

ONLINE resources 2014

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What can we do in our research group?

Different ways to do research



January 2014

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ISSN: 1446-4179
ISBN: 978-0-7334-3448-8 (online)
SPRC Resource 1/2014

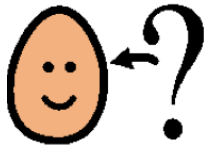
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The Social Policy Research Centre is based in the
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at UNSW Australia.
This resource is an output of the [Individual funding:
building community capacity through action](#) research project
funded by the Disability Policy and Research Working Group
through a National Disability Research and Development Grant.

Suggested citation

Meltzer, A., Fisher, K. R., Purcal, C., Bevan, N., & Cooper,
S. (2014). *What can we do in our research group? Different
ways to do research (SPRC Resource 1/2014)*. Sydney:
Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW Australia.

This booklet gives some ideas about different ways that people do research. The ideas are split into different types of activities so you can easily find the ones you are interested in. There are ideas for:



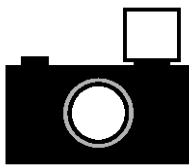
- **Talking**

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- **Writing**

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- **Taking photos**

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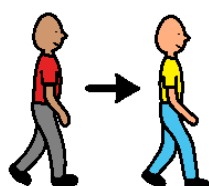
- **Using technology**

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- **Getting out and about**

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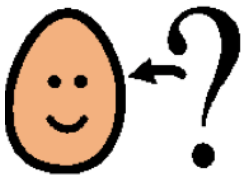
These are ideas for what you could do in your research group. But if you have other ideas, you can do those as well.

For any of these ideas, please remember:

- Your research group should agree on how to do it and on what you want to find out.
- The people who take part need to give consent – this means that they know about the research and agree to take part without anyone forcing them to agree. This could be people in your research group or that you talk to in the community.
- You need to keep information about other people a secret. You can't tell others about who took part.
- You can get help to do any of these ideas. You can ask someone you trust to help you. You can also ask the person who runs your research group how to do it.
- You don't have to stick to one idea. You can try out different ideas.
- You don't have to do anything you are uncomfortable with.

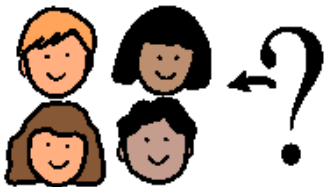
Talking

Some people do research by talking about the research topic. For example:



An interview

This means that two people talk together. One person (the researcher) asks questions and the other person answers. Interviews are good for getting lots of details from one person.



Focus groups

This means that a group of people talk together. One person (the researcher) asks questions. The other people might take turns answering or they might have a discussion about the answer. Usually about 5 to 10 people take part in a focus group. Focus groups are good for hearing what different people think and for getting lots of details.

Writing

Some people do research by writing about the research topic or asking other people to write about it. For example:



Surveys

This means writing some questions for other people to answer. The questions could be ones where people tick an answer from a few already written down or could be ones where people have to fill in what they think. Surveys are good for getting answers from a lot of people at once.

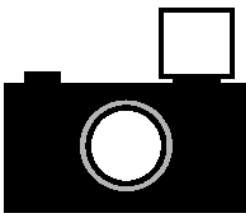


Writing in

This means setting just a few questions and asking people to write about and send in what they think. This could be as long or short as they want. Writing in is good for people who don't want to talk about the research topic, but still have something important to say.

Taking photos

Some people do research with photos about the research topic. For example:



Photovoice

This means that people who take part in the research go out and take photos about things to do with the research topic. These photos are made just for the research. Afterwards they come back together and talk about their photos and explain what is important about them or what they show about the research topic. This could be talking either in an interview or a focus group. Photovoice is good for showing lots about what happens in people's lives.

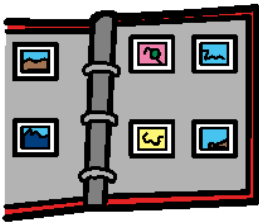


Photo interviews or photo groups

Photo interviews or photo groups are where people talk together about photos that show something about the research topic. These are photos that have already been taken for other things, but that show something important about the research topic and so can be used here too. For example:

- Photos that the person asking questions (the researcher) brings because they match the questions.
- Photos that the people answering the questions bring because they show something important about what they think of the research topic.

Talking about the photos could be either in an interview or a focus group. Photo interviews and photo groups are good for getting people talking, because sometimes photos give people more confidence or more ideas.

Using technology

Some people do research using technology. For example:



Voice or video recording

This means making a record or a copy of what people said or did, either that you listen to or that you watch (like on the radio or on TV). For example, there could be a voice or video recording of an interview or a people could make a video about the research topic. Voice and video recordings are good for people who don't like writing or who want to be creative.



iPad apps



This means using the apps on an iPad to show something about the research topic. For example, there are apps to make lists, take photos or to make a mind map. There are lots of apps and lots of options! iPad apps are good for getting people involved who like technology or who communicate by iPad.

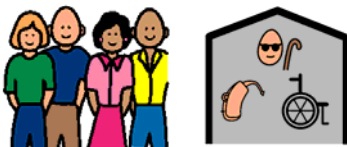
Doing creative activities

Some people do creative activities to find out about the research topic. For example:



Art

This means asking people to make something that shows what they think about the research topic. This could be drawing, painting, collage or any other type of art. It could also be making things like timelines or mind maps. Art is good for people who don't like writing and who like being creative. It is also good for getting people to think of new ideas when they see what each other has done.

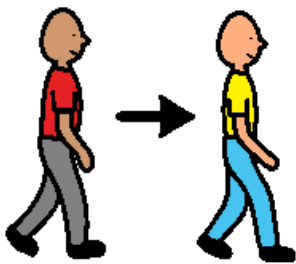


Community mapping

This means asking people to draw a 'map' of what happens for them in their community. For example, it could be asking them to show what they do with help from their support worker: where they go, what they do, who they meet with and what other services they use (for example: shops, learning, work or fun activities). Community mapping is good for getting a sense of all the different things that people do in their lives.

Getting out and about

Some people find out about the research topic by getting out and about. For example:



Go-along interviews

This means going with someone as they do a day to day activity. For example, you could go with someone when they go to do errands with their support worker or you could be with them when they write out their timesheets for their support workers. You ask questions about what's happening and what they think as they go through their activity. You can either write down or voice-record the answers.



Observation (watching)

This means watching people do something that has something to do with the research topic. For example, you could watch how someone acts with their support worker in their home or at work. You write down or voice-record notes about what you see happening and what you think it means. Observation (watching) is good for getting information from people who can't communicate very much and for seeing how things just happen day to day.

