

Thus, future research should place a stronger emphasis on promoting connections and collaborations between child co-researchers from different locations at different points of the research and for longer periods of time. To my knowledge, only one scaled-up participatory study so far has explored how interactions between child co-researchers from

different study locations evolve across time (Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016).

Kornbluh, Watling Neal and Ozer (2016) used social network analysis to examine interactions between study locations using social media sites. They found that as time passed, interactions between study locations increased and became more frequent, and child co-researchers reported gains in perspective taking. However, the relationship between changes in the amount and frequency of interactions, the nature of these exchanges, and children's critical consciousness was outside the scope of that study.

Based on the above, future research on the influence of scaling-up participatory research on children's critical consciousness should carry out an in-depth exploration of the process through which child co-researchers' connect and collaborate across large geographic areas while engaging with data that reflects the experiences of children from different backgrounds and places. This research should adopt an ecological approach to understand how children's contexts influence their critical consciousness and their interactions with each other. Future research could apply this approach to focus on topics that child co-researchers in this PhD research identified as relevant for them locally and globally, such as climate change and racial discrimination.

More studies about the nature of child co-researchers' collaborations across study locations should explore how child co-researchers' different social identities manifest and influence each other during the development of critical consciousness at different levels. Participatory research projects often involve the encounter of participants from diverse backgrounds in terms of culture, nationality, ethnicity, socio-economic status, language, education and religion (Balakrishnan & Claiborne, 2017; Fernández et al., 2015; Kohfeldt et al., 2011). Evidence shows that encounters between people of different ages and cultural backgrounds may require addressing issues like language barriers (Fernández et al., 2015), prejudice and power relationships between different social groups (Maglajlic, 2010; Ozer et al., 2010; Porter et al., 2010). However, previous research on participatory research with children in multicultural contexts often works in school settings where children, despite being from different backgrounds, already know each other and are familiar with each other's communities. In contrast, when participatory research with children is scaled-up, a frequent objective is to gather the perspectives of a diverse group of child co-researchers across a

larger geographic area. Thus, encounters between children from very different backgrounds who are not familiar with each other's experiences and perspectives can become more frequent and intense.

This is particularly important in cases when child co-researchers' social groups have a past history of conflict between them. Nguyen and Quinn (2018) found that participatory research can help young co-researchers question their racial prejudices when they critically reflect about the shared history and struggles between them and people from another ethnic group. In this study, young people studied the history of oppression of African Americans and Vietnamese immigrants to explain how inequity and structural racism in the USA influenced these two groups into seeing each other as competitors. However, the child co-researchers in this study were only from a migrant Vietnamese background, and they only learned about the lives of African Americans in this study through history lessons. Thus, future research can examine how child co-researchers in scaled-up participatory research can establish positive collaborations despite belonging to social groups that have a history of conflict, and how this can influence their individual, social and global awareness.

Future research should also develop a deeper understanding of how children's social identities come into play when scaling-up participatory research with children. Social Categorization Theory (Haslam, 2004) explains that people's social identities shift depending on what elements are the most salient at a particular time and place. In two separate qualitative participatory studies by Hope and Bañales (2019), children's identity and interests in two different study locations determined that one group focused on school-level issues while the other on problems that manifested in the wider community. Thus, it is possible that child co-researchers in the Children's Araucaria and Kids Contribute studies may have preferred to identify as members of other social groups and communities, that may have been defined by other aspects other than geographic location and country of origin. Because children's social identities shape their critical reflections and actions (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Kohfeldt & Langhout, 2012) adult researchers in future studies should discuss with child co-researchers what point of reference is the most important to them at different points of the research.

Children have multiple and dynamic social identities (Clonan-Roy et al., 2016; Diemer et al.,

2016) Thus, when scaling-up participatory research, child co-researchers from very different backgrounds and locations may still share an identity, for example, as migrant youth, Aboriginal peoples, disaster-affected youth or members of the LGTB+ community. Thus, scaling-up may not only help expose children to different perspectives but help them connect with peers with whom they share similar experiences and identities. In line with this, identifying with children and young people from different parts of the world and moments in history is an expected outcome of global awareness (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). Thus, future research could explore how scaling-up participatory research can help promote child co-researchers' sense of global citizenship, collective empowerment and shared identity with children from different places and cultures.

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Appendix 1: Systematic Review

Journal of Adolescent Health 67 (2020) S14–S23



JOURNAL OF
ADOLESCENT
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Review article

Using Technology to Scale up Youth-Led Participatory Action Research: A Systematic Review



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Article history: Received February 4, 2019; Accepted October 18, 2019

Keywords: YPAR; Adolescent; Technology; Digital; Scaling; Participatory

ABSTRACT

Purpose: Rapid advances in technology create opportunities for adolescents to influence practice and policy in health and other domains. Technology can support the scaling of Youth-Led Participatory Action Research (YPAR), in which adolescents conduct research to improve issues that affect them. We present the first known published systematic review of the use of technology to scale YPAR.

Methods: A systematic review of the empirical literature was conducted from 2000 to 2018 using databases PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, and PubMed. The review included peer-reviewed articles of YPAR studies involving adolescents (aged 10–19 years) using technology for scaling. Appraisal of papers included the role of technology and consistency with YPAR principles.

Results: Nine peer-reviewed YPAR publications focusing on a range of health issues with adolescents aged 11–19 years were identified. Technology included Facebook (most common), Twitter, Instagram, Skype, e-mail, blogs, and personalized mapping applications. Overall, technology was primarily used for adolescent participants to gather data. The appraisal revealed the complexities inherent in conducting YPAR using technology across multiple sites, with different adults in supportive roles and varying levels of opportunities for adolescent engagement.

Conclusions: This review provides insights at the intersection of youth-led research and technology, highlighting opportunities in a changing technological landscape and the challenges of YPAR at scale.

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IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTION

This review confirmed the opportunities that technology provides to scale up the reach and impact of YPAR projects with adolescents. Given the current limited evidence to guide practice, it is timely to reflect on the added complexities associated with maintaining participatory principles while involving increased numbers of both adolescents and adult partners, working across multiple sites and mediums. There is a clear need to update current YPAR and related adolescent participatory research models and frameworks to provide guidance for how to manage these complex multilevel collaborative relationships.

Conflicts of interest: There are no conflicts of interest to report for this review or article for any of the authors.

Disclaimer: This article was published in a Supplement supported by a National Science Foundation Smart and Connected Health Grant (SCH) to Principal Investigators Elizabeth Ozer, Ph.D. and James Lester, Ph.D. (IIS-1344670 & IIS-1344803). Any opinions, findings, and conclusions are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2019.10.019>

Explosive growth in digital technology is transforming the experience of adolescence across the world [1,2]. The *Lancet* Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing [3] identified adolescence as a critical phase for achieving life potential and noted the opportunities offered by digital media to engage adolescents who are “biologically, emotionally, and developmentally primed for engagement beyond their families” (p. 2424). Adolescents tend to embrace new technologies [4,5], representing an estimated one in three Internet users globally [6]. This gives them unprecedented access to information and different ways of expression in the digital world that were not available for previous generations [7]. Technology is also reshaping methods of research and helping to bridge geographic and social distances [8]. Digital technologies, such as videoconferencing, online chat rooms, and social media, provide promising mechanisms for enabling adolescents to take agentic roles in research investigations and programming to support adolescent health and well-being. Youth-Led Participatory Action Research (YPAR) is a form of participatory research, which promotes these agentic roles. Adolescents are trained and supported to conduct research that addresses issues they have identified as affecting their lives [9]. YPAR aims to achieve sustainable changes in a relevant setting, service, program, or policy [10]. In this article, we present a systematic review, which examines the use of technology to scale up the reach and impact of YPAR projects.

Cutting across fields and constituencies in adolescent health, there are multiple framings that emphasize the importance and potential impact of YPAR [10,11], which we briefly review here to provide a context for our present study on technology for the scaling of YPAR. A rights-based framing posits that adolescents' participation in health-related research, services, and systems that affect them is a fundamental right [12]. Consistent with this framing, participatory health research approaches promote young people's right to have their voices heard by actively involving them across the research process, from its design to its dissemination [13–15]. A second type of framing—both “instrumental” and epistemological in nature—highlights that adolescents provide unique “insider” phenomenological expertise such that adolescent-generated research knowledge can enhance the validity of research on adolescent health and well-being and lead to more effective design of adolescent-focused services and systems [10,16]. Third, there is a growing research literature that examines the effects of YPAR on adolescents and developmental settings, identifying outcomes, such as new leadership opportunities for adolescents, practitioner growth, research quality, and policy changes [17–22], shifts in the perceptions of adult opinion leaders in recognizing the value and input of adolescents in key decisions [23,24], and benefits for participants across developmental, psychological, citizenship, and academic outcomes [10,25–28]. Participation in YPAR is likely to be particularly beneficial for youth who experience disadvantage and challenges to agency [29,30]. It is unclear how use of technology in YPAR would influence the potential benefits or costs.

New technologies can provide opportunities for adolescents to develop their civic engagement [31,32]. Activities, such as accessing information, networking, and producing online content, provide opportunities for adolescents to connect to each other on equal terms, allowing the identification of common interests and mobilizing collective action [33,34]. In this way, adolescents are not passive technology users but active agents

capable of widespread social change [35]. This was evident when online coverage of a solo school strike protesting climate change by a Swedish student triggered mass student protests in at least 270 towns and cities internationally, in countries including Australia, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Japan, and the U.S., resulting in an invitation for the student to address a UN Climate Change Summit in 2018 [36].

In addition, there is historical precedent for the use of technology to support YPAR. For example, the TeenNet action research project was established in 1995 to involve teenagers in the development and management of a health promotion website [37]. Flicker et al. [38] first proposed an e-PAR model to combine technology with Participatory Action Research for working with children and youth. Technology was meant to promote youth's self-expression, communication, and skill-building while critically researching their worlds and developing strategies for social change [38]. Since then, new developments have expanded adult researchers' views on how technology can help incorporate children and young people's perspectives in research relevant to their lives. In YPAR 2.0, young people use innovative ways to apply local knowledge to “deepen civic engagement, democratize data, expand educational opportunity, inform policy, and mobilize community assets” (p. 1287) [53]. Innovation includes using diverse technologies, such as mobile devices and social media, to help youth collaborate in real time to potentiate aspects, such as the visualization, storage, and communication of data, as well as its ownership by the community. Similarly, the YPAR Hub was established in 2015 by UC-Berkeley as an online tool to support YPAR activities (<http://yparhub.berkeley.edu/>).

However, there is as yet no published systematic analysis of how digital technologies are being used to scale opportunities for adolescents in YPAR and how such efforts balance scaling and meaningful participation. This is important, considering that high-quality YPAR implementation requires ongoing and intentional processes to build trust and balance power sharing on key decisions across the project phases among peers and with adult facilitators [39]. A particular challenge is to prevent YPAR from becoming “tokenistic,” in which children and adolescents end up as tokens of participation or “window dressing” for adult agendas [40]. This systematic review focuses on projects using participatory approaches to engage adolescents as decision-makers in YPAR, using technology to scale up project reach and impact. Our analysis focused on the methods and processes. Specifically, our review aimed to address (1) what forms of technology were used to scale up the participatory research and how were they used and (2) how were the participatory elements of the research maintained within that process?

Terminology

The terminology used for children and youth is complex and often differs across countries and social contexts. Thus, we used multiple search terms for our review as described below. For brevity, we will use the term “adolescents” for the remainder of the article when referring to the target age group, to be consistent with the World Health Organization definition of those aged between 10 and 19 years [41]. The terminology for participatory forms of research also varies [42]. We use the commonly used term “YPAR” to represent participatory research approaches involving adolescents in the cocreation of knowledge and

advocacy and generation of subsequent health and social change outcomes.

Methods

Data collection included the following stages: (1) an intensive systematic review of existing literature and (2) follow-up phone discussions with each study's lead authors.

Literature review

The literature review examined the use of technology to scale YPAR projects involving adolescents by locating articles that used technology to extend research activities and decision-making beyond one geographic site (i.e., adolescent group/school or community). Articles were included if they were (1) empirically reviewed, (2) in English, (3) published between 2000 and 2018, (4) consisted of adolescent participants (aged 10–19 years), and (5) explicitly discussed using technology to scale up YPAR efforts. Social media have only been developed and accessible to the public within the last two decades; thus, our sample was restricted to the period between January 2000 and 2018. Our search focused on adolescents, with sample participants between 10 and 19 years old. Finally, projects that used technology for internal project activities rather than to extend the reach and impact of the project were excluded from the review.

The electronic databases PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, and PubMed were used to search for empirical sources. Google Scholar was also used to cross-check literature review findings. In addition, we used the following terms to identify potential articles: “youth participatory action research AND social media/OR digital tools/OR digital platforms,” “community-based participatory action research AND adolescent/children/teenagers, AND social media/OR digital tools/OR digital platforms,” “Action research AND adolescent/children/teenagers, AND social media/OR digital tools/OR digital platforms.” Search engines were last reviewed on August 17, 2018.

The search protocol was piloted by three of the review authors (M.K., K.M., and S.B.) to ensure consistency in search terms and search results. Next, two of the review authors (M.K. and S.B.) screened the title, abstract, and keywords of selected articles against the inclusion and exclusion criteria. If this provided insufficient information, the full-text article was retrieved and reviewed to decide. Following this initial screening, full-text articles for selected papers were checked against the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Differences were resolved via discussion between the authors performing the screening; any unresolved issues were cross-checked with other authors as needed. If an article met the inclusion criteria, the following information was entered into an Excel spreadsheet: author, year, journal, study length, participant age, sample size, country, research topic, reach or geographic coverage (local, national, international) as well as notable themes (i.e., challenges, benefits, power dynamics, etc.).

An appraisal of technology use was conducted to identify the type of digital technology and online platforms used in each project and the way technology supported and scaled up different YPAR activities. The role of technology was reviewed by the study reviewers in collaboration with the study authors and documented with the corresponding stage of the YPAR process as described in the YPAR literature [43,44] (Table 1). Finally, Shier's [13] framework was applied in an appraisal of participatory approaches to examine power sharing between the adults and the adolescent researchers at each stage of the research process, ranging from adolescents not being involved, consulted, collaborating, and directing and deciding for themselves.

Phone discussions. Follow-up conversations with study authors were conducted (by review author M.K.) across all five projects as a collaborative opportunity to cross-check our understandings and to fill gaps in the information provided in the published accounts to enable more thorough and accurate appraisals of technology use and participatory approaches to be undertaken. The discussions ranged from 30 to 90 minutes. The phone conversations elicited additional unanticipated information regarding challenges

Table 1
Youth-Led Participatory Action Research and technology appraisal tool

Research phase	Participation	Application of digital technology in YPAR project
Study design	- Decision-making in research/study design (methods, measures) - Decision-making in sample size, location, and participants	- Digital technology is employed to organize and determine the scope, direction, and design of the research project. - Example: digital technology to discuss or brainstorm potential projects via a shared document, blog, or online group discussion, etc.
Issue selection	- Decision-making on issue of interest (i.e., focus of YPAR project) - Co-create/craft research question of inquiry	- Digital technology is used to facilitate the issue selection process. - Example: using digital technology, a survey, online discussion board, or blog to “vote” or “elect” an issue of interest for the project.
Implementation	- Engage in data collection or development of data collection tools - Conduct surveys, field notes, interviews, or focus groups	- Creation of digital tools/platforms - Digital technology is used to either recruit participants or gather data. - Example: recruiting participants via online platforms (i.e., social media) and making flyers or internet graphics/website. - Collecting data from participants via digital technology such as an online survey, blog, etc.
Data analysis	Reviewing and co-analyzing results	- Digital technology is used to analyze, visualize, or identify common themes within the data. - Example: data analysis software or other computer programs (e.g., Excel [45] and Visone [46])
Dissemination and Social Action	- Decision-making regarding moving the findings toward action - Sharing findings with audiences (and selecting which audience to share with)	- Digital technology is strategically used to share/disseminate findings to educate the larger public and mobilize others to act. - Example: sharing findings using digital technology: crafting a video, a poster/flyer, sharing information on YouTube or social media, developing a website, etc.
Evaluation of the Research Process	Analyzing and assess the research process and next steps.	Digital technology/platforms are used to evaluate the project, discuss the next steps, and strategic planning.

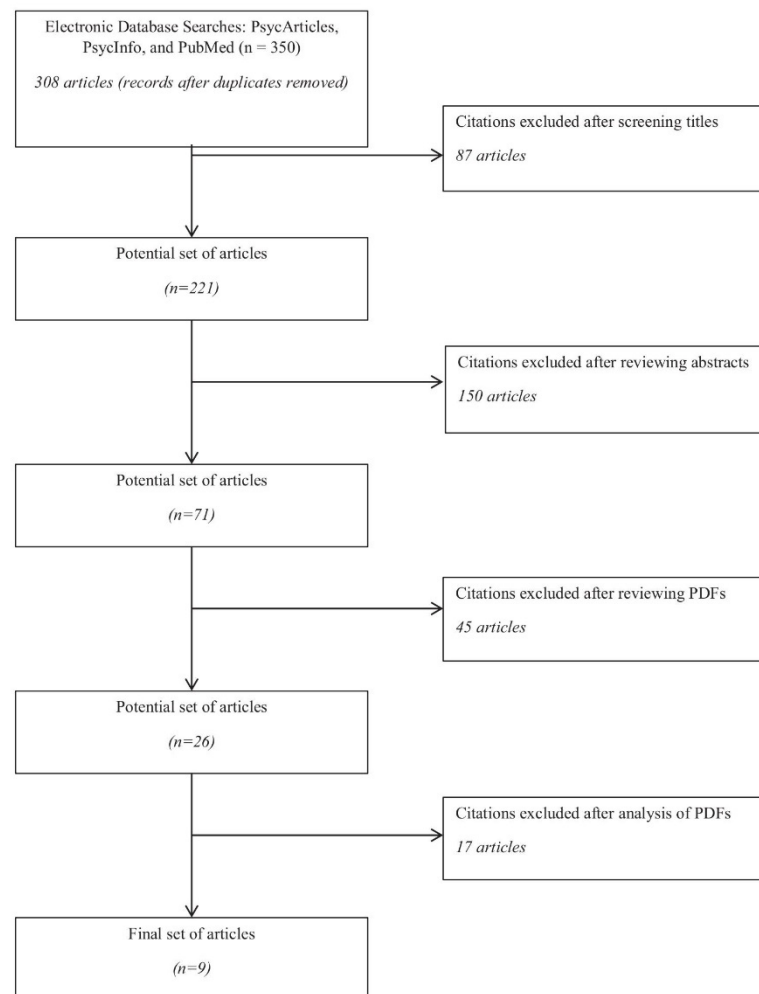


Figure 1. Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses flow chart.

in implementation, participant uptake of technology, and future considerations. Extensive field notes were taken for each phone discussion, which were subsequently combined and categorized to support the framework analysis described below. Similarities and differences within and across categories were examined to enhance our interpretation of the appraisal findings.

Analysis

To guide data analysis and interpretation, the author(s) used framework analysis [47]. Notably, framework analysis offers flexibility in the data analysis process in that analysis can begin during or after data collection. The framework analysis consisted of the following stages: (1) in-depth familiarization with key literature

review articles, (2) identification of emerging patterns and themes guided by the appraisal tools, (3) indexing significant texts, (4) charting key excerpts to illustrate or modify emerging trends, and (5) mapping findings using schematic diagrams to inform data interpretation. The process was then repeated, refined, and adapted when gaps in the framework were identified by incorporating the field notes from phone discussions with study authors.

Findings

Search results

Application of the search protocol yielded a total of 350 articles, 308 (nonduplicated) articles, of which 299 were

Table 2
Project characteristics

Project number	Location	Length	Topic focus	Sample size: adolescent co-researchers	Age
Project 1, Dream Teens [48–51]	Portugal (National)	1 year	Public Health: personal resources and well-being, social capital, love and sexuality, substance use and injuries, lifestyle, and citizenship and social participation	247	11–18
Project 2, Peer Resources [33,52]	San Francisco (three schools), California, USA	6 months	Public health: sex education, mental health, and school counselor availability	54	14–18
Project 3, Streetwyze [53]	Oakland (citywide), California, USA	3 years	Public health: food inequity and insecurity	90	16–18
Project 4, NYLI [54]	West Virginia, USA	Not specified (2 years)	Public health: drug prevention	130	12–19
Project 5, JaxHERO [55]	Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida, USA	3 years	Public health: obesity and health inequity	9	15–19

subsequently excluded based on the inclusion/exclusion criteria (Figure 1). For instance, we excluded papers in which youth used technology to disseminate findings within an organization but not as part of the research process or coordination, such as Girls Study Girls Inc. [23]. The remaining nine empirical articles were identified as using some form of digital technology to facilitate YPAR efforts across distinct geographic regions. These projects used digital technology in the context of mobilizing conversation, research, and social action among diverse adolescent groups and stakeholders. Although a total of nine articles were identified, two of the articles described the same project located within the Bay Area, USA. In addition, four of the articles described the same project connecting adolescents on a national scale across Portugal. Thus, the sample consisted of five unique and distinct projects.

Project characteristics

Projects varied in the number of adolescent participants ranging from 9 to 247 participants and ages ranged from 11 to 19 years (Table 2). In addition, the geographic distance covered for each project varied from connecting three schools within one city to a citywide collaborative to countywide efforts and a national project. Four of the projects were conducted within the U.S. while the national project was conducted in Portugal. The projects addressed a wide range of public health topics, including sexuality, substance use, mental health, obesity prevention, social capital, and citizenship.

Appraisal of technology use

Articles were reviewed and assessed on how technology was used to facilitate YPAR processes across geographically distinct groups. Although Facebook [56] was the most common social media platform, projects used Twitter [57], Instagram [58], Skype [59], e-mail, and blogs, as well as personalized applications designed for the purposes of community mapping (i.e., Streetwyze [60]). Overall, technology was primarily used for adolescent participants to gather and share information (Table 3).

The variation across the projects in the type of technology used and its purpose is an indicator of the range of options available:

- Project 1 (Dream Teens, Portugal) used technology to recruit adolescent participants (via social media posts) and screened

participants (via Skype interviews). Adult research team members provided adolescents with online feedback, information, and the tools to design their own research study, identify an issue of interest, and analyze the data gathered via a private Facebook group. The adolescent research team further screened and polled adolescents belonging to a larger public Facebook group. Adolescents presented their findings/recommendations for participant feedback via website and a livestreamed conference. Key decisions for the YPAR project were made online to facilitate conversations among adolescents on a national scale.

- Project 2 (Peer Resources, San Francisco) also used Facebook. In the context of this study, three school-based groups conducted their on-the-ground YPAR projects, each within their own school. Key questions, updates, and information were shared online throughout the YPAR process. Data collection was predominantly conducted offline; however, the Facebook platform was used to schedule interviews across schools and to ask for input on results during the data analysis stage. In addition, school-based YPAR groups communicated online to collaborate in determining final social action plans and dissemination efforts.
- Project 3 (Streetwyze, Oakland) employed and developed Streetwyze, a community mapping application, to gather neighborhood-level data surrounding food insecurity and access. The application was developed in real-time (i.e., piloting data collection and online feedback sessions), and in partnership with adolescents to guide the research design process. For instance, participants went to local convenience stores to record the amount of fresh produce available. These local data were combined with census trends as well as public health indicators to allow participants to visualize and analyze geographic food insecurities in real time (comparing and contrasting personalized and big data). Local groups could simultaneously collect data and share their data findings with others throughout the city.
- Projects 4 (NYLI, West Virginia) and 5 (JaxHERO, Jacksonville) used online platforms (Facebook and WordPress [61]) to gather and share data across geographic distances using photovoice (a photographic ethnographic documentation method to facilitate social change). Thus, the online platform allowed adolescent participants to view one another's photographs, narratives, and observations, spurring data collection. In addition, adolescents were able to ask questions and brainstorm the next steps using these digital platforms. Notably,

Table 3
Technology use throughout project stages

Project number	Recruitment	Study design	Issue selection	Implementation (data collection)	Data analysis	Dissemination and social action
Project 1: Dream Teens	Skype, Facebook	Facebook	Facebook	Facebook	Facebook	Facebook, Skype, Webinar
Project 2: Peer Resources		Streetwyze		Facebook	Facebook	Facebook
Project 3: Streetwyze				Streetwyze	Streetwyze	Streetwyze
Project 4: NYLI				WordPress	WordPress, Google Docs, Skype	WordPress, YouTube
Project 5: JaxHERO				Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and e-mail		

Project 4 involved a subgroup of adolescents who engaged in data analysis using Google docs [62] and Skype to thematically code photovoice posts and narratives. In addition, all adolescents in Project 4 created digital stories (videos, Web sites, and exhibits) to disseminate information to larger audiences.

Follow-up phone conversations with YPAR study authors allowed for a deeper analysis of the application of technology, specifically addressing the benefits and advantages of using technology in YPAR projects, the obligations of the adult researchers supporting the YPAR project, and challenges experienced at specific stages of the YPAR process involving use of technology.

Benefits. Study authors stressed the importance of technology for increasing the scale of projects and democratizing young people's access to information, research skill development, and civic participation. Across projects, study authors noted the opportunity to access and engage historically underserved communities, in particular, adolescents who did not have access to programs or services within their local communities. The online platform also allowed participants to engage in research and inquiry at their own pace. For instance, researchers could easily inquire further into an idea by replying or referencing a specific comment proposed earlier by an adolescent participant at the individual and group levels within a social media thread. Authors noted that this experience allowed for further in-depth exploration of particular issues and documentation of conversations, prompting opportunities for critical reflection (e.g., adolescents re-reading their posts and initial ideas). In addition, technology allowed researchers to quickly access real-time data and provide recommendations to funders, organizations, and programs based on aggregated trends. Adult researchers were able to also reduce research expenditures (e.g., transcription and data entry) compared with traditional in-person research methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups, and surveys).

In the context of the various stages of YPAR, study authors noted the importance of technology in facilitating data collection and information sharing between young people and adult research team members. For instance, study authors highlighted the value of creatively using technology for data collection through “teasers and challenges,” which consisted of open-ended questions through text, music, or video formats to solicit adolescent response. Authors noted that this provided opportunities to enrich the data and offered flexibility in follow-up questions.

Obligations. To reap the benefits of technological use, study authors stressed the importance of having a network,

stakeholder buy-in, and funding (to pay participants for their time conducting data collection and analysis) when engaging young people in YPAR through online mediums. Study authors highlighted the importance of training adults (i.e., staff, research team members) in online facilitation to recognize, elevate, and promote adolescent participation throughout the data collection process, foster conversations to interpret the data, as well as attend to potential tensions or challenges within online spaces (e.g., cyberbullying). Notably, authors stressed the importance of training adult or program staff in creating an empowering and critical space for adolescents. Furthermore, study authors articulated the importance of being mindful of inequities in digital access and literacy and the need for strategic efforts in providing resources and supports to adolescent researchers.

Challenges. Challenges in obtaining rich dialog among young people (i.e., horizontal communication) not reliant on adult research team facilitation were reported in articles and phone discussions in four of the five projects. In particular, this trend occurred when key decisions in research design, analysis, or social action were required. Authors noted that YPAR design decisions in research focus, analysis, and social action were challenging to facilitate via technology. Several of the projects consisted of a hybrid design in which participants met regularly in-person and online. Study authors stressed the importance of the in-person meetings to reduce potential tensions, develop group norms, and engage in challenging decision-making processes. However, several authors that were connecting adolescents across large geographic spaces used the online platform Skype, which mimics the interpersonal dynamics of an in-person discussion.

Only Project 3 (Streetwyze, Oakland) solicited adolescent voice and perspective in the design of the online platform (a mobile Web application) and continually modified the platform based on user feedback. This was done to create a platform that could be accessed in adolescents' everyday lives. This particular project reported the least challenges in the uptake and use of the application by adolescents. Several team members well situated within the information and technology field had the expertise to continually modify and refine the online user interface. This intentionally diverse interdisciplinary research team allowed for needed modifications to the online interface and design. Several other study authors described identifying an ideal online platform based on adolescent input; however, when the project was implemented (several months later), adolescents were no longer using that particular platform (i.e., moving from Facebook to Instagram). Thus, several authors stressed the challenges in applying for funding that identified a particular platform (i.e.,

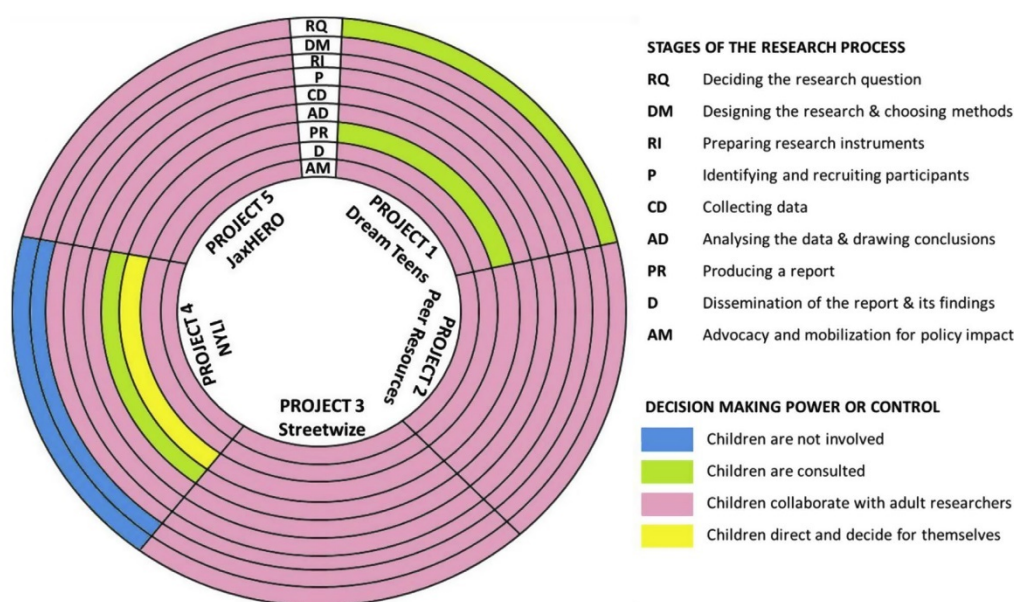


Figure 2. Appraisal of participatory approaches throughout project stages. Source: Author's representation, based on Shier's analytical tool [13].

Facebook) and the rapidly changing technological landscape and uptake of novel mediums (i.e., Instagram and Snapchat).

Appraisal of Participatory Approaches

Shier's analytical tool to help researchers develop partnerships with children and adolescents was used to assess the level of adolescent engagement at each stage of the projects (Figure 2). This was challenging based on published articles alone because they did not typically provide sufficient information on this aspect of YPAR. To address this gap, we gathered additional information through follow up phone discussions with the authors of the original YPAR studies included in this review. The appraisal showed that when adolescents were involved in the research process (specifically data collection, analysis, and advocacy), they mostly acted as collaborative researchers with adult guidance and support.

Study authors noted the benefits, challenges, and strategies in soliciting meaningful adolescent engagement and contribution to decision-making. As described below, two clear trends were noted throughout these conversations: (1) variation in meaningful adolescent participation within a singular YPAR project and (2) scaffolding adolescent participation within the project.

Variation in meaningful participation

It was challenging for some study authors to convey a clear sense of the participatory elements of the project at each research stage because it varied across the participants, YPAR groups, and project sites. It was also influenced by the medium of engagement and the adult support person involved. For instance,

in Project 2 (Peer Resources, San Francisco), teachers varied in adolescent engagement between classes, with some progressing the efforts of a former YPAR student group project, and others facilitating their first YPAR project. Thus, levels of adolescent engagement varied across sites and stages of the YPAR process, with one group being heavily involved in data analysis, whereas another engaged in problem identification. Thus, reflecting across the entire adolescent participant pool for Project 2, there were YPAR school-based groups occupying roles as active collaborators with adult researchers throughout each stage of the project. However, each school-based YPAR group did not achieve this status throughout, and the level, quality, and depth of the participation varied greatly. Project 4 (NYLI, West Virginia) showed a similar trend in that adolescent groups (130 total, with a range of 3–10 students per group) varied in their level of active participation in data collection. High-quality adolescent participation may have been influenced by the resources available (i.e., access to technology), skill set of the adult advisor, and relationships among the adolescents.

Scaffolding participation

Scaffolding adolescent engagement was identified as an important strategy, used by three of five projects to ensure quality participation and outcomes. In the projects reviewed, there was a smaller subgroup of adolescents engaged in meaningful high-level participation as co-collaborators. For instance, Project 1 (Dream Teens, Portugal) consisted of a smaller internal research team engaged throughout the YPAR process ($N = 67$) and actively polled a larger pool of students interested in sharing their perspectives surrounding issues impacting young people

throughout the country ($N = 147$). The authors stressed that this particular approach was critical to conducting YPAR while not being a burden on adolescents who did not have time to be highly involved. Furthermore, Project 3 (Steetwize, Oakland) developed the application and research objectives through a long-term partnership with two nonprofit organizations. Staff (also youth aged 18–25 years) helped in the design, development, and recruitment for the project. Next, high school students (recruited by youth staff) were engaged in testing the application and gathering valuable data for the project. Thus, the project had young people involved in each stage of the project, from determining the objects, to testing data collection methods. In Project 4 (NYLI, West Virginia), a smaller group of eight self-selected adolescents engaged in evaluating the qualitative data yielded from the online platform. Adolescents provided validity checks in data interpretation and analysis of the adult research team. It is notable that Project 2 (Peer Resources, San Francisco) and Project 5 (JaxHero, Florida) had the smallest number of adolescent co-researchers ($N = 54$ and $N = 9$, respectively) and thus may not have required the same logistics in securing meaningful adolescent engagement. The importance of providing opportunities for adolescents to partake in deeper, more engaging roles at various stages of the YPAR project was noted by study authors while still enabling adolescents to select their own level of engagement.

Discussion

The rapid spread of youth participatory politics through online media demonstrates the promise of digital technology to be used to scale up YPAR projects [8,32,37,63]. However, this systematic review highlighted the relative scarcity of peer-reviewed evidence on this topic despite proposals a decade ago for an e-PAR approach using technology and participatory action research to engage youth in health promotion [38] and more recent advocacy for YPAR 2.0 approaches [53].

In the small number of studies that did report the use of technology for scaling-up the scope of YPAR projects, there was a wide range of digital media and tools being used, primarily for data collection and dissemination. Technology was identified as particularly advantageous in data collection and exploration. Yet critical joint decisions in analysis, dissemination, and social action were reported to be challenging to facilitate via technology. These particular stages can be challenging to perform in-person and often benefit from the support of a series of guiding questions and adult support [39,64]. Thus, careful selection of technological platforms for different stages of the YPAR process may be particularly beneficial to match the exchange required (e.g., using Skype or Zoom for real-time discussions about data analysis and strategic action planning). Alternatively, preparatory work in-person could also be used to support adolescents in developing group norms and working through upcoming scenarios surrounding key decisions made within the online platform.

A key goal of YPAR is that it is empowering for those involved in the co-creation of new knowledge and subsequent action about health and well-being issues affecting them [25,65,66]. Studies of youth who use communication technology to be active in online political participation have demonstrated they are likely to have those experiences serve as a gateway into offline political participation [67,68]. Therefore, it is possible that online

involvement in YPAR could also progress to everyday involvement in health research and action.

It is incumbent on adult YPAR partners to adopt a reflexive approach to the YPAR processes to ensure the research environment is supportive and creates opportunities for adolescent agency without compromising their social, emotional, or physical safety [15]. Many frameworks and models have been developed to assist in this process [13,15,25,69–75]. However, this systematic review demonstrates that scaling up of YPAR projects introduces added complexities. YPAR projects with large numbers of adolescent researchers across multiple sites using different methods of communication may introduce greater variability in the level of engagement for adolescents in the research process and in the level and nature of adult support. The differing roles of the adults and the adolescents reflect the variability and challenges inherent in complex interventions [76], but the integrity of the YPAR approach is still an important consideration. Further research is needed to examine whether YPAR fidelity is more, less, or differentially applied with digitally based scaling. Drawing on impact and implementation assessments of YPAR projects can inform future efforts [39,77,78]. Arguably, the use of technology both increases opportunities for adolescents to contribute to decision-making and reduces the intensive interpersonal processes. It provides access to developmental opportunities but may also expose adolescents to potential risks in the online environment [1,2,6]. It may offer increased opportunities for adult oversight, documentation, and provision of support to adolescents but may also reduce the lead researcher's capacity to engage meaningfully with multiple project sites and with adult and adolescent contributors.

Our review of the extant literature suggests that strategically designing opportunities for high-level engagement throughout various stages of the YPAR project can increase adolescents' access to meaningful opportunities for participation. It highlighted the importance of being transparent about likely differences in experiences of the YPAR project, dependent on the form of participation. It also emphasized the potential need for capacity building for the adults involved to ensure consistency in YPAR approaches across multiple groups and sites [15]. However, it is also important to acknowledge that not all adolescents will want a high level of engagement and that disengagement and subversion of research processes can in themselves be a form of agency and assertion of adolescent rights [9,40,75].

Limitations and further research

The terminology used for this review's search terms, the search timeframe, and the restriction to peer-reviewed articles in English may have potentially missed relevant research projects. Future reviews could provide a broader examination of white papers, evaluations, and reports from organizations engaged in YPAR projects and publications in other languages. This review provides important initial insights to consider in future research to align with the rapid emergence of technological advances. It also highlights the need for rigorous assessment of differential impacts for adolescent participants in digitally scaled up YPAR projects.

Acknowledgments

The review authors greatly appreciate the cooperation of the following study authors in providing additional information and

insights to support the appraisal process: Dr. Lauren Lichty (University of Washington Bothell), Jennifer Mortensen (Senior Research Analyst at the YMCA USA), Dr. William C. Livingood Jr. (University of Florida), Cátia Branquinho (University of Lisbon), Dr. Margarida Gaspar de Matos (University of Lisbon), Dr. Antwi Akom (Professor & Founding Director of the University of California San Francisco & San Francisco State University Social Innovation and Opportunity Lab, Co-Founder Streetwyze), and Tessa Cruz (Program Manager, Equitable Development and Community Engaged Design, Institute for Sustainable Economic Educational Environmental Design).

Authors' Contributions: All the authors made substantial contributions to the conception and design of the review and the drafting of the article. M.K. and S.B. conducted the review and selection and appraisal of articles as noted in the article.

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Appendix 2: Main characteristics of scaled-up participatory studies with child co-researchers

Table 9: Characteristics of scaled participatory studies – conceptual frameworks, demographic characteristics of child co-researchers, duration and frequency of contact between adult researchers and child co-researchers

Study/ Reference	Scale	Conceptual frameworks	Demographic characteristics of child co-researchers	Duration	Frequency of contact
Children in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) (Haynes & Tanner, 2015; Seballos & Tanner, 2011; Tanner, 2010; Tanner & Seballos, 2012)	Multinational	- Participatory action research (PAR) - Child-Centred Risk Reduction	9 – 28 years old, most groups between 10 -18 years old.	Information not available.	Information not available.
Dream Teens (Branquinho, 2018; Branquinho et al., 2018; Frاسquilho et al., 2018; Gaspar de Matos & Simoes, 2016)	National	- Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) - Positive Youth Development	11 - 18 years old.	2 years	Adult researchers and child co-researchers worked remotely using social media tool on a weekly basis. Child co-researchers met in person for the first time 9 months after entering the project.
Growing Up in New York City (GUiNYC) (Driskell, 2007; Fuller-Rowell, 2009)	City	Multi-organizational Action Research (MSAC)	11 – 13 years old.	2 years	Information about local action research projects not available. Meetings between youth and adults representing each one of the study sites were carried out every two weeks.
JaxHero (Livingood et	County	Community-Based	15 - 19 years old adolescents from a	3 years	Child co-researchers had to participate in at least 1 of 2 bi-

al., 2017)		Participatory Research (CBPR)	minority community.		monthly meetings.
National Youth Leadership Initiative (NYLI) (Mortensen et al., 2014)	State	Participatory Action Research (PAR)	12 - 19 years old. 78 females and 49 males. Average age 15 years old. 90% white and living in rural communities.	2 years, but each adolescent participated in one-year long leadership program.	Adolescents participated in 3 in-person training sessions with additional distance learning sessions in between. After training, adolescents participated in blogs in a self-guided way.
Peer Resources (Kornbluh, 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2016)	School district	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	14 -18 years old: 50% juniors, 33% seniors, 9% sophomores and 7% freshmen. 46% female, 37% Hispanic/Latino(a), 33% Asian, 13% Black/African American, 7% White, 6% Other, 2% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, 2% American Indian/Alaska Native.	6 months.	The participatory project was part of a school elective that was offered 4 out of 5 days a week. Sessions ranged from 1 hour to 90 minutes. Special time from class was scheduled to dedicate to connecting to other groups using SNS
Reshaping Our World (Trott, 2019)	Inter-municipal	- Participatory Action Research - Transformative Sustainability Learning Theory	10 - 12 years old. 56% white, 25% Hispanic/Latinx, 14.6% multiethnic, Asian/Pacific Islander 4%. 62% low income.	1 year and 4 months.	15-week after school program. Participants met one hour weekly, attending an average of 11 to 12 sessions.
Streetwyze (Akom et al.,	Area of city	YPAR 2.0	16 - 18 years old.	3 years, each cohort of child	Information not available.

2016)		• Racial and Social Justice		co-researchers participated for 1 year.	
Teens Tackle Tobacco (Ross, 2011)	City	• Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)	15 - 18 years old	3 years	An initial training phase followed by weekly meetings for team-building and strategic planning.
You<th are Here (Walker & Saito, 2011)	County	• Participatory action research • Assets-based community development	Information not available.	3 years, different cohorts participated either in a 10-week or 10-month curriculum.	Information not available.
Youth Creating Disaster Recovery and Resilience (YCDR²) (Fletcher et al., 2016)	International	• Child-Centred Risk Reduction	Information not available.	Information not available.	1 to 4-day workshops were carried out at each community.
Youth Action for Health (Suleiman et al., 2006)	County level	• CBPR • Social justice youth development (SJYD)	Information not available.	7 – 8 months	Child co-researchers met with a primary adult facilitator minimum once a week for 1-2 hours. There were bi-weekly or monthly meetings with other youth program staff for research training.

Appendix 3: Ethics Approval for Children's Araucaria Study, ID 1749790

22 September 2017

A/Professor Lisa Gibbs
Melbourne School of Population and Global Health
The University of Melbourne

Dear A/Prof Gibbs

I am pleased to advise that the Health Sciences Human Ethics Sub-Committee approved the following Project:

Project title: **Children's Araucaria: Action, Resilience, Unity, Collaboration and Ideas**
Researchers: **Miss E Taunt, Msc A Vasquez, Master In Health Psychology S Ramis, A/Prof L F Gibbs, K Marinkovic Chavez**
Ethics ID: **1749790**

The Project has been approved for the period: **22-Sep-2017 to 31-Dec-2017**

It is your responsibility to ensure that all people associated with the Project are made aware of what has actually been approved.

Research projects are normally approved to 31 December of the year of approval. Projects may be renewed yearly for up to a total of five years upon receipt of a satisfactory annual report. If a project is to continue beyond five years a new application will normally need to be submitted.

Please note that the following conditions apply to your approval. Failure to abide by these conditions may result in suspension or discontinuation of approval and/or disciplinary action.

- (a) **Limit of Approval:** Approval is limited strictly to the research as submitted in your Project application.
- (b) **Variation to Project:** Any subsequent variations or modifications you might wish to make to the Project must be notified formally to the Human Ethics Sub-Committee for further consideration and approval. If the Sub-Committee considers that the proposed changes are significant, you may be required to submit a new application for approval of the revised Project.
- (c) **Incidents or adverse effects:** Researchers must report immediately to the Sub-Committee anything which might affect the ethical acceptance of the protocol including adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the Project. Failure to do so may result in suspension or cancellation of approval.
- (d) **Monitoring:** All projects are subject to monitoring at any time by the Human Research Ethics Committee.
- (e) **Annual Report:** Please be aware that the Human Research Ethics Committee requires that researchers submit an annual report on each of their projects at the end of the year, or at the conclusion of a project if it continues for less than this time. Failure to submit an annual report will mean that ethics approval will lapse.
- (f) **Auditing:** All projects may be subject to audit by members of the Sub-Committee.

If you have any queries on these matters, or require additional information, please contact me using the details below.

Please quote the ethics registration number and the title of the Project in any future correspondence.

On behalf of the Sub-Committee I wish you well in your research.

Yours sincerely



Ms Hilary Young - Secretary
Health Sciences HESC
Phone: 03 8344 8595, Email: hilary.young@unimelb.edu.au

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unimelb.edu.au

Appendix 4: Ethics approval for Kids Contribute Study, ID 1748691



05 June 2017

A/Prof Lisa Gibbs
Melbourne School of Population and Global Health
The University of Melbourne

Dear A/Prof Gibbs

I am pleased to advise that the Health Sciences Human Ethics Sub-Committee approved the following Project:

Project title: **Children as contributors**
Researchers: **A/Prof L F Gibbs, Miss L M Carpenter, Ms H R Morrice, K Marinkovic Chavez**
Ethics ID: **1748691**

The Project has been approved for the period: **05-Jun-2017 to 31-Dec-2017**

It is your responsibility to ensure that all people associated with the Project are made aware of what has actually been approved.

Research projects are normally approved to 31 December of the year of approval. Projects may be renewed yearly for up to a total of five years upon receipt of a satisfactory annual report. If a project is to continue beyond five years a new application will normally need to be submitted.

Please note that the following conditions apply to your approval. Failure to abide by these conditions may result in suspension or discontinuation of approval and/or disciplinary action.

- (a) **Limit of Approval:** Approval is limited strictly to the research as submitted in your Project application.
- (b) **Variation to Project:** Any subsequent variations or modifications you might wish to make to the Project must be notified formally to the Human Ethics Sub-Committee for further consideration and approval. If the Sub-Committee considers that the proposed changes are significant, you may be required to submit a new application for approval of the revised Project.
- (c) **Incidents or adverse effects:** Researchers must report immediately to the Sub-Committee anything which might affect the ethical acceptance of the protocol including adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the Project. Failure to do so may result in suspension or cancellation of approval.
- (d) **Monitoring:** All projects are subject to monitoring at any time by the Human Research Ethics Committee.
- (e) **Annual Report:** Please be aware that the Human Research Ethics Committee requires that researchers submit an annual report on each of their projects at the end of the year, or at the conclusion of a project if it continues for less than this time. Failure to submit an annual report will mean that ethics approval will lapse.
- (f) **Auditing:** All projects may be subject to audit by members of the Sub-Committee.

If you have any queries on these matters, or require additional information, please contact me using the details below.

Please quote the ethics registration number and the title of the Project in any future correspondence.

On behalf of the Sub-Committee I wish you well in your research.

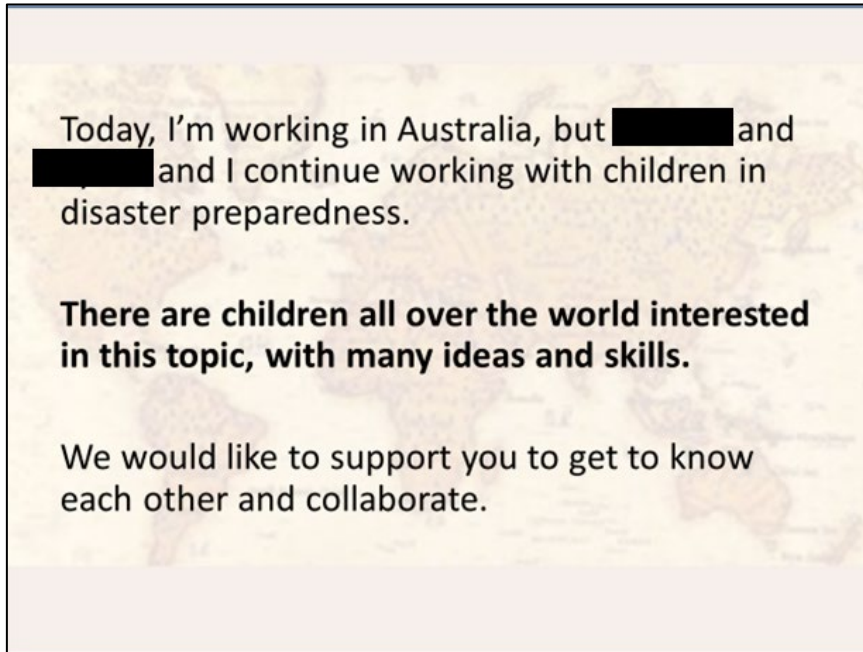
Yours sincerely

Ms Hilary Young, Secretary
Health Sciences HESC
Phone: 03 8344 8595, Email: hilary.young@unimelb.edu.au

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unimelb.edu.au

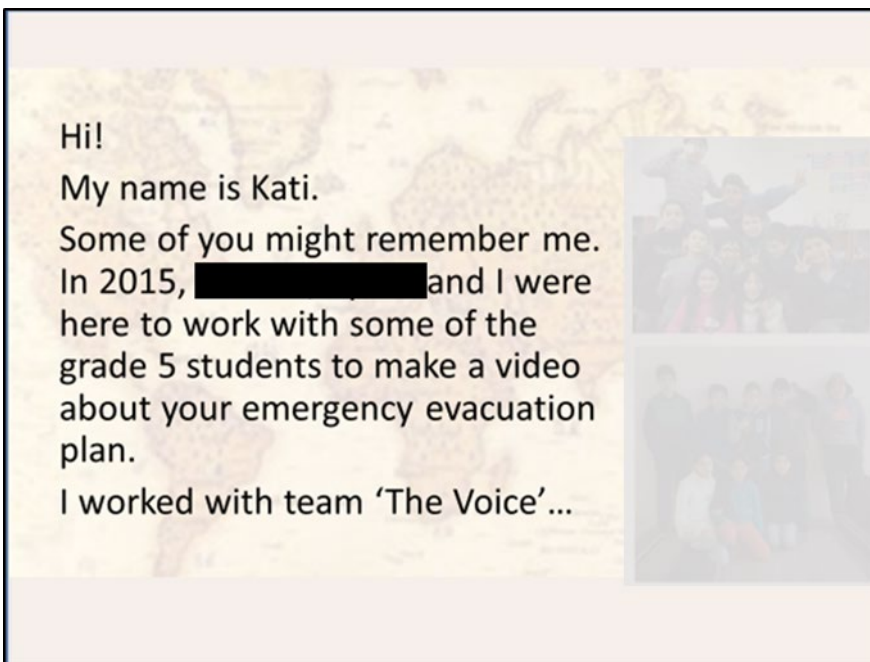
Appendix 5: Introductory PowerPoint presentation for Chilean students in the Araucaria study



Today, I'm working in Australia, but [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and I continue working with children in disaster preparedness.

There are children all over the world interested in this topic, with many ideas and skills.

We would like to support you to get to know each other and collaborate.



Hi!

My name is Kati.

Some of you might remember me. In 2015, [REDACTED] and I were here to work with some of the grade 5 students to make a video about your emergency evacuation plan.

I worked with team 'The Voice'...





In the meantime, I'd like to show you some things I've learned from them so far, and some things that have surprised me.

Welcome to [REDACTED]!

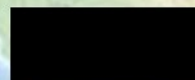
[REDACTED] is in Australia, approximately **11.130 km** from [REDACTED].

We have a **14-hour** time difference!

- It's a beautiful place, surrounded by bush and the sea...
- There are wombats and kangaroos, they even live where people play sports!
- But this environment can also be dangerous, because there's a lot of **bushfires**.



These signs are real...



Use Google Earth to make a virtual trip to [REDACTED]

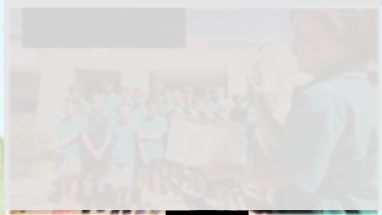


Who are we going to meet?
Children that, just like you, are working to make their community more resilient.

What do they do?
They are in grades 5 and 6. With the help of firefighters and teachers, they learn about fire and how to prevent bushfires.

After this, they teach other children, their families and community!

What do they know about us?
They know they will meet children from Chile, who live far away and work on topics related to disasters.
They are also very interested in the 33 miners.



This is their school, [redacted] Primary School



The program in which they participate is called [redacted]

You can watch a video made by the the school and its students.




We want to invite you to **get to know each other, share and learn from each other.**

The adults will be here to support you and suggest some topics, however...

Remember, this is **YOUR** project, and the children from Anglesea want to get to know **YOU!**

During the next weeks, you and the children from [REDACTED] will have the opportunity to get to know each other, share your work and ideas.

We hope you
have a Good
time!

Remember, **your voices** are
very important in Chile and
Australia!

You work will help us think of better ways
for children to participate in disaster
preparedness



Thanks!

Links:

Google Earth: take a virtual tour to [REDACTED] Primary School

<https://earth.google.com/web/@-33.8561326,->

[\[REDACTED\]/data=CIsaWRJTCiQweDk2NjMzY2QxNWYwZDUxMGY6MHg0YjUyYTg1YjY1YjBhOWIZDAXHwJXtQMAhghciTHawUcAqGUNvbGVnaW8gQWx0YXpvcCBEZWwgTWfpcG8YAIAbKA!](https://earth.google.com/web/@-33.8561326,-[REDACTED]/data=CIsaWRJTCiQweDk2NjMzY2QxNWYwZDUxMGY6MHg0YjUyYTg1YjY1YjBhOWIZDAXHwJXtQMAhghciTHawUcAqGUNvbGVnaW8gQWx0YXpvcCBEZWwgTWfpcG8YAIAbKA!)

VicEmergency's website: check out the news about [REDACTED] and their connection with. There are many links you might find interesting, what do you think?

[http://pm.tools.vine.vic.gov.au/prepare/prepare.html#community-planning/mapview.html?popup=\[REDACTED\]](http://pm.tools.vine.vic.gov.au/prepare/prepare.html#community-planning/mapview.html?popup=[REDACTED])

Appendix 6: Plain Language Statement (PLS) for children in the Children's Araucaria study



Information Sheet for Children

Children's Araucaria: Action, Resilience, Unity, Collaboration and Ideas

Hi,

Our names are Lisa Gibbs and Katitza Marinkovic. We are researchers at the University of Melbourne School of Population and Global Health and wanted to tell you about our study.

If you're interested, please read this information carefully, and decide if you want to be part of it. You can ask us questions if you don't understand or want to know more.

What is this study about?

We want to learn about children's experiences participating in programs that help prepare for disasters (also called Disaster Risk Reduction), like the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs that you attend. We also want to learn what children think about sharing their ideas with children from other countries when they are participating in this kind of programs.

Do I have to participate?

It is up to you if you want to participate. Even if you are part of the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs, you don't have to be part of this research. If you join in, you can agree to some parts and not others. You can also stop at any time, and it won't affect you at school or the program in any way.

If I decide to participate, what will I do?

We want to invite you to a group discussion that will take place at the time and place of the Resilient Seaview or Safe Cuesta Grande programs. During this discussion, we'll show you our observations about the work and ideas that the children in Chile and Australia carried out and

ask for your opinion.

We may also ask you to have a chat with us on your own about some of these ideas. Both the group discussion and interview will be recorded, so we remember what was said.

What are the possible benefits?

Your ideas will help us learn how children can contribute to the way we prepare for future disasters. You can also learn new skills and meet children from another country (Chile/Australia).

What are the possible risks?

There are no big risks. If something makes you feel sad, angry or uncomfortable, you don't have to talk about it. You can also decide what activities you want to do.

Will I hear about the results of this study?

Yes. In the group discussion, we will look at the results of the study together so we can listen to your opinions. The adult researchers will publish the results at conferences and in journal articles.

Will the things that I say in the meeting be kept private?

Yes, only the researchers and the other people in the group discussion will know what you say and do. We would only contact your parents or authorities if you seemed to be in danger. We will group the results in any reports but as there are only a small number of people taking part in this study, it is possible that someone who knows you might be able to guess who you are from what was said.

We will keep recordings and notes from the study for five years at The University of Melbourne after the last reports are published and then we will destroy them.

Where can I get further information?

You can contact us any time to discuss the study:

Katitza Marinkovic 90358286 or e-mail kmarinkovic@student.unimelb.edu.au

Lisa Gibbs 8344 0920 or e-mail lgibbs@unimelb.edu.au

[REDACTED]

This study is supported by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

We hope that you enjoy participating in this study!

If you are in Australia and are ever distressed about any problems and you are not sure who you can talk to, you can call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800. This is a free, private telephone service for young people aged 5 to 25.

If you are in Chile and are ever distressed about any problems and you are not sure who you can talk to, you can reach out to the school counsellor, or contact the Municipal Mental Health Centre (COSAM) at Pasaje Araucania, or call +56 2 8221180.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Office for Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.

Appendix 7: Consent form for children in the Children's Araucaria study



Consent Form for Children

Children's Araucaria: Action, Resilience, Unity, Collaboration and Ideas

Primary Researcher: Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs

Additional Researchers: Katitza Marinkovic

Melbourne School of Global and Population Health, Centre for Health Equity

1. I understand that this study seeks to understand children's views about participating in a Disaster Risk Reduction program, and to learn about their experience of sharing their ideas with children from other countries, in this case, Chile/Australia.
2. I understand that this study will analyse the work I have already carried out in the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs consisting of videos, drawings, maps, photographs, among others, and that is publicly available.
3. I understand that I will be invited to a group discussion to give feedback on the research results, so that they reflect my opinions and experiences. In addition to this, I may also be invited to participate in an individual interview.
4. I understand that the group discussion and interview will be audio recorded.
5. I understand that it is up to me if I want to be part of the research, that I can stop any time and it won't affect me at school or the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs.
6. I understand that the information collected for this research, including this form, will be kept at the University of Melbourne and will be destroyed 5 years after all the reports have been published.
7. I understand that only the researchers in this study and other children in the group discussion will know my name and what I say, but that it may be possible that someone may guess who I am from what I said.

Please put your details and sign here if you agree to be part of this study:

- Name:
- Address:
- Phone number:
- Date of birth:
- Signature:
- Date:

Thank you!

Appendix 8: Plain Language Statement (PLS) for parents and guardians in the Children's Araucaria study



Information Sheet for Parents and Guardians

Children's Araucaria: Action, Resilience, Unity, Collaboration and Ideas

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This sheet provides information about the *Children's Araucaria* study that is part of the PhD research carried out by student Katitza Marinkovic and supervised by Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs, from the University of Melbourne School of Population and Global Health.

If you would like your child to participate, please read the following information. You can also contact us for any questions.

What is this study about?

We want to about children's experiences participating in programs that help reduce the risk of disasters (Disaster Risk Reduction), like the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs. We also want to explore children's experience of sharing their ideas and opinions in these programs with children from other countries, in this case, Chile/Australia. In order to do this, we want to observe the Resilient Seaview or Safe Cuesta Grande programs that your child has been attending at his or her school.

Do the children have to participate?

Participation is voluntary and can also stop at any time during the study.

What will the children be asked to do during this study?

Our study will analyse the materials that children produced as part of their participation in the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs and are publicly available (videos, maps, drawings, photographs, among others). We want to invite your child to a group discussion where the researchers will present their initial findings and ask for their feedback and

opinions. If children are interested, some of them could also be invited to an individual interview. The group discussion and interviews will be carried out at the same place and time your program, last 30 to 60 minutes and be audio recorded.

What are the possible benefits?

There is evidence that involving children as active participants and listening to their views can contribute to their self-esteem, sensitivity to the perspective of others, hope for the future, and active citizenship. Also, their ideas will contribute to the field of Disaster Risk Reduction. All participating schools will be acknowledged in the study reports and the results will be shared with families and schools that participated.

What are the possible risks?

There are no likely risks from participating. If, during the group discussion or interview, your child experiences distress or feels uncomfortable due to the topic of discussion, he or she can choose to talk about it or not. Your child will also have the choice of what activities he or she wants to participate.

In Australia, the Kids Helpline is a phone counselling service available to all children at any time- on 1800 55 1800. If you are in Chile, you can contact the school counsellor, or the Municipal Mental Health Centre (COSAM) at Pasaje Araucanía or call +56 2 8221180.

Will I hear about the results of this study?

Yes. We will summarize the study's findings and present them to all the people who participated, their families and schools. We'll also publish the results by presenting them at conferences and in journal articles.

Will the things that children say be kept private?

Yes, only the researchers and the other people in the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs will know what individual children said during the research group discussions and interviews. The information and contributions provided by children will be treated as confidential subject to legal requirements. Identifying information will be removed when reporting the study findings.

We will keep recordings and notes from the study for five years at The University of Melbourne

after the last reports are published and then we will destroy them.

Where can I get further information?

You can contact us any time to discuss the study:

Lisa Gibbs 8344 0920 or e-mail lgibbs@unimelb.edu.au

Katitza Marinkovic 90358286 or e-mail kmarinkovic@student.unimelb.edu.au

In Chile: [REDACTED]

This study is supported by [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED]

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Office for Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.

Appendix 9: Consent form for parents and guardians in the Children's Araucaria study



Consent Form for Parents and Guardians

Children's Araucaria: Action, Resilience, Unity, Collaboration and Ideas

Primary Researcher: Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs

PhD Student: Katitza Marinkovic

Melbourne School of Global and Population Health:

1. I understand that this study seeks to understand children's views about participating in a Disaster Risk Reduction program, and to learn about their experience of sharing their ideas with children from other countries, in this case, Chile/Australia.
2. I understand that this study will analyse the work already produced by my child in the Resilient Seaview or Safe Cuesta Grande program, consisting of videos, drawings, maps, photographs, among others, that are publicly available.
3. I understand that my child will be invited to a group discussion to provide feedback on the research, so that his or her opinions and experiences are reflected in the results. In addition to this, my child may also be invited to participate in an individual interview.
4. I understand that the group discussion and interview will be audio recorded.
5. I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and that he or she is free to quit the study at any time, without explanation and this will not affect him or her at school or the Resilient Seaview or Safe Cuesta Grande programs.
6. I understand that the data from this research will be stored at the University of Melbourne and will be destroyed 5 years after publication.
7. I understand that the information from the discussions and interviews will be grouped and not linked to any individuals but if my child's story is familiar to others, they may recognise his/her contribution.
8. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form, it will be kept by the researchers in a locked cabinet at the University of Melbourne.
- 9.

Please fill with your details if you agree to your child being part of this study:

- Parent/guardian name:
- Parent/guardian e-mail address:
- Parent/guardian phone number:

- Child Name:
- Parent/guardian signature:
- Date:

Thank you!

Appendix 10: Plain Language Statement (PLS) for adult program facilitators in the Children's Araucaria study

Information for Adult Participants

Children's Araucaria: Action, Resilience, Unity, Collaboration and Ideas

This sheet provides information about the Children's Araucaria study that is part of the PhD research carried out by student Katitza Marinkovic and supervised by Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs, from the University of Melbourne School of Population and Global Health.

If you would like to participate, please read the following information. You can also contact us for any questions.

What is this study about?

We want to learn about children's experiences participating in programs that help reduce the risk of disasters (Disaster Risk Reduction), like the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs. We also want to explore children's experiences of sharing their ideas and opinions in these programs with children from other countries, in this case, Chile/Australia. To do this, we want to observe the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs and learn from your experience of being involved as part of the school staff or facilitator.

Do I have to participate?

Participation is voluntary and can also stop at any time during the study.

What will I be asked to do during this study?

We want to invite you to participate in an individual interview about your views and opinions of the Resilient Seaview or Safe Cuesta Grande programs. The interview will be carried out at a place and time that is suitable to you, last 30 to 60 minutes and be audio recorded. If you are in Chile, the interview would be carried out through a videoconference with the PhD student Katitza Marinkovic. However, if you don't feel comfortable with a videoconference, [REDACTED] can carry out the interview in person instead.

What are the possible benefits?

Your ideas will contribute to the field of Disaster Risk Reduction. Specifically, it will help us to

better understand how to carry out programs for children in Disaster Risk Reduction and to learn about the potential benefits of having children share their ideas with children from other countries. All participating schools will be acknowledged in the study reports and the results will be shared with families and schools that participated.

What are the possible risks?

There are no likely risks from participating. If, during the interview, you experience distress or feel uncomfortable, you can choose to stop the interview at any time.

Will I hear about the results of this study?

Yes. We will summarize the study's findings and present them to all the people who participated, their families and schools. We'll also publish the results by presenting them at conferences and in journal articles.

Will the things I say be kept private?

Yes, only the researchers will know what is said during your interview. The information and contributions provided by you will be treated as confidential subject to legal requirements. Identifying information will be removed when reporting the study findings. However, due to the small number of adult participants, someone may recognize you from what you said during the interview.

We will keep recordings and notes from the study for five years at The University of Melbourne after the last reports are published and then we will destroy them.

Where can I get further information?

You can contact us any time to discuss the study:

Lisa Gibbs 8344 0920 or e-mail lgibbs@unimelb.edu.au
Katitza Marinkovic 90358286 or e-mail kmarinkovic@student.unimelb.edu.au
In Chile: [REDACTED]

This study is supported by [REDACTED]

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Office for Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.

Appendix 11: Consent form for adult program facilitators in the Children's Araucaria study

Consent Form for Adult Participants

Melbourne School of Global and Population Health/Centre for Health Equity
Children's Araucaria: Action, Resilience, Unity, Collaboration and Ideas



Primary Researcher: Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs

PhD Student: Katitza Marinkovic

1. I understand that this study seeks to understand children's views about participating in a Disaster Risk Reduction program and learn about their experience of sharing their ideas with children from other countries, in this case, Chile/Australia.
2. I understand that this study is also interested in learning from the perspective of the adults involved in the programs, such as school staff and facilitators. Therefore, I will be invited to participate in an individual interview about my views and opinions on the Resilient Seaview or Safe Cuesta Grande programs.
3. I understand that if I'm in Chile, the PhD researcher working in Australia can carry out the interview via video-conference. However, if I don't feel comfortable, I can request the interview to be carried out in person by [REDACTED], who are the program facilitators from [REDACTED] working with the school
4. I understand that the interview will be audio recorded.
5. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I'm free to quit the study anytime, without explanation and this will not affect me at the school or the Resilient Seaview or Safe Cuesta Grande programs.
6. I understand that the data from this research will be stored at the University of Melbourne and will be destroyed 5 years after publication.
7. I understand that my information will be kept confidential, but if my answers are familiar to others, they may recognise my contribution.
8. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form, it will be kept by the researchers in a locked cabinet at the University of Melbourne.

I, _____,
agree to participate in this study.

Signature:

Date:

Thank you!

Appendix 12: Theme guide for focus groups with children in the Children's Araucaria study

Children's Araucaria: Action, Resilience, Unity, Collaboration and Ideas

Group Discussion and Individual Interview Theme Guide for Children

Group discussion and interviews will be minimally structured, in order to allow children to actively participate and lead the discussion.

Introduction:

First, the researcher will explain the study's initial results to the children, with support from the adult facilitator. In the case of Chile, [REDACTED] will present the study's findings, which will have been previously discussed with PhD Student Katitza Marinkovic.

Topics to be explored:

1. What do you think about these results?
2. Are these results similar to what you experienced while participating in the Resilient Seaview or Safe Cuesta Grande programs? What would you change?
3. Do you think programs like these are helpful? How and who could they help?
4. How do you think other children will feel about participating in programs like the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs?
5. How would you describe to other children the experience of connecting with children from another country (Chile/Australia)?
6. Do think it's useful for programs like the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs to offer children the opportunity to contact children from another country? Why?
7. What new ideas would you like to include in a program like the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs?
8. Who do you think should know about what the children in the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs have been working on? How would you tell them?
9. Do you have other ideas of how children from different countries can connect and

work together?

10. Is something else you like to say to the researchers or the children in Chile/Australia?
11. Do you remember what things you sent to the children in Chile?
12. How did you participate in making the letters and videos?
13. How did you feel when making the videos and letters?
14. If we were making the same activity again, how would you like to make the new materials for the children in Chile?

Appendix 13: Theme guide for individual interviews with lead adult program facilitators in the Children's Araucaria study

Children's Araucaria: Action, Resilience, Unity, Collaboration and Ideas

Individual Interview Guide for Adults

Interviews will be semi-structured. First, the researcher will introduce the study's aims.

Interviews will be carried out by PhD student Katitza Marinkovic. In the case an interviewee from Chile doesn't want to carry out a videoconference, [REDACTED] will be in charge of executing the interview in person.

Themes to be explored:

1. Please tell me about your experience with the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs.
2. Do you think it's beneficial to involve children as active agents in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)? Who would be the beneficiaries and how would they benefit? Did you see any examples of this while being involved with the program?
3. What do you think are the main challenges to involve children as agents of change in DRR?
4. What would be the role of adults and the organizations they work with regarding the incorporation of children as agents of change in DRR?
5. What characteristics, training or experience do you think adults need to work with children as agents of change in their communities?
6. Do you think projects like the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs are useful? In what ways and for whom?
7. Do you think that it's beneficial for contact children from different countries when participating in initiatives like the Resilient Seaview and Safe Cuesta Grande programs? Who would be the beneficiaries and how would they benefit? Did you see any examples of this while being involved with the program?
8. Are there any other comments or suggestions you would like to add?

Appendix 14: Example of pen pal letter in the Children's Araucaria study

Hello!

My name is [REDACTED].

I am from [REDACTED] a small coastal town in Australia.

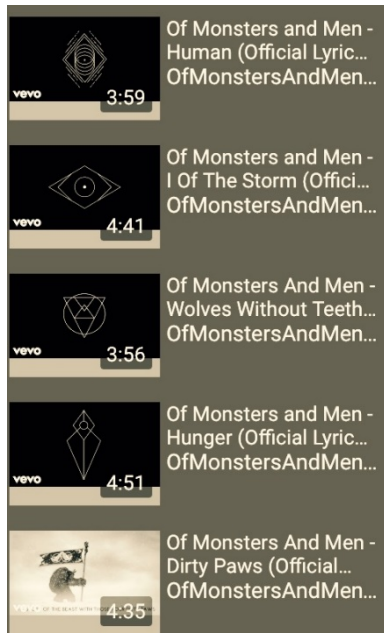
I would like to know more about you and what it is like to live in your country and share with you what my life is like. I have written this letter and would love you someone to reply – we would love students to write to us but also adults would be wonderful too 😊

I am 11 years old. We are in Grade 5 and 6 at [REDACTED] Primary School.



My favourite subject Science.

I enjoy cooking, reading, photography and I am good at technology.



My favourite band is Of Monsters and Men.



My school lunch today includes an apple.

Question - What can you feel, but cannot see, you can hear but doesn't have a mouth?

Answer – (at end of letter).

- What is your favourite food?
- What sports do you like to play?
- What is your favourite music?

- What other hobbies do you have?
- What TV shows and movies do you like?

Our town is surrounded by [REDACTED] National Park and the ocean.

Our National Park is home to many plants and animals.

In summer and warmer months the forest can be a bushfire hazard to our community.

- What is your town like?

On ThinkHazard.org we saw that some of the hazards in your country are wildfire and earthquakes.

Wildfire

- Do you have a fire brigade?
- Do you have an emergency number that you call to tell someone where a fire is?
- Are there Australian Eucalyptus trees near you?
- How did your big fire at the beginning of the year start?
- Did any people die? If so how many?
- Did you have other countries or Australians come to help you put out the fire?

Earthquakes:

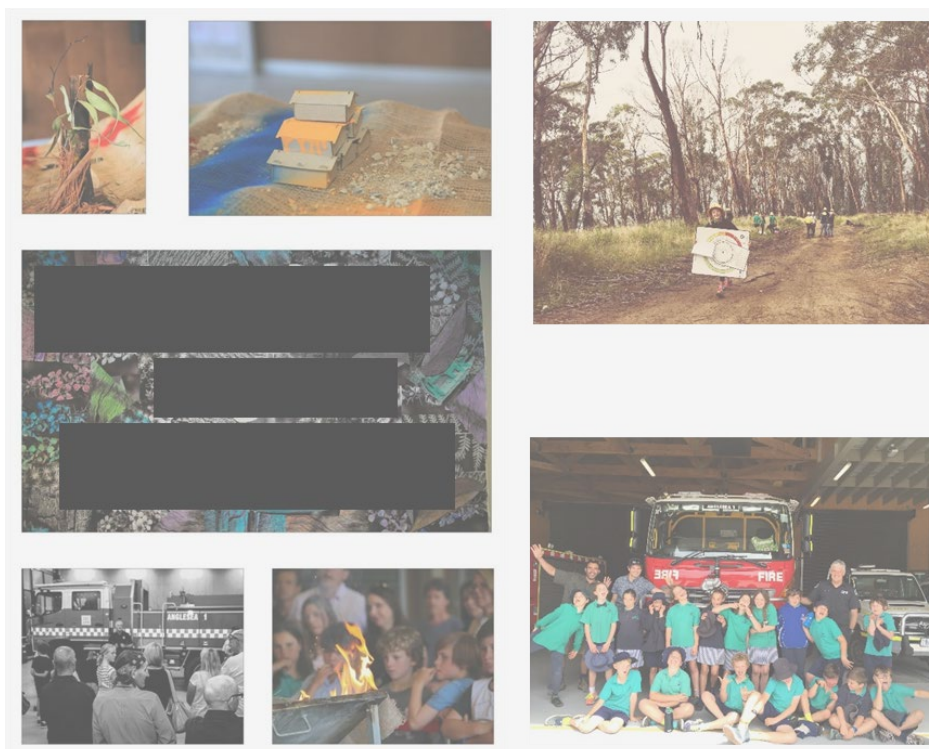
- Have you been saved from an earthquake?
- What do you do after an earthquake?
- Can you escape from an earthquake?
- Do you do drills?
- Do cracks appear in the ground, can you fall in them?

- Is it scary or cool?
- How big can earthquakes be?
- How do you handle it?

Random:

- How hot is it there?
- What sports and food do you have?
- What cars do you have?
- Are houses really bright coloured?
- What animals do you have?

With our local Country Fire Authority [REDACTED] Fire Brigade and our school, [REDACTED] Primary School; we are part of the [REDACTED] Program



The [REDACTED] program consists of 3 key parts:

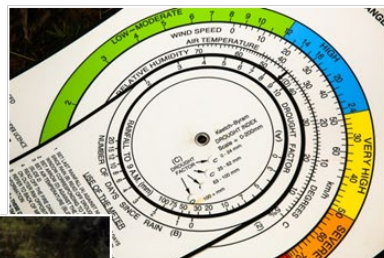
1. an introduction to the program,
2. bushfire behaviour and resilience sessions and

3. student led projects and workshops.

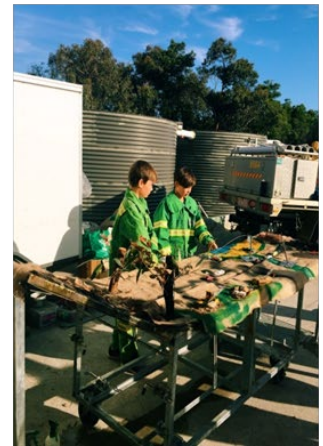


We have a tour of our local fire station with our fire brigade and our local [REDACTED] elder – Uncle Bryon runs a smoking ceremony, teaching us the traditional ways of fire and living on country.

Some of our Bushfire Behaviour and Resilience sessions are at our fire station and others are out in our local forest.



We also become the teachers of the program; creating and presenting our own bushfire resilience workshops.



“Live and breathe, survive and thrive-CFA”-

My favourite part of the [REDACTED] program is the Burn table and making inventions.

Thank you for reading my letter!

To reply please email us at [REDACTED] and or post to us at:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Victoria, Australia.

Answer – The wind!

Appendix 15: Kids Contribute Poll (including Child and Youth Resilience Measure, CYRM)

Hello!

This survey is all about ‘contributing’. That means doing something that helps others.

We want to know how the kids of Australia contribute at home, at school and in their communities.

We want to share that information with adults, to show them how valuable you really are to this country.

Thank you!

1. How old are you? (under 6, 6-18, over 18)

2. Do you identify as...

Male
Female

3.

a. Do you know the postcode of your home?

No
Yes

b. What is the postcode of your home?

OR

c. Can you tell us what suburb you live in?

{Free text response}

4. What state or territory are you from?

NSW	Qld
SA	NT
Vic	WA
Tas	ACT

5. Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

Yes
No
Not Sure

6. What is the main language you speak at home?

English	Greek	Maltese	Turkish
Arabic	Hindi	Mandarin	Vietnamese
Cantonese	Indigenous Languages	Polish	Other
Croatian	Italian	Spanish	
German	Macedonian	Tagalog	

7. Where were you born?

Australia	Ireland	Singapore	United Kingdom
Afghanistan	Japan	South Africa	USA
China	Malaysia	South Korea	Vietnam
India	New Zealand	Sri Lanka	Other
Indonesia	Pakistan	Sudan	
Iraq	Philippines	Thailand	

8. At home, how often do you contribute in the following ways?

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A lot
Cleaning and tidying up	1	2	3	4	5
Looking after brothers and sisters	1	2	3	4	5
Doing other jobs around the house (e.g. taking care of pets, cooking, helping at the garden, shopping)	1	2	3	4	5
Helping adults with technology	1	2	3	4	5
Caring for other family members	1	2	3	4	5
Helping other family members that don't speak English	1	2	3	4	5
Helping in my parent/guardian's business	1	2	3	4	5
Other:	{Free text response}				

9. At school, how often do you contribute in the following ways?

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A lot
Helping at school events	1	2	3	4	5
Being a leader	1	2	3	4	5
Helping to stop bullying	1	2	3	4	5
Helping others with their schoolwork or homework	1	2	3	4	5
Helping other people feel better when they are sad or angry	1	2	3	4	5
Other:	{Free text response}				

10. How often do you contribute in clubs (e.g. sports, art, hobbies, other) in the following ways?

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A lot
Coaching or teaching other children	1	2	3	4	5
Umpiring	1	2	3	4	5

Cleaning, tidying up or doing other jobs	1	2	3	4	5
Supporting at games or other events	1	2	3	4	5
Helping raise funds	1	2	3	4	5
Other:	{Free text response}				
I don't participate in any clubs	Tick box				

11. In your community (e.g. your neighbourhood), how often do you contribute in the following ways?

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A lot
Helping during community events and celebrations	1	2	3	4	5
Helping people I don't know (e.g. giving directions in the street, giving my seat on the train, tram or bus)	1	2	3	4	5
Making donations or volunteering	1	2	3	4	5
Helping take care of the environment (e.g. recycling, collecting rubbish, helping animals)	1	2	3	4	5
Helping others online (e.g. on social media)	1	2	3	4	5
Other:	{Free text response}				

12. How much do you like contributing in the following ways?

	I don't like it at all	I like it a little	I somewhat like it	I like it quite a bit	I like it a lot
Cleaning and tidying up					
Doing other jobs at home, school, clubs or elsewhere					
Teaching or coaching others					
Helping others feel better					

13. How do you feel when you are contributing? (Tick all that apply to you)

	Y	N			
Happy					
Proud					
Appreciated					
Feeling like I'm part of something					
Responsible					
Nervous					
Annoyed					
Tired					

Pressured into it					
Other:	{Free text response}				

14. Why do you usually contribute? Tick all that apply.

☐	Because it's fun or interesting
☐	Because I don't have a choice (e.g. you'll get grounded if you don't do it)
☐	Because I get paid or a reward (e.g. pocket money, permission to do other things, good grades)
☐	To gain respect and appreciation
☐	To be a role model and a leader
☐	To learn new things
☐	To help others feel better
☐	To make friends
☐	To make the world a better place

15. Do you get pocket money for contributing at home? If so, how much?

I don't get any

Under \$5 a week

\$5 – 10

\$10-15

\$15-20

\$20-25

More than \$25

16. What age were you when you started doing jobs at home? (Drop down menu)	
☐	3 years old or younger
☐	4 to 5 years old
☐	6 to 7 years old
☐	8 to 9 years old
☐	9 to 10 years old
☐	11 to 12 years old
☐	12 to 13 years old
☐	14 to 15 years old
☐	16 to 17 years old
☐	17 to 18 years old
☐	I don't know
☐	I don't do chores

17. Do you think girls and boys contribute by doing the same things?

☐	Girls and boys do the same things
☐	Girls and boys do different things
☐	Sometimes boys and girls do the same things and sometimes they do different things
☐	I don't know

That completes the main part of the survey.

Thanks for getting this far!

But before you finish, we have some quick general questions to ask you about how you feel about different parts of your life. All of these questions are optional.

How much do the statements below describe you? Circle one answer for each statement.

Item	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A lot
1. I have people I look up to					
2. Getting an education is important to me					
3. My parents(s)/caregiver(s) know a lot about me					
4. I try to finish what I start					
5. I am able to solve problems without harming myself or others (for example, by being violent)					
6. I know where to go in my community to get help					
7. I feel I belong at my school					
8. My family stands by me during difficult times					
9. My friends stand by me during difficult times					
10. I am treated fairly in my community					
11. I have opportunities to develop skills that will be useful later in life (like jobs skills and skills to care for others)					
12. I enjoy my community's traditions					

Thank you for completing BTN's Kids Contribute survey!

Appendix 16: Kids Contribute Plain Language Statement for Children and Young People



Information Sheet for Children Children as Contributors

Hi,

Our names are Lisa Gibbs, Katitza Marinkovic, Hanna Morrice and Lauren Carpenter. We are researchers at the University of Melbourne School of Population and Global Health and wanted to tell you about our project. If you're interested, please read this information carefully, and decide if you want to participate. You can ask us questions if there's something you don't understand or want to know more about.

What is this project about?

We want to learn how children contribute at home and elsewhere as part of their everyday lives. We also want to know how they feel about being asked to help out or offering to help.

We would like to invite you to be a researcher with us and think of questions that might be important for other children on this topic. We will give these questions to ABC's Behind the News television program to suggest they include it as a poll for their viewers. Then, we'll explore the answers from children across Australia and decide with you what we do with that information.

Do I have to participate?

No, it's up to you. If you join in, you can also stop at any time, and it won't affect you in any way, or at school/sporting.

If I decide to participate, what will I do?

We will meet as a group at a place and time that suits you about four times during the year, for about 30 to 60 minutes, to talk about your experiences and the questions for the Behind the News poll.

We will be recording our meetings, so we remember what was said, and Katitza will also take some pictures and notes. If you don't want us to take pictures of you, then let us know. You can just tell us or tick the box in the consent form we'll give you that says you don't want us to take your picture. You can still be part of the project.

By being part of this project, you can help us to find out what children across Australia are doing to help out at home, in their schools and in their sports clubs. You can also help us to show the results to other members of your school and community.

What are the possible benefits?

We think that doing research to help others can be a great way to discover new skills. Also, it can be fun! Your ideas will also help adults think of better ways to improve children's lives.

What are the possible risks?

There are no big risks. If there is something that makes you feel sad, angry or uncomfortable, you can choose if you want to talk about it or not. You can also decide what activities you want to do.

Will I hear about the results of this project?

Yes. We will look at the results together to decide how we can share them with others and whether things need to change. Our group of adult researchers will also show them at conferences and in journal articles.

Will the things that I say in the meeting be kept private?

Yes, only the researchers and the other people in the focus group will know what you say. We would only contact your parents or authorities if you seemed to be in danger. We will group the results in any reports but as there are only a small number of people taking part in this project, it is possible that someone might be able to guess who you are from what was said.

You can help us to decide how we share the information with others and whether you would like to be named as a co-researcher and co-author on reports and presentations. If you don't want to, we don't have to show your name. We will ask you what you prefer, and it is completely up to you, and you can change your mind right up until the results are presented. We will keep recordings and notes from the project for five years at The University of Melbourne after the last reports are published and then we will destroy them.

Where can I get further information?

You can contact us any time to discuss the project:

Katitza Marinkovic 90358286 or e-mail kmarinkovic@student.unimelb.edu.au

Lisa Gibbs 8344 0920 or e-mail lgibbs@unimelb.edu.au

The project is funded by the Myer Foundation.

We hope that you enjoy participating in this project!

If you are ever distressed about any problems and you are not sure who you can talk to, you can call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800. This is a free, private telephone service for young people aged 5 to 25.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Office for Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.

Appendix 17: Kids Contribute Consent Form for Children and Young People



Consent Form for Children Children as Contributors

Primary Researcher: Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs

Additional Researchers: Katitza Marinkovic, Hanna Morrice, Lauren Carpenter.

1. I understand that I will be asked about how children help at home and school and in sports clubs.
2. I understand that I will help think up possible questions for an ABC Behind the News show about *Children as contributors*.
3. I understand that I will give feedback on the research results to make sure they reflect the lives of children.
4. I understand that there may be opportunities for me to help report on the research results, if I am interested in doing that.
5. I understand that the focus groups and interviews will be audio recorded.
6. I understand that it is up to me if I want to be part of this and I can stop any time and won't affect me at school or my sporting club.
7. I understand that the information collected for this research, including this form, will be kept at the University of Melbourne and will be destroyed 5 years after all the reports have been published.
8. I understand that only the researchers in this project and other children in the focus groups will know my name and what I say, but that it may be possible that someone may guess who I am from what I said.

The researchers would like to **take pictures** during the research – is that okay with you? (You can still be part of the project either way.)

☐ **Yes**, I am happy for you to take photos of me during the research and to use them in reports, presentations and online material about the project.

☐ No, I would rather you didn't take any photos of me.

Please put your details and sign here if you agree to be part of this project:

- Name:
- Address:
- Phone number:
- Date of Birth:
- Signature:
- Date:

Thank you!

Appendix 18: Kids Contribute Plain Language Statement for Parents and Guardians



Information Sheet for Parents and Guardians Children as Contributors

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This sheet provides information about the Children as Contributors' study that I am undertaking with research colleagues at the University of Melbourne - Katitza Marinkovic, Hanna Morrice and Lauren Carpenter.

If you would like your child to participate, please read the following information. You can also contact us for any questions.

What is this project about?

We want to learn how children contribute at home, school and in sporting clubs and elsewhere as part of their everyday lives. We also want to know how they feel about helping out and if it makes a difference if they are required to help or if they offer to help.

We are conducting this study in partnership with the ABC children's television program – Behind the News.

Do the children have to participate?

Participation is voluntary and can also stop at any time during the study.

What will the children be asked to do during this project?

The research team would like to meet with groups of children 3-4 times across the year, at their home/school/sports club at a time that suits them, their families and the school/club. The focus group discussions will last for approximately 20 to 40 minutes. Some children may also be invited to do an additional interview if they have a different point of view that could not be captured in the focus group discussion. First, children will be asked their thoughts and ideas about children's roles at home, school and in the sports club, and the different ways they are able to help out. They will be asked to suggest potential questions for an online survey to be conducted by Behind the News for children across Australia. Once the results from the online survey are available, the children will be asked to discuss their views about them. They will also be invited to propose ideas that can help improve children's lives.

The focus groups and interviews will be audio-recorded, so we remember what was said. Pictures and notes may also be taken. If they are interested, the children will have an opportunity to contribute as a co-author to the reporting of the study findings in reports and presentations.

What are the possible benefits?

There is evidence that involving children as co-researchers in health research that is relevant to them can contribute to self-esteem, awareness of other views, hope for the future, and active citizenship. Also, their ideas will help adults think of better ways to improve children's lives. All participating schools and sports clubs will be acknowledged in the study reports and the results will be shared with families, school and sports club communities.

What are the possible risks?

There are no likely risks from participating. If, during the focus groups, a child experiences distress or feels uncomfortable due to the topic of discussion or an activity, they won't be pressured to participate, and can choose if they want to talk about it or not.

The Kids Helpline is a phone counselling service available to all children at any time- on 1800 55 1800.

Will I hear about the results of this project?

Yes. We will summarize the project's findings and present them to all the people who participated, their families, schools and sporting clubs. We'll also publish the results by presenting them at conferences and in journal articles. Finally, the children will have the opportunity of presenting their results to interested groups if they wish to do so.

Will the things that children say be kept private?

Yes, only the researchers and the other people in the focus group will know what is said during the focus group discussions and interviews. The information provided by children will be treated as confidential subject to legal requirements. Identifying information will be removed when reporting the study findings but the children will be acknowledged as co-authors of the research and given the opportunity to co-present the findings if they wish.

We will keep recordings and notes from the project for five years at The University of Melbourne after the last reports are published and then we will destroy them.

Where can I get further information?

You can contact us at any time to discuss the project:

Lisa Gibbs 8344 0920 or e-mail lgibbs@unimelb.edu.au

Katitza Marinkovic 90358286 or e-mail kmarinkovic@student.unimelb.edu.au

The project is funded by the Myer Foundation.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Office for Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.

Appendix 19: Kids Contribute Consent Form for Parents and Guardians



Consent Form for Parents and Guardians Children as Contributors

Primary Researcher: Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs

Additional Researchers: Katitza Marinkovic, Hanna Morrice, Lauren Carpenter.

I understand that this study seeks to explore children's views and experiences of helping at home, at school and in sporting clubs.

1. I understand that my child will participate in 3-4 discussions throughout the year to contribute ideas for the research and help with interpreting the results
2. I understand that my child will have the option to decide if he or she wants to participate in presenting the study results in different ways including at school, in the community and potentially on the ABC children's television program called Behind the News
3. I understand that my child will have the opportunity to be named as a co-author on the reports from this research study
4. I understand that the focus groups and interviews will be audio recorded.
5. I understand that some photos will be taken and used in presentations and reports to explain the research process.
6. I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and that he or she is free to quit the project anytime, without explanation and this will not affect him or her in any way, or at school or the sporting club.
7. I understand that the data from this research will be stored at the University of Melbourne and will be destroyed after 5 years.
8. I understand that the information from the discussions will be grouped and not linked to any individuals but if your child's story is familiar to others, they may recognise his/her contribution.
9. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form, it will be kept by the researchers in a locked cabinet at the University of Melbourne.

The researchers would like to **take pictures** of the children during the research – is that okay? (He/she can still be part of the project either way.)

☐ **Yes**, I am happy for you to take photos of my child during the research and to use them in reports, presentations and online material about the project.

☐ **No**, I would rather you didn't take any photos of my child.

Please put your details and sign here if you agree to your child being part of this project:

- Parent/guardian name:
- Parent/guardian address:
- Parent/guardian phone number:
- Child's Name:
- Parent/guardian signature:
- Date:

Thank you!

Appendix 20: National Child and Youth Forum Invitation and Consent Form for Children and Young People

3 July 2018

INVITATION TO THE NATIONAL CHILD AND YOUTH FORUM

Hi [name of child co-researcher],

Our names are Lisa Gibbs, Katitza Marinkovic, Hannah Morrice and Lauren Carpenter. We are researchers at the University of Melbourne School of Population and Global Health and have been working with you and other child co-researchers on the Kids Contribute project.

First, we want to thank you for hard work creating the poll for Behind the News. We got nearly **11,000 responses from children and young people across Australia!**

You have previously given us your permission to meet online to talk about how you contribute, develop questions for the poll and discuss its results. Now, we have a special event that we want to tell you about.

What's the event about?

We're organizing the first National Child and Youth Forum, where children will have the opportunity to tell the results of their work in the Kids Contribute project to an audience of adults, children and young people. There will be a Panel of adults from different areas affecting children's lives, such as government, media, education, sports clubs and organizations for parents. Their job is to listen to your recommendations and respond with ideas that can improve children's lives.

There will be some people from the media taking some pictures and videos, and we also want to record and live stream this event.

When and where will the Forum take place?

The National Child and Youth Forum will take place on Friday, 7 September 2018, at the University of Melbourne, in the Forum Theatre (153), Arts West, from 3.00pm – 4.30pm, with refreshments until 5.30pm. There will be a short rehearsal at 2pm so everyone feels comfortable about what to do. **We will need you to arrive at the university at 1.30pm** so we can take you to the venue on campus, have a pre-event rehearsal and give you something to eat and drink before we start.

We understand that the Forum may take place at the same time you're supposed to be at school. With your permission, we'll ask your parents and school to let you leave early so you can attend this event.

What will I do?

This is the result of your work, so you get to choose what role you want to have in the Forum. We can suggest some ideas, but you can also invent how you want to participate. Katitza will meet with you at least once before the Forum, so you can talk about what you want to do and practice.

We also want to catch up with you soon after the Forum to ask you about your experience, so we can find out what worked and what could be improved for future events. Katitza will meet with you on a day, time and location that suits you best. If you prefer not to do this, it won't affect your participation at the Forum.

Do I have to participate?

It's completely up to you if you want to participate in the Forum, and if you decide not to, it won't affect you in any way or at your school. You can also come as part of the audience or watch it on live stream if you want.

Can I invite other people to the Forum?

Yes. You will have 3 invitations to give to the people you'd like to be there, like your parents, friends, or other members of your family. Seating will be very limited so please ask your guests to register by **27th August** through the following link, so they don't miss out:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/national-child-and-youth-forum-tickets-47758263251>

Password: ChildrensLives123

What about food and transportation?

There will be some food and drinks at the Forum. We can also help you with transport to and from the University. If someone is driving you, we can provide parking.

What if I can't attend the Forum but still want to participate?

You can contribute to the Forum even if you are unable to attend by telling Katitza your ideas for that day. You can also make a video of yourself presenting your recommendations and we'll show it during the Forum.

What happens next?

First, we want to ask for your consent, by signing this form and ticking on the boxes depending on how you want to be involved (please, don't forget to respond "yes" or "no" for all the questions). Once we have your permission, we will contact your parents to ask for their permission and notify your school as well.

In case you have any questions or need to let us know of any requirements, you can contact Katitza for more information on marinkovick@unimelb.edu.au or +61 0415 732 739.

Please answer by ticking on the boxes below:

	YES	NO
I'm interested in participating in the National Child and Youth Forum and give my permission for the researchers to contact me, my parents and my school.	☐	☐
I am interested in being interviewed by Behind the News and other media if needed.	☐	☐
I can't attend the Forum , but still want to meet with Katitza to contribute with my ideas.	☐	☐
I'm happy to meet with Katitza after the Forum, at a day and time that suits me, to talk about my experience with the Forum and the Kids Contribute project.	☐	☐

- **Full name:**
- **Date:**
- **Signature:**

Please send this consent form back to Katitza either in person, or via scan or taking a photo of this consent form on your mobile device and emailing to: marinkovick@unimelb.edu.au

Appendix 21: National Child and Youth Forum Information Sheet and Consent Form for Parents and Guardians

3 July 2018

Dear [name of parent],

Our names are Lisa Gibbs, Katitza Marinkovic, Hannah Morrice and Lauren Carpenter. We are researchers at the University of Melbourne School of Population and Global Health and have been working with [name of child co-researcher] and other child and teenage co-researchers on the Kids Contribute project (originally called Children/Youth as Contributors).

You previously gave permission for us to meet by phone with [name of child co-researcher] to talk about how children and young people contribute in their everyday lives and to help us develop questions for the Kids Contribute survey. We're very happy to tell you that the Kids Contribute Survey, run by ABC's Behind the News TV show, got nearly **11,000 responses** from children and young people across Australia!

We would like to ask your permission for Angus to participate in an event that we are developing to disseminate the survey's findings.

What's the event about?

We're organizing the first National Child and Youth Forum, where children and teenagers will have the opportunity to show the results of their work in the Kids Contribute project, and a related Kids Rights project, to an audience of adults, children and young people. There will be a panel of adults from different areas affecting children's lives, such as government, media, education, sports clubs and organizations for parents. Their job is to listen to the Kids Contribute findings and recommendations and respond with plans for how they will use the information. The event will be chaired by the National Children's Commissioner who plans to use the Kids Contribute findings in her report to the United Nations on Australia's performance under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We are planning to record the event and share it on social media.

When and where will the Forum take place?

The National Child and Youth Forum will take place on Friday, 7 September 2018, at the University of Melbourne, in the Forum Theatre (153), Arts West, from 3.00pm – 5.00pm. **Children and teenagers participating in the event will need to arrive at the University at 1.30pm.** This will allow time to be guided to the venue on campus, to have a pre-event rehearsal and have something to eat and drink before it begins.

The Forum will take place partly during school hours. With your consent, we will contact the school to formally notify them your child will need to leave school early to attend this event.

What will my child do?

The children and teenagers participating in the Forum can choose what role they will have. They may decide to be on stage to present the Kids Contribute findings or have other jobs like welcoming the audience as they arrive. Katitza will meet with all of them 1-3 times before the Forum to prepare and practice. There will be a final rehearsal at 2pm at the venue on the day of the Forum.

Katitza would also like to catch up with the children and teenagers involved sometime in the month after the Forum to ask about their experience to find out what could be improved for future events.

If you or [name of child co-researcher] prefer not to do this, it won't affect his participation at the Forum.

Does my child have to participate?

No. Participation in the Forum is voluntary, and it won't affect [name of child co-researcher] in any way. If [name of child co-researcher] doesn't want to participate, he can still come as part of the audience or watch it on live stream.

Can I also attend the Forum?

Yes. Your child will have 3 invitations to give to parents, friends, or other family members. Seating will be very limited so if you would like to attend please register as soon as possible through the following link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/national-child-and-youth-forum-tickets-47758263251>

Password: ChildrensLives123

What about food and transport?

There will be some food and drinks at the Forum. We can help organise transport to and from the event for [name of child co-researcher] if needed. If you're driving, we can provide parking at the University.

What if my child can't attend the Forum but still wants to participate?

[name of child co-researcher] can contribute to the Forum even if he is unable to attend, by telling Katitza his ideas for that day. He can also make a video to present his recommendations and we'll show it during the Forum.

What happens next?

First, we want to ask for your consent by signing this form - please, don't forget to respond "yes" or "no" for all the questions. Once we have your consent, we will contact [name of child co-researcher]'s school to notify them about the forum.

In case you have any questions, you can contact Katitza for more information on marinkovick@unimelb.edu.au or +61 0415 732 739.

Please answer by ticking on the boxes below:

	YES	NO
I give my permission for my child to participate in the National Child and Youth Forum and for the researchers to contact him, me and the school. I understand this will include pictures and videos being taken of my child during the Forum.	☐	☐
I give my permission for my child to be interviewed by Behind the News or other media if needed.	☐	☐
My child can't attend the Forum , but still wants to meet with Katitza to contribute to the event.	☐	☐

- Full name:
- Name of child:
- Contact number:
- E-mail:
- Child's school:
- Date:
- Signature

Please send this consent form back to Katitza either in person, or via scan or taking a photo of this consent form on your mobile device and emailing to: marinkovick@unimelb.edu.au

Appendix 22: Theme Guide for Initial Focus Groups with Child co-researchers

Children as Contributors

Focus Group and Interview Theme Guide for Children

All focus groups will be minimally structured, in order to allow children to actively participate and lead the discussion.

Introduction:

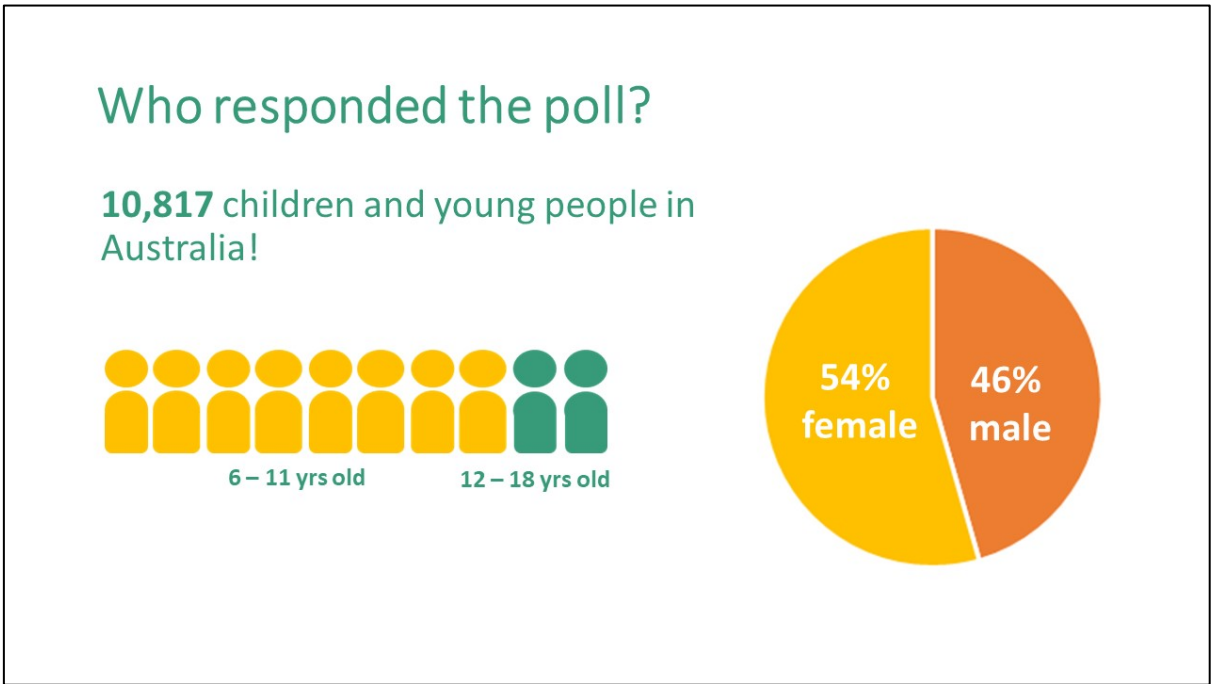
Review of the Plain Language Statement, with emphasis on children's expectations of this project's results and products.

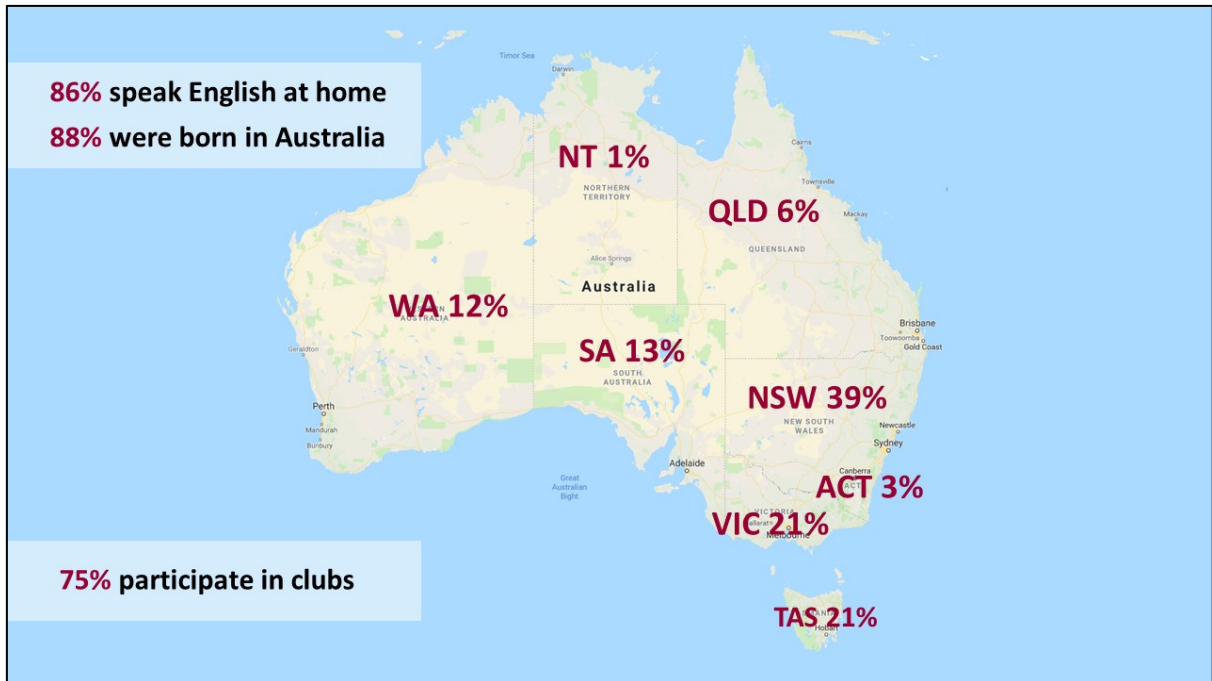
Topics to be explored in initial focus group discussions and interviews:

There will be an initial broad discussion about children's roles at home/school/sports clubs. The following prompts will be used, if necessary, to explore children's views about opportunities to contribute:

- a) What are the different ways that children help out?
- b) Are children always asked to do those things or do they offer sometimes?
- c) Do children have any choice in what ways they help?
- d) Do children get any payment for helping out?
- e) Do children have any other responsibilities?
- f) Do expectations change as children get older? In what ways?
- g) Do you think children and young people should be asked to help out? Why?
- h) Why do you think young people are asked to help out?
- i) What is good/bad about helping out or contributing?
- j) We would like to find out how children and young people across Australia are helping out and how they feel about that – what questions do you think we should ask them?

Appendix 23: Presentation for child co-researchers with the Kids Contribute Poll preliminary findings





99% of respondents contribute
in one way or another

Children and young people contribute **MORE** by:



- Helping with technology (53%)
- Caring for other family members (59%)



- Supporting at games or other events (65%)



- Helping stop bullying (59%)
- Helping others feel better when they're sad/angry (72%)



- Helping take care of the environment (60%)

*Based on the number of children who reported contributing "a lot" or "often".

In what ways children help with the environment?



Children and young people contribute **LESS** by:



- Helping family members that don't speak English (17%)



- Coaching or teaching other children



- Helping at school events (49%)



- Helping people I don't know

*Based on the number of children who reported contributing "a lot" or "often".

Why do you contribute?

MOST FREQUENT ANSWERS



- To help others feel better
- To make the world a better place
- To be a role model/leader



- It's fun/interesting
- To learn

LEAST FREQUENT ANSWERS



- To get paid or a reward



- Because there's no choice

77% enjoy contributing to help others feel better



63% feel happy

59% feel proud



6% feel pressured

5% feel annoyed

It also seems that almost half of children don't feel appreciated while they are contributing....





DOING CHORES...



60% of children started doing chores
between **5 - 8 years** old

Females start an **earlier age** than males



Half of children get pocket money for doing chores

Who gets paid more for doing chores?



Males



Older children



AGE DIFFERENCES...

Younger children (6 – 11 yrs) contribute more by:



- Doing other jobs around the house
- Caring for other family members
- Helping family members that don't speak English
- Helping in their parent/guardian's business



- Helping to stop bullying*
- Helping others feel better when they're sad/angry*



- Helping at community events/celebrations*
- Taking care of the environment*

*We still don't know if these differences are significant.

Older children (12 – 18 yrs) contribute more by:



Helping adults with technology (59%
vs 53%)



Being a leader



Helping others online*

*We still don't know if these differences are significant.



6 – 11 YRS OLD

Why contribute?

- To make the world a better place
- To make friends

They feel **proud** when they contribute

They enjoy cleaning and doing other jobs at home, school, clubs or elsewhere*



12 – 18 YRS OLD

Why contribute?

- To be a role model/leader
- To get paid or rewards
- Because they don't have a choice

They can feel more **annoyed** or **tired** when they contribute



GENDER DIFFERENCES...

Females contribute more by:



- Cleaning and tidying up
- Looking after brothers and sisters
- Doing other jobs around the house
- Caring for other family members
- Helping family members that don't speak English
- Helping in my parent/guardian's business



- Helping at school events*
- Being a leader*
- Helping to stop bullying*
- Helping others with schoolwork/homework*
- Helping others feel better when they're sad/angry*



- Helping at community events/celebrations*
- Helping strangers*
- Donating or volunteering*
- Taking care of the environment*

Males contribute more by:



Helping adults with technology



Helping others online*

*However, we still don't know if these differences are significant



Females enjoy more:

- Cleaning and tidying up*
- Doing other jobs at home, school, clubs, elsewhere*
- Teaching or coaching others*
- Helping others feel better*

Females also reported feeling more **happy, proud, like they are a part of something, responsible and appreciated.**



Males reported feeling more **nervous, tired, pressured or annoyed***

*However, we still don't know if these differences are significant

Why do you contribute?

More **females** reported:



More **males** reported:



CONTRIBUTING AND RESILIENCE



Contributing can help you be more resilient!

Thank you!

Appendix 24: Theme guide for interpreting poll findings with child co-researchers

Children as Contributors

Focus Group and Interview Theme Guide for Children

All focus groups will be minimally structured, in order to allow children to actively participate and lead the discussion.

Introduction:

Review of the Plain Language Statement, with emphasis on children's expectations of this project's results and products.

Discussing the focus group discussions results and the Behind the News poll results:

- a) How do you feel and think about these results? Do you agree?
- b) Did you expect other children to answer in the way they did?
- c) Why do you think that children gave these answers?
- d) What do you think is the most important thing about these results?
- e) What do you think should change to help young people, based on what we see in these results?
- f) What would you tell adults about these results and what should be done about them?
- g) Do you have ideas about what you would like to do to make things better for you and other children and young people?

Appendix 25: Child co-researchers' PowerPoint presentations at the National Child and Youth Forum



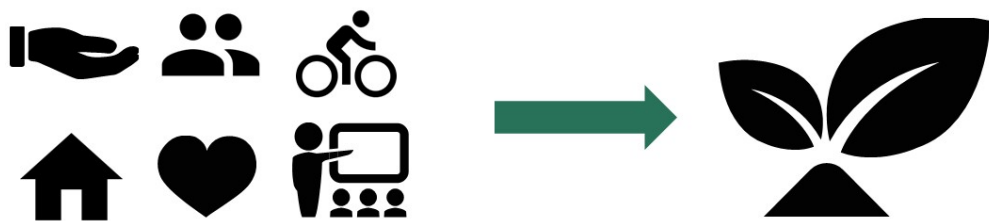
Children and Teenagers

Clip from our Sydney co-researchers: Most important rights





CONTRIBUTING AND RESILIENCE



**Contributing can help you
be more resilient!**





Half of children get pocket money
for doing chores

We should also help
without having to be
asked.

Helping others can make
you feel happy and
grateful.



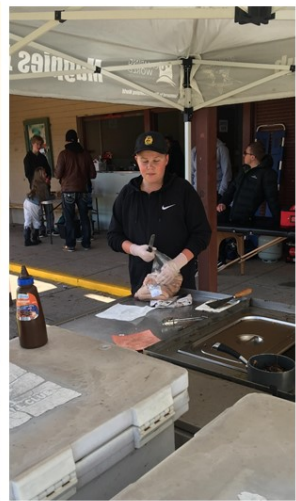
Parents

Charlie and
Kaitlin

**10,817 children and young people
responded to our Kids Contribute poll!**



99% reported contributing in one way or another





**60% of children start
doing chores at 5 - 8 years old**

**But girls start earlier
and get paid less**



Our poll showed that girls and young women reported they contribute more often than boys at home, school and the community



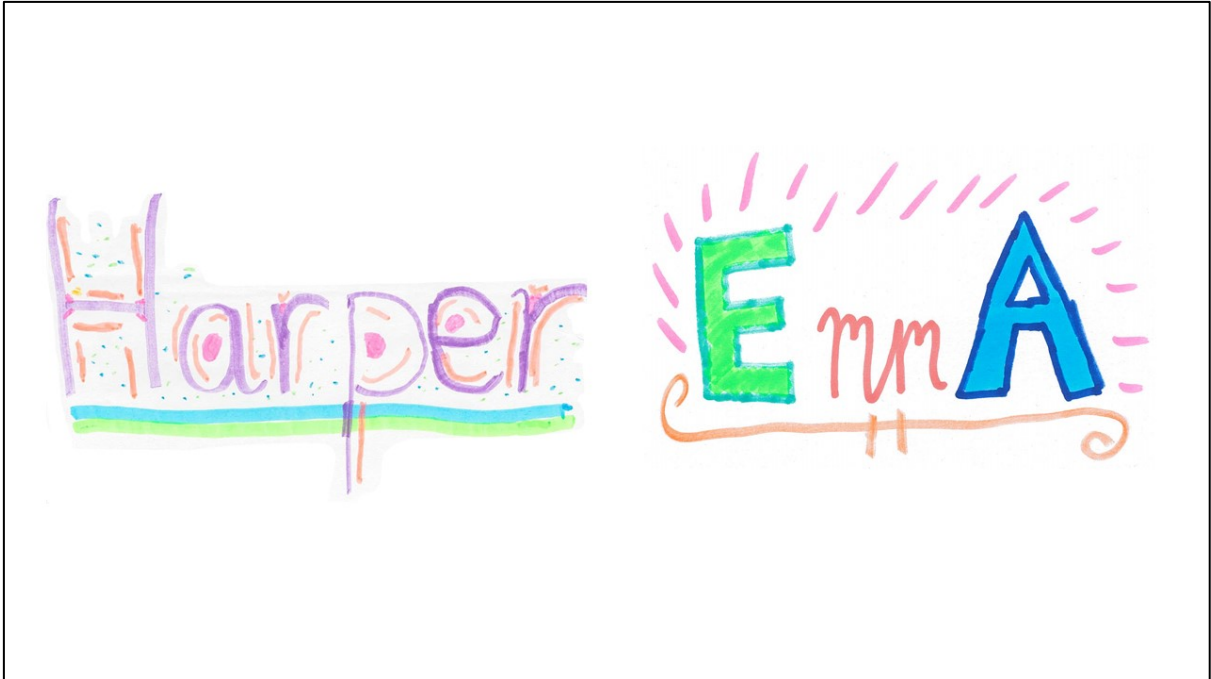
Girls and boys should get paid the same for the same jobs.

Pocket money should depend on what the job is.

Everyone deserves appreciation.

Schools

Clip from our Sydney co-researchers:
Role of teachers and parents in helping
ensure kids' rights are met



59% of children and young people help to stop bullying at schools



**BULLYING
Safe school
ZONE**



Can you make this happen?

Sports clubs and professional sport



FINN AcHoL Rory

The image shows three hand-drawn names. 'FINN' is in a blocky, outlined font with a small orange flower on the 'i'. 'AcHoL' is in a colorful, bubbly font with a red outline and green dots. 'Rory' is in a blue, cursive font.

Helping younger kids:



Homework club



Coaching

How can we do it better?



Treating kids as equals



Being a role model



Giving time

Community support provides opportunities for everyone



Lifts



Club employing kids



Leadership

Handling Money

Social Skills

Resilience

Inclusiveness



Access to all abilities



All ages included



Multicultural

How can this approach be promoted more widely?



**Our poll showed that girls make less money
than boys from a very early age.**

**This continues later in life and you can observe
this in sports.**

**Some say it's because
men's work is harder or
they do it better, but it's
not true.**



**What can you do, so boys and girls
have equal opportunities to
contribute through sports?**



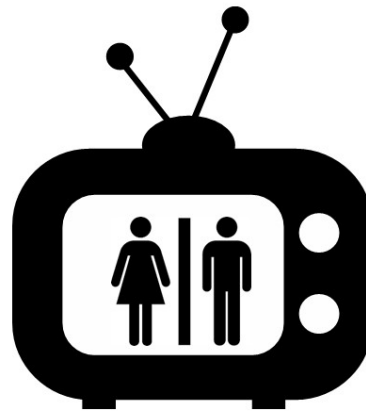
Sports and the Media

AYUEN AKOT

Margaret

Daniella

Awien



GENDER EQUALITY IN THE MEDIA

Why does the media not give women the same recognition regards to sports as men?



How can the media help young women aim high and follow their dream career?

Australian Society

Clip from our Sydney co-researchers:
The value of participation



A map of Australia with state and territory names labeled: Western Australia, Northern Territory, South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania. Major cities like Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane are also marked.

**Our poll found that children from
very different backgrounds
contribute in Australia**

A photograph of a diverse family group. It includes a man in a white shirt, an older man in a white cap, a woman in a black hijab, and a young child in a pink outfit, all smiling.

**Speak only when your words are
more beautiful than the silence.**

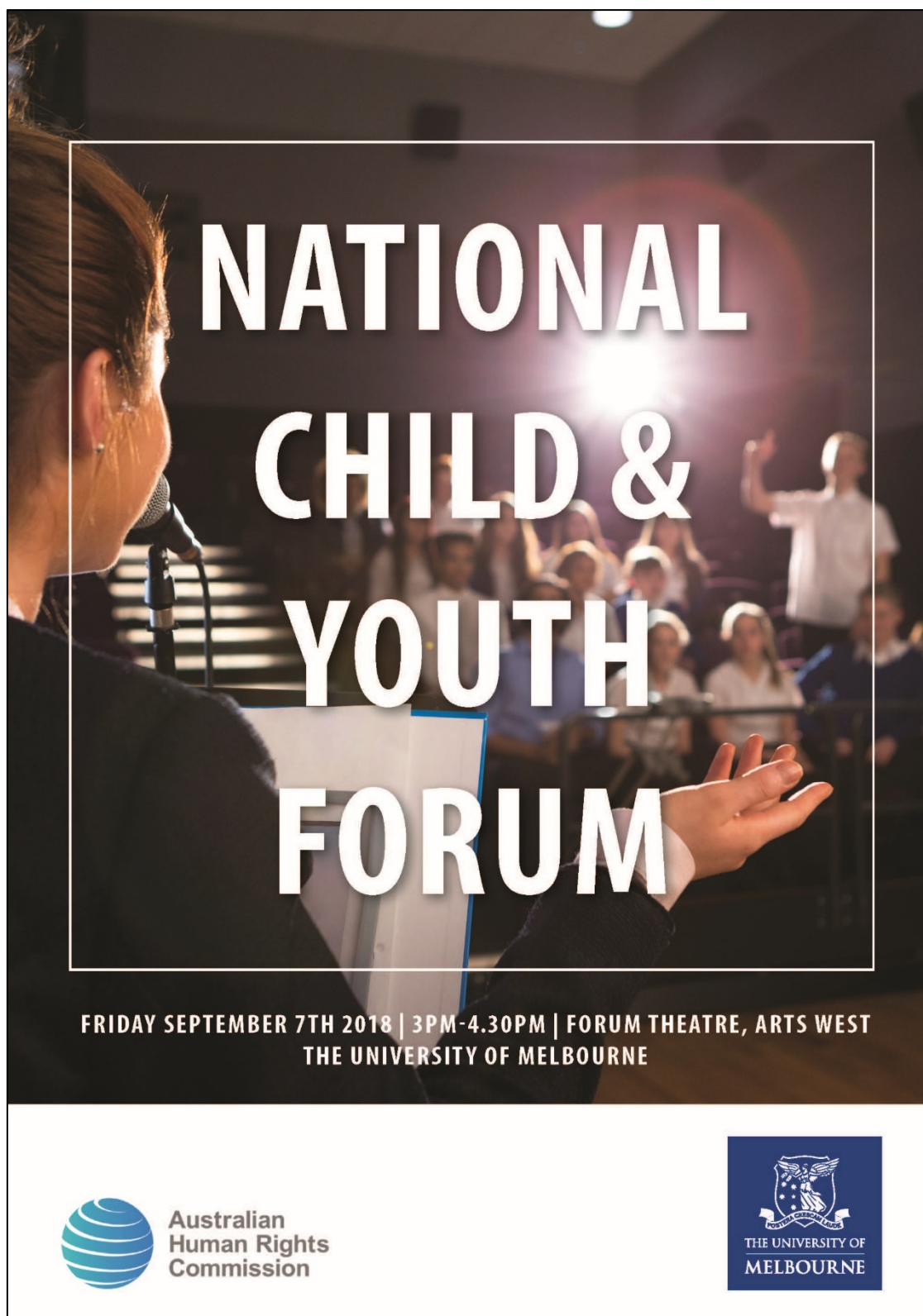
What can you do to help protect Muslim girls and women's right to help others through their traditions and religion?

Clip from our Sydney co-researchers:
Why kids need to be heard

Angus



Appendix 26: National Child and Youth Forum Report

A poster for the National Child & Youth Forum. The background is a photograph of a young person speaking into a microphone at a podium, with a blurred audience of children and young people in the background. The title 'NATIONAL CHILD & YOUTH FORUM' is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Below the title, the event details are listed in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, there are two logos: the Australian Human Rights Commission logo on the left and the University of Melbourne logo on the right.

NATIONAL CHILD & YOUTH FORUM

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 7TH 2018 | 3PM-4.30PM | FORUM THEATRE, ARTS WEST
THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

 Australian
Human Rights
Commission

 THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

The National Child and Youth Forum was co-hosted by the University of Melbourne's Children's Lives Research Initiative and the National Children's Commissioner Megan Mitchell.

It was only possible because of generous funding support received from the Myer Foundation.

Thanks to the following organisations who have provided support to the research process and the Forum preparations (in alphabetical order):

ABC Behind the News
Anglicare Western Australia
Collingwood All Stars Basketball Association
Columba Catholic College Charters Towers
Fawkner Primary School
Human Rights Commission
Jesuit Social Services
Leongatha Netball and Football Club
Melbourne Boomers
UNICEF Australia

University of Melbourne team: Lisa Gibbs, Hannah Morrice, Katitza Marinkovic, Lauren Carpenter, Alana Pirrone.



ABOUT

The University of Melbourne and the National Children's Commissioner worked with teams of child and teenage co-researchers across Australia to co-develop surveys based on kids' rights and opportunities to contribute in their daily lives. The Kids Contribute and the Kids' Rights stories and related surveys were aired by partner ABC Behind the News. Over 33,000 children and teenagers participated in the surveys overall, providing significant insights into the views and experiences of Australian children and teenagers.

The National Child and Youth Forum is an opportunity for the young researchers to present their key research messages and recommendations for action to a panel of influential Australians in relevant sectors.

PRESENTERS

These young presenters represent a team of over 80 child and teenage co-researchers from across Australia. (In order of appearance):

- **Daniella Nagnda**
- **Logan Valentine**
- **Syd Greenacre**
- **Ayuen Akot**
- **Charlie Gough**
- **Kaitlin Gough**
- **Adol Achol**
- **Awien Kuel**
- **Emma Bekhit**
- **Harper Geary**
- **Rory Stevens**
- **Finn Corr**
- **Achol Achol**
- **Matisse Chalkey**
- **Arek Akot**
- **Margaret Akol**
- **Lulu Kheder**
- **Angus Ford**
- **and pre-prepared clips from a team of Sydney co-researchers**

PANELLISTS

Megan Mitchell (Panel Chair)
National Children's Commissioner,
Australian Human Rights Commission

Eva Massey
UNICEF Young Ambassador

Josh Brittain
UNICEF Young Ambassador

Derek McCormack
A/Executive Director,
Raising Children Network

Sarah Larsen
Journalist, Behind the News, ABC

Dennis Yarrington
President, Australian Primary
Principals Association

Nadine Liddy
National Coordinator, Multicultural
Youth Advocacy Network

Madeleine Garrick
Basketball Player, Melbourne Boomers
& Australian Opals

AGENDA

Master of Ceremonies: Professor Lisa Gibbs, Chair of the Children's Lives Research Initiative and Director of the Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program, University of Melbourne

15.00	Welcome address	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor James McCluskey AO
	Acknowledgement of Country	Brent Watkins
15.10	Research background to the Forum	Professor Lisa Gibbs
	Role of Human Rights Commission and Panel introduction	Ms Megan Mitchell, National Children's Commissioner
15.15	Presentations from young researchers and targeted responses from panel members	
16.00	Discussion of issues raised, including opportunity for audience contribution	
16.25	Final response and commitment	Ms Megan Mitchell, National Children's Commissioner
16.30	Close	Professor Lisa Gibbs

RESEARCH FINDINGS



10,817 children

The Kids Contribute results showed that:



99% of children and teenagers were contributing at **home** and at **school**, and many were contributing in their **community** as well.

The results showed that children valued opportunities to contribute in the places they **live, learn** and **play**.

Approximately half reported that they receive pocket money but they were more likely to be motivated to contribute by the **rewards** of feeling proud and helping others.



Children and teenagers who reported higher levels of contributing also showed **higher levels of resilience**.



The results revealed clear **gender differences**.

Girls were more likely to report **contributing more often**, received **less monetary rewards**, and showed **higher levels of resilience**.

National Child & Youth Forum | September 7th 2018 | The University of Melbourne | 6



22,700 children

The Kids' Rights results showed that:



most children felt that their rights were being met in their lives most of the time (ranging from 79% to 96% for each right)



The most common place that children reported learning about their rights was at **school**, followed by **home**. A greater proportion of older children and children who did not speak English at home reported learning about their rights **online**.



TO FEEL SAFE



TO BE CARED FOR AND HAVE A HOME



TO BE ABLE TO BREATHE CLEAN AIR AND DRINK CLEAN WATER.

These top three were consistent across all subgroups, with the exception of older children who ranked 'getting an education' third.



A greater proportion of **girls** (compared to boys) felt that they could **participate in decisions** that affect them at home and school,



whilst a greater proportion of **boys** felt they had **more control online** compared to girls.

National Child & Youth Forum | September 7th 2018 | The University of Melbourne | 7

For further information contact **Hannah Morrice**, Research Fellow, Jack Brockhoff
Child Health and Wellbeing Program, University of Melbourne.
hannah.morrice@unimelb.edu.au

Appendix 27: Theme guide for final focus groups with child co-researchers

Kids Contribute: Theme Guide for Final Focus Group Child co-researchers

All focus groups will be minimally structured, in order to allow children to actively participate and lead the discussion.

Introduction:

Review of the Plain Language Statement, with emphasis on children's expectations of this project's results and products.

Topics to be explored in initial focus group discussions and interviews:

Impressions about the research process:

- How would you describe your experience in the Kids Contribute Study? Would you recommend this experience to other children and young people?
- How did you feel as a child co-researcher thinking about questions for the poll and interpreting the results?
- Did you feel supported by the adult facilitators? How?
- Would you prefer to receive more or less help from adults? When?
- How did you feel working as a child co-researchers in a team/individually?
- What were your favourite and least favourite parts of working in the study?
- Would you like to participate in a study as a child co-researchers again?
- If you participated in another study as a child co-researcher, what topics would you like to research?
- Would you prefer to choose how we'll do the research, like interviews, polls, experiments?

Impressions about the forum:

- What were your favourite and least favourite parts of being part of the forum?
- What do you think about the answers that you got from the panel?
-

Recommendations:

- If we were doing a project like this again, how could we improve it?
- What would you recommend to adults who work with child co-researchers?
- Was there anything that caught your attention from what the people in the panel said?

Impressions about scaling-up PR:

- What do you think about working with child co-researchers from other countries?
- Would you like to communicate with child co-researchers working in other places? How would you like to communicate?
- Do you think that working with child co-researchers from other places could benefit the results of the research?

Wrap-up:

- Do you think that your reference letter reflects how you contributed during the study and the forum?
- Is there something you would like to add about your experience?

Appendix 28: Examples of vignettes crafted based on transcript material from the Kids Contribute Study

Vignette 1: To be very honest. What type of questions are we trying to ask?

- What kind of questions would you like to ask in the poll about how the children and young people contribute? – I asked.
- I kind of don't get it. To be very honest. What type of questions are we trying to ask? – said Anita.
- For example, seeing this, it could be 'What life skills do people think that they get from helping around?' – I said, looking at our notes from the previous session. – Or, maybe you want to think about something completely different. Let's think about what you would like to know, rather than what you should ask. What kind of things would make you curious?
- Like, 'Why do you help?' – said Anita.
- What would be the alternatives that kids can choose from? – I asked.
- It makes you feel good. – said Aliyah.
- You might be getting paid. You enjoy it. Um, like, the experience. That's a new question. – said Anita.
- So, we can say that the experience of things is divided into different things. – I said. – One, are feelings. The other is motives. We could do one that is more focussed on feelings.
- How do you feel when contributing? – said Anita. – Happy, useful, valued.
- Could there be a difference between feeling useful and valued? – I asked.
- Valued would probably feel like others around you think that you are needed, kind of useful. You think that you're contributing, you're making a difference. – said Anita.
- Sometimes there's negative feelings as well? – I asked.
- When you're being forced. – said Grace.
- How do you think that makes them feel? – I asked.

- Probably used. – said Grace.
- Wow. That’s a good... oh boy. I hadn’t thought about that one. There’s a difference between feeling used and useful, right? It’s very interesting. – I said.
- I think those are the most important questions. – said Aamira.
- Yeah. Those are very, very good questions. Is there anything else you’d like to add, or do you think we are okay? – I asked.
- I think we’ve covered everything. – responded Aamira.

Vignette 2: ‘Woo-hoo, hey, ladies, come here, look at my six-pack’

- Hello. How are you today? I am Piper. – said Piper, talking to the recorder.
- I am also another Piper. – said Chloe.
- Can this person hear us eating pizza? – said Chloe, referring to the audio recorder. –
Yum, yum, yum, yum, yum, yum.
- So, today I'm going to tell you a little bit about the poll results. We have some differences between boys and girls. What do you think might be the differences that we found? – I asked.
- Probably girls have to do more chores. Men don’t really need to cook, you know, it’s like in movies, ‘My wife will have to cook the dinner, wash my laundry and I have to do the work.’ – said Chloe. – Girl actors are normally, like, ‘Oh’ and trying to fall for the boys, and then the boys are, like, these big strong men going, ‘I'm awesome’.
James Bond is a good movie but, why do ladies need to be in love, they can’t be saving the world and James Bond has to go, like, you know, ‘Woo-hoo, hey, ladies, come here, look at my six-pack’? It’s a bit strange.

Vignette 3: 'That would be me'

- How do you think that you help others by participating in this BtN poll? – I asked.
- They could think about what you're saying, and if it's a question, they might answer it and that might help them. – said Adam.
- What did the video make you think? – I asked.
- Just made me feel the same. Just still do what I do, which isn't X box all the time. I do spend a little bit in the X box. – said Adam. – I help wash on my mom's car, feed all my pets, help with some computer stuff. That's what I can think. I don't like doing that much stuff around the house. Dad sometimes bugs me a lot. There's getting something back, like a reward. It feels good when you're told up.
- The least favourite ways to help were to get paid or because they're forcing you. We also found that the least frequent feelings when helping were pressured and annoyed. – I said.
- That's me sometimes. I get forced to clean my room. Last time I cleaned was almost a few days after new year. – said Adam. It was 24 May.
- Sometimes you feel tired? – I asked.
- That's me. I don't get much sleep. I usually stay up a bit... quite late. Tonight, I'll be probably going to sleep 10:30 because The Front Bar's on. And, other nights... The Family Guy, the Simpsons. – said Adam.
- The poll also found that girls tend to start doing chores a little sooner than boys. – I said.
- They do grow up to become moms and boys... well, I suppose they grow up to be dads. Most boys go into the sports direction. They might be sitting down watching sports all the time. That would be me. – said Adam.

- We found that children who contributed the most also were the most resilient. Why do you think that is? – I asked.
- I think because doing stuff for other people can make you happy. If you're happier then it's easier to overcome stuff. – said Adam. – If you do stuff and they say 'good job,' it might make you...
- Prouder. More encouragement. – said Corey.
- I don't get told because whatever me and my dad did... my mum doesn't like that because she's grumpy all the time... I'm saying that... for good reasons. – said Adam.
- So, if you don't get that feeling of appreciation you might be a little bit less resilient? – I said.
- You'd be a bit like trying and no one cares. – said Corey.

Story 18: 'I think we should do racism'

- We'll talk about media portrayal of gangs. – said Anita. They all laughed. – Somebody say it first.
- We have to say it, so we might as well. This year, there's been a lot of stuff on the news about how young African teenagers are portrayed in the news. – said Grace.
- People are not like that. You've got to understand. – said Aamira.
- The phone. When you were walking home from training. – said Anita to Aamira.
- Two months before, they got a call that someone got their phone stolen. I had a jumper and black clothes and walked in the station and they were, like, that could be the person, so they started asking me questions. That was sad... That wasn't bad. – said Aamira.
- It was. I would have cried. – said Grace. – We'll just get some data. Some evidence.

- Could we walk around and have interviews? – said Anita. – We start with videos of police sirens and going, woo, woo, woo. I think we’re trying to go not just for gangs, but just, like, racism in general.
- I think we should do racism. – said Grace. – Talking about gangs...
- That can be our personal thing. – said Aamira.
- And then we’ll expand on it. – said Grace.
- There might be an Asian group as well. And Aboriginal youth. – said Lisa.
- This country has done them wrong in so many ways. – said Anita.
- I can see police coming to them, like, putting their gloves on, checking on them, you know what I mean. – said Aliyah. – They feel they have drugs and stuff like that.
- This is a topic I would want to cover as well in other countries. – said Gaby. – Just be aware that you’re going in a controversial space, and there are some horrible people out there.
- I’m ready for that. I can’t wait to debate. Can’t wait to stand up and take questions. – said Anita.
- I said to you on the day, is it okay if people ask you questions, and you were, like, ‘no way.’ – said Gaby.
- We didn’t have enough knowledge of this. – said Anita.
- Now you’re completely all over it. You’ve done it the way we suggested the first time, from now on you decide. – said Gaby.
- Yeah. I just didn’t know what was going on. – said Aamira. – This topic... I am very confident now.
- It’s a learning path for all of us. – said Gaby. – I just thought you guys did an amazing job. And, I just think the next one is going to blow it out of the water.

Appendix 29: Codebook used during the thematic analysis in the Kids Contribute study

- A. Initial insights about contributing
 - a. Defining contributing
 - b. Contributing in everyday life
 - i. At home
 - ii. At school
 - iii. At clubs
 - iv. Elsewhere in the community
 - c. Motivations to contribute
 - i. Being asked for help
 - ii. Rewards
 - d. Fostering resilience
 - i. Promoting positive feelings
 - ii. Promoting a sense of empowerment
 - iii. Building skills
 - iv. Promoting social wellbeing
 - v. Limitations to the benefits of contributing for resilience
- B. Accepting different views on getting pocket money for chores
 - a. Assessing the poll data
 - i. Observing changes in children's motivation to help as they age
 - ii. Questioning the validity of the poll data
 - b. Believing children shouldn't get pocket money for chores
 - c. Believing children should get a fair payment for doing chores
- C. Developing Critical Consciousness about Gender Differences
 - a. Assessing the poll data
 - i. First impressions about poll results on gender differences in contributing
 - ii. Questioning the validity of the poll data
 - b. Problematising gender differences in contributing
 - i. Perceiving gender differences as natural
 - ii. Perceiving gender differences as a problem
 - c. Questioning the root causes of gender differences in contributing
 - i. Reflecting on root causes at home
 - ii. Reflecting on root causes in the wider society
 - d. Developing key messages about gender equality for the National Child and Youth Forum
 - i. Equality in house chores
 - ii. Better representation of girls and women
 - iii. Opportunities for girls to contribute through their religion and traditions
 - iv. Asking adults about the root causes of gender differences in contributing

Appendix 30: Lists of child co-researchers' contributions at home, school, clubs and community

Contributions at home reported by child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute Study

Helping with chores	Helping family members	Family economy
Hygiene: cleaning in general, mopping, doing the laundry, washing dishes, vacuuming, cleaning up own room, putting things away, taking out the rubbish, cleaning the backyard, washing car, wiping windows.	Helping adults: helping with technology (computers, phones, TV, wi-fi), helping with the English language, giving massage, giving water, lifting or carrying heavy things, driving people around, looking for things, reaching high places.	Family business: helping take care of rural property and animals.
Food: washing and peeling vegetables, cooking, serving tea for family, cooking for siblings, cooking for oneself, grocery shopping.	Taking care of siblings: babysitting, feeding, changing diapers.	Supporting parents: getting a job.
Errands: post office	Taking care of pets: walking the dog, giving food and water, bringing birds inside, cleaning after pets, washing and grooming.	
Outside: taking care of the garden, mowing lawn, watering plants.		

Source: author's elaboration.

Contributions at school reported by child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute Study

Type of contribution	Specific activities
Good behaviour	collaborating with teachers, helping teachers, attending classes and paying attention, being organized and prepared.
Promoting positive relationships	Helping others feel better, welcoming new students, mentoring younger students, being a leader, helping prevent or stop bullying.
Cleaning and setting up	Putting out bins, taking out compost, cleaning tables and classroom, pinning tables, picking up rubbish, setting chairs.
Extracurricular activities	Helping at school events, joining a team or club at the school, cooking.
Community service	Community service programs, volunteering in the community, opportunities to volunteer with the environment.

Source: author's elaboration.

Contributions at different types of clubs, reported by child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute Study

Type of contribution	Specific activities
Cleaning and setting up	setting up (e.g. equipment, tables, chairs), collecting rubbish, cleaning spaces.
Teaching and mentoring younger kids	coaching in sports, helping others with homework, organizing games and activities for younger kids, being a role model, monitoring the behaviour of younger kids.
Special events and celebrations	Helping prepare and host celebrations for the members of the club and wider community.

Source: author's elaboration.

Contributions at sports clubs reported by child co-researchers in the Kids Contribute Study

Type of contribution	Specific activities
During games	making announcements, giving water, hosting at the entrance, keeping scores and statistics, being a referee, cheering the team, playing, taking care of small children, working at the canteen, filling in when players were missing for a game.
Good sportsmanship	teamwork, collaborating with coaches, helping others feel better, filling, positively representing their club in front of other clubs, being friendly to people from rival teams, playing by the rules, acknowledging the rival team's strengths.
Helping organize the team	preparing for games, organizing lifts for team members, helping manage teams, attending trainings, being on time.
Supporting the club	fund raising events, cooking, recruiting new players, planning to help the club in the future (i.e. promoting the club, donating money, becoming a coach).
Community development	Participating in special programs for social inclusion for people with migrant background or disabilities.

Source: author's elaboration.

Appendix 31: Codebook used during the thematic analysis of the Kids Contribute Study Story

A. Adult-child relationships

a. Promoting freedom of expression

i. Building positive rapport

1. Promoting a positive relationship
2. Empathizing with child co-researchers' emotions
3. Building trust

ii. Embracing different ways of communicating

1. During research meetings
2. During the forum
3. Using sense of humour

iii. Addressing increasingly wider audiences

1. Aiming for an attentive and influential audience
2. Child co-researchers wanting to establish a collaborative dialogue with adults
3. Generating safe spaces for child co-researchers' self-expression
4. Coresearchers' impressions of being heard at the forum

b. Promoting agency and empowerment

i. Progressively sharing roles and responsibilities

1. Providing adult support
2. Giving child co-researchers the choice of how to become involved

ii. Empowering child co-researchers

1. Acknowledging diverse child perspectives
2. Acknowledging child co-researchers' competences and expertise
3. Asking child co-researchers for their feedback on the study

c. Obstacles and difficulties

i. Communication

- ii. Gaps between meetings

- iii. Sustainability

B. Child-child relationships

- a. Child co-researchers supporting each other

- b. Progressively making child co-researchers come together as one large group

- c. Progressive exposure to other child co-researchers' perspectives

- d. Critical reflection about other child co-researchers' perspectives

- i. Observing differences in perspectives

- ii. Observing similarities in perspectives

- iii. Questioning one's prejudices

- iv. Developing new and more inclusive views about global social issues