

# Process and impact of involving children in the HBSC Ireland study

Professor Colette Kelly  
Health Promotion Research Centre  
NUI Galway  
@HBSCIreland

Kelly, C., Daniels, N., Burke, L., Költö, A., O'Donnell, A., McGovern O. & Nic Gabhainn, S.



NUI Galway  
OÉ Gaillimh



An Roinn Sláinte  
Department of Health

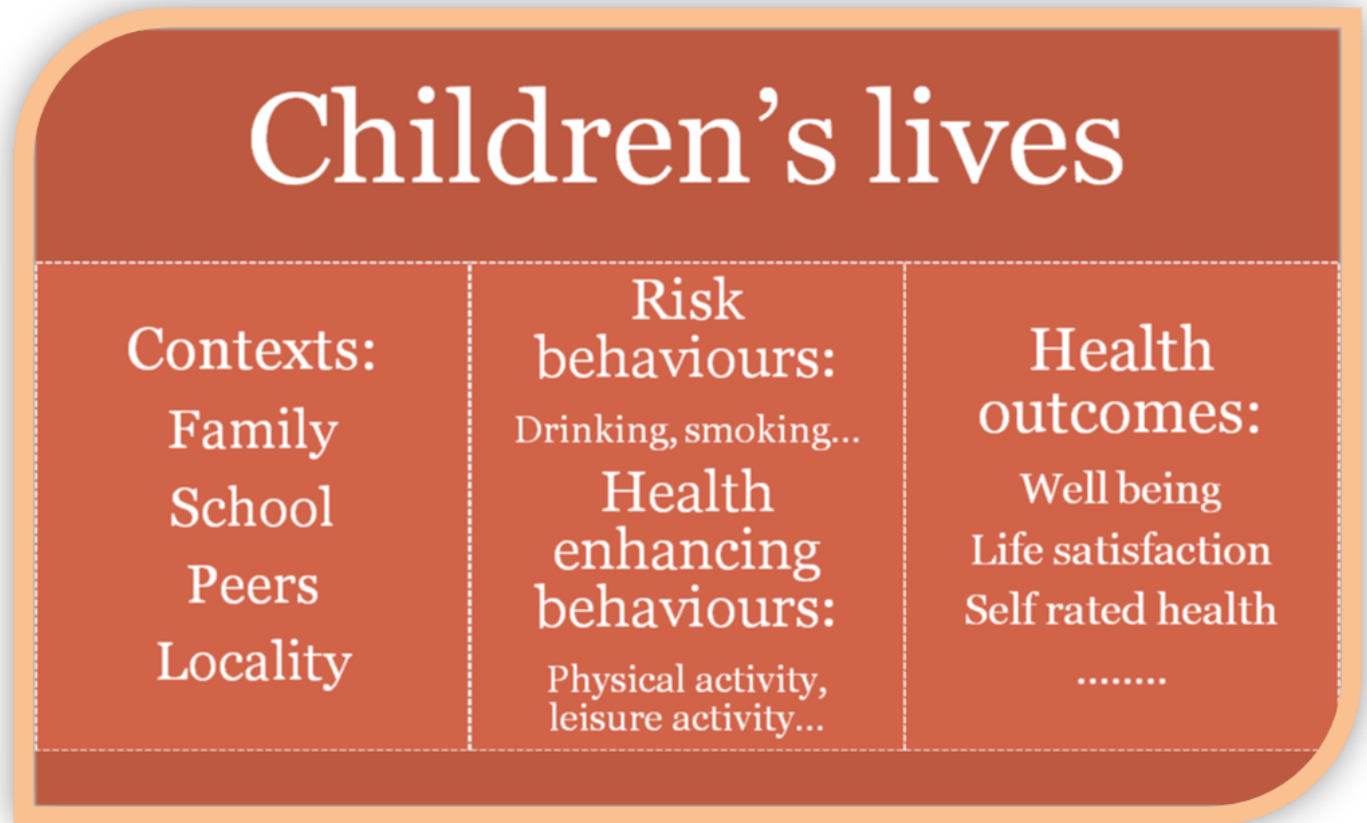


HPRC  
Health Promotion Research Centre

# HBSC study

- Collaborative study with the WHO European office
- Initiated by four countries in 1982
- International survey every four years
- Ireland joined in 1994
- Irish data collected over six cycles since 1998
- 51 countries currently involved
- Network of researchers with policy and practice links

# HBSC conceptual framework



# Rationale for Youth Participation

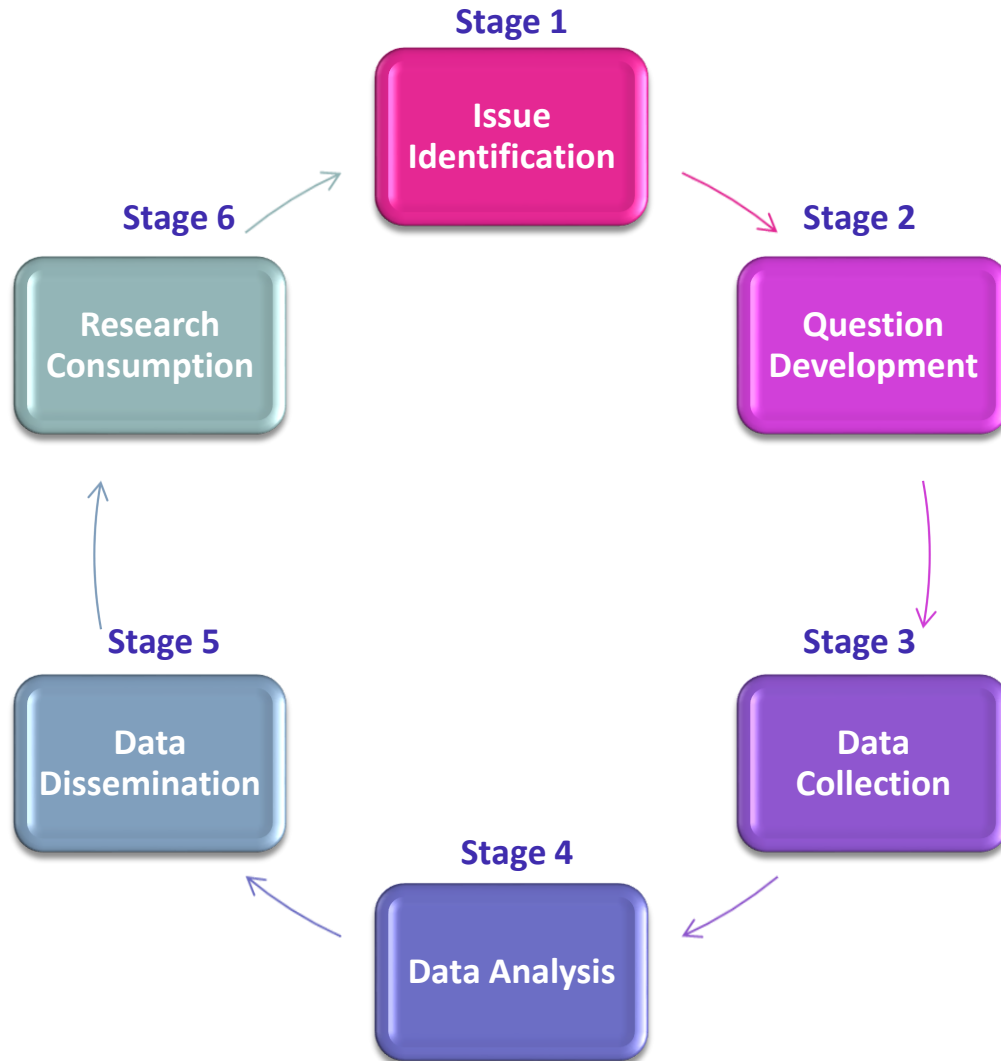
- Rights based perspectives
- Data quality enhancement
- Stakeholder engagement
- Interpretation and dissemination
- Health Promoting Health Promotion
- Challenge to the distribution of power in research

# HBSC Ireland

- **HBSC Ireland** has been working on the development of a variety of research methodologies intended to facilitate active participation of young people in the research process.
- This is a research method (PRP), a health promotion practice and a research area; we aim to explore if it ‘works’, how it ‘works’, and what the benefits, if any, are for child health and well-being and our research practice.

# Research Cycle

Stages 1-2 part of national partnership agreement with the DCYA, Ireland.



# HBSC & DCYA (research stages 1 & 2)

- An essential objective of the HBSC study is to liaise with various stakeholders and involve them in the research process. In particular young people have an important role to play in the research process and it is a priority of the HBSC study to involve them where possible
- The DCYA (now DCEDIY) was responsible for ensuring the establishment and improvement of structures that provide children and young people with a voice on issues that affect their lives at local and national level
- Citizen engagement (DCYA) chose HBSC as first 'Flagship Partnership' – to have items directly designed by children

# Objectives of Partnership

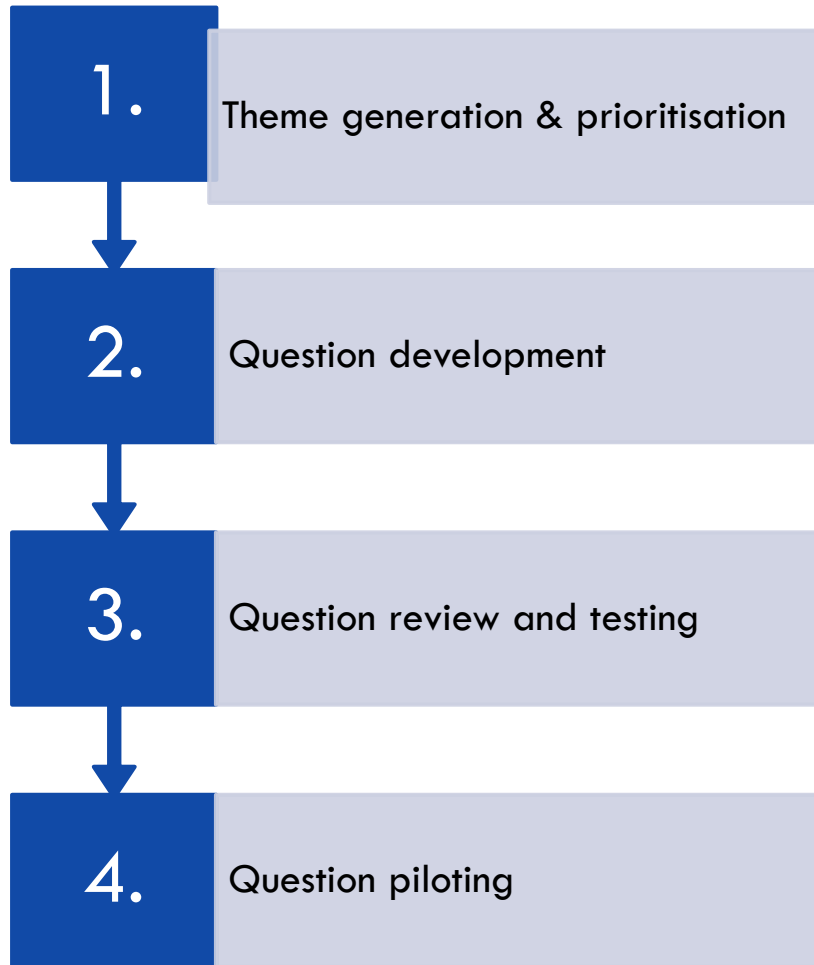
- To support children and young people's participation in the HBSC cycle
- To document the participation process as the project is progressing with a view to establishing a model of good practice to inform both national and international literature in this field
- To honour the contribution of children and young people in the design, execution, dissemination and use of the HBSC Ireland study
- To contribute the perspectives and priorities of Irish children and young people to the development of the international HBSC network
- To advocate for the processes and outcomes of the partnership to inform and influence the development of the international HBSC network.



# Method

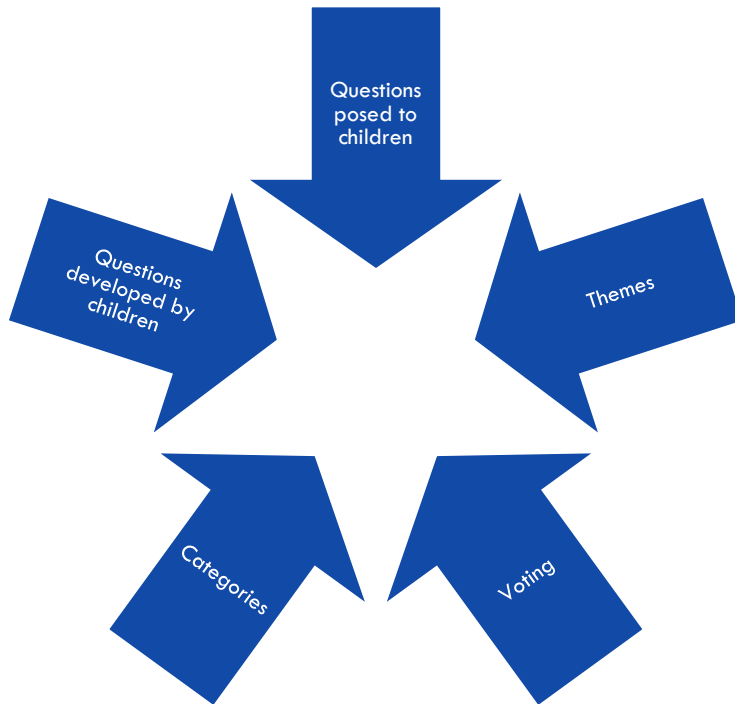
- Four sequential participatory workshops with separate groups of primary and post-primary school children
- Children recruited through Comhairle na nÓg (12-17 years) and with youth participation officers through Primary Principals Network (8-12 years).  
N=410 children
- Workshop aims
  1. To explore what children *think is important to understand about life for* children in Ireland
  2. To enable children *to develop possible questions for use* in the HBSC study on new topics
  3. To enable children *to review and test questions*, created by young people, for possible use in the HBSC study
  4. To enable children *to read and answer the questions* and to provide feedback to them.

# Workshops and activities



- Individual & group work
- Flashcards
- Voting stickers
- Working across & within groups
- Post-it notes
- Snap-card game
- Pizza slices
- Sticky dots
- Ranking

# 1. Theme generation & prioritisation



- Asked: *“What would an alien from Mars like to know about you or your friends to understand what life is like for children in Ireland?”* (primary)
- Answers written/drawn on flash cards and grouped into themes.
- Themes explored further using a space/placemat poster format whereby all children could contribute.

# Outputs: Primary

Themes: 37 → 24 → 6

What is important?; Why?; What else?



**Above:** Example of the comments and ideas written by the primary school children on a space poster.

**Right:** An actual completed space poster from the primary school workshop.



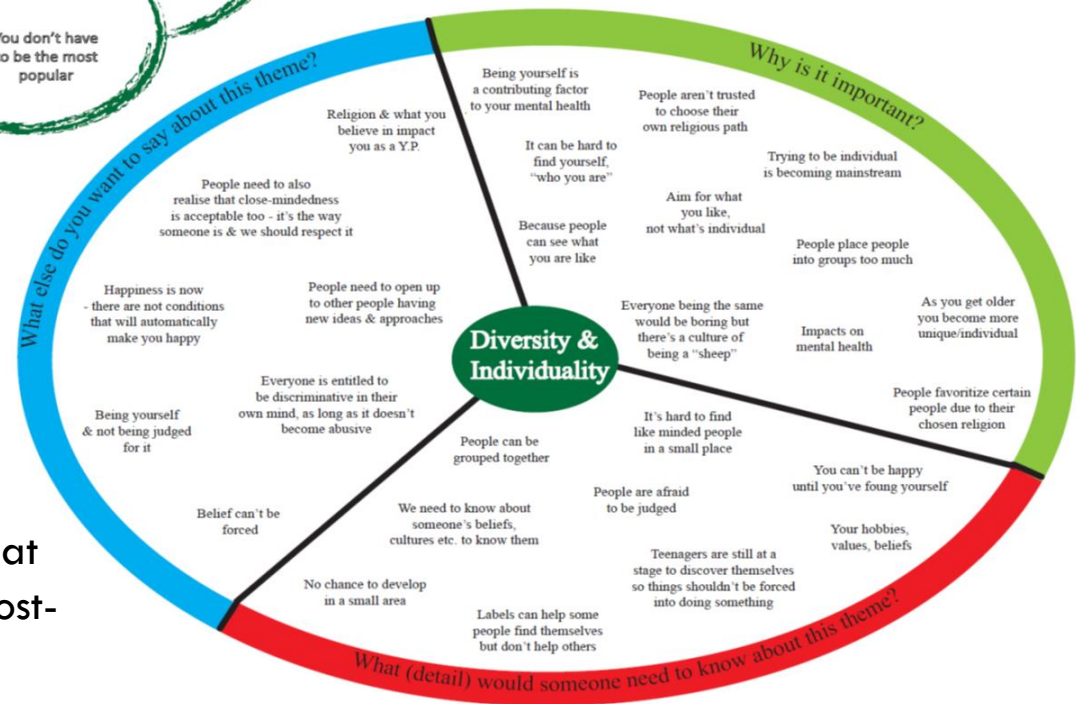
# Outputs: Post-primary



Themes: 16 → 6

**Above:** An examples of post-it suggestions grouped into a theme.

**Right:** An example of the questions answered on this theme in the placemat poster by young people during the post-primary school workshop.



# Final questions: Primary

Question	Response	Domain
Do you play sports?	Yes, No	Fun
Do you play with a club?	Yes, No	Fun
Do you prefer to play....	Indoors, Outdoors?	Fun
How often do you do your hobbies?	Every day, Every week, Every month, Rarely, Never	Fun
Does your family play with you?	Always, Often, Sometimes, Never	Family
Do you love your family?	Always, Often, Sometimes, Never	Family

# Final questions: Post-primary

Question	Response	Domain
Are you comfortable talking about your sexuality?	Yes, No, Don't know	Diversity/individuality
Do you feel comfortable being yourself with your friends?	Always, Often, Sometimes, Never	Diversity/individuality
At what age should young people be allowed to work?		Independence
What age should young people be allowed to vote?		Independence
Are you self-confident?	Always, Often, Sometimes, Never	Mental health
Do you feel social networking sites are safe?	A lot, Some, A little, Not very much, Not at all	Bullying

# Impact

- Re-working of a survey
- First time youth involved in topic identification for a survey
- First time youth developed survey questions and response options
- Partnership working = shared resources, skills & project management
- Child-developed questions included in monitoring implementation of BOBF
- Used to advocate for increased child participation in HBSC internationally



# Reflections

- Diversity of youth involved
- Online mechanisms versus face to face
- Power differences between children and adults
  - Confidence and belief in children's abilities
  - Use of a “hands-off” approach
  - Fun and enjoyment to the process
- Child participation as standard in adolescent research

# Acknowledgements

- Dr. Natasha Clarke
- Priscilla Doyle
- Dr. Lorraine Burke
- Mary Callaghan
- Dr. Kathy Ann Fox
- Colette Fleming
- Dr. Siobhan O'Higgins
- Aoife Gavin
- Dr. Gail Cummins
- Larri Walker
- Dr. Jane Sixsmith
- Prof. Saoirse Nic Gabhainn

## CONTACT US:

HBSC Ireland Website:  
[www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc](http://www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc)

HBSC International Website:  
[www.hbsc.org](http://www.hbsc.org)

Contact HBSC Ireland:  
[hbsc@nuigalway.ie](mailto:hbsc@nuigalway.ie)

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