

Piloting Questions Developed by Primary School Children for Inclusion in the 2014 Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study

Daniels, N.,¹
 Burke, L.,¹
 O'Donnell, A.,²
 McGovern, O.,²
 Kelly, C.,¹
 Nic Gabhainn, S.¹
 Health Promotion
 Research Centre,
 National University
 of Ireland, Galway¹
 Citizen Participation
 Unit, Department
 of Children and
 Youth Affairs²

INTRODUCTION

The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study in Ireland provides data on a cyclical basis on a range of health and well-being related issues and the context of young peoples' lives. In partnership with the Citizen Participation Unit of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs the HBSC Ireland Research Team have been working on the inclusion of children as stakeholders in the research process. Within this partnership a series of participative workshops were conducted with primary school children. These workshops facilitated the children to develop consensus on priority dimensions of their lives, to compose potential questionnaire items based on these priorities, including response options and to review their progress. This abstract details the process of piloting these questions.

METHODOLOGY

Six class groups from two schools took part (n=49) children (51% female; 49% male). Eleven questions were piloted from three categories (Table 1). Each participant was asked to (1) complete the pilot questionnaire (2) underline any words or questions they did not understand or found difficult to read and to (3) cross out any questions they thought should not be asked of children their age. A class discussion followed.

RESULTS

Of the eleven questions, one had an unacceptable level of missing data and caused confusion to participating children ('Do you feel safe with other people?'). One was an open question for which there were too many different answers provided ('What is your favourite sport?'). In one question 100% of children gave the same answer ('Do you like making new friends?'). The responses to two questions were highly skewed and thus were unlikely to provide useful data ('Does your family try to spend time with you?' and 'Is having a family important to you?'). A final question was strongly queried by pupils during the classroom discussion ('Do you love your family?') As a result of the pilot these six questions were excluded. Five new questions, developed by primary school children, will be included in the 2014 HBSC questionnaire; (1) 'Do you play sports?' (2) 'Do you play with a club?' (3) 'Do you prefer to play... indoors or outdoors?' (4) 'How often do you do your hobbies?' (5) 'Does your family play with you?'

CONCLUSION

The methodologies used in these workshops provided rich data directly from the children and can be applied to other projects to actively engage with children and inform health promotion practice and policy.

Table 1 - Child Developed Questions Piloted with Primary School Children

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE OPTIONS
FUN Do you play sports? Do you play with a club? Do you prefer to play... How often do you do your hobbies? What is your favourite sport?	Yes, No Yes, No Indoors, Outdoors? Every day, Every week, Every month, Rarely, Never Open-ended
SAFETY Do you feel safe with other people?	Yes, No
FAMILY Do you like making new friends? Does your family play with you? Does your family try to spend time with you? Is having family and friends important to you? Do you love your family?	Yes, No Always, Often, Sometimes, Never Yes, No Yes, No A lot, Some, A little, Not very much, Not at all