

# Mapping Research Evidence and Gaps to Support the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People in Ireland: Protocol for a Series of Rapid Scoping Reviews

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## Background

Protecting and promoting the well-being and development of children and young people (0-24) is a national priority for the Government of Ireland. The current national policy framework 'Young Ireland (2023-2028)' emphasises a rights-based approach and builds on the previous 'Better Outcomes Brighter Futures (BOBF) (2014-2020)' framework<sup>1,2</sup>.

In order to inform policy priorities going forward, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) has committed to developing a new Cross Government Children and Young People's Research Programme, thus ensuring actions are evidence- and needs-based.

## Aim

The aim of this project is to identify and chart existing research on children and young people's development and well-being which is aligned with current policy priorities. This will help to identify gaps in the research landscape to support and inform the development of the new Cross Government Research Programme.

## Methods

- **Study design:** Six rapid scoping reviews are being carried out<sup>3</sup>.
- **Search strategies:** Searches have been aligned with key indicators for the five Outcomes of BOBF<sup>2</sup>. A sixth search strategy focused on infants and the early years has also been developed (0 – 4 years old) (Figure 1).



Figure 1: The five Outcomes under BOBF National Youth Policy Framework.

- **Database selection:** Peer-reviewed literature has been accessed through Medline, PsycINFO, and Scopus, and grey literature was acquired via Google.
- **Sources of information:** Primary studies, review articles, Government reports, and non-Government reports are eligible for inclusion.
- **Inclusion criteria:** Studies will be included if they are (i) written in English, (ii) published between 2011 and 2023, (iii) contain extractable data on children and young people from the Republic of Ireland, and (iv) at least 50% of the participants are under the age of 24.
- **Literature screening & mapping:** Two independent reviewers are managing study screening. Existing evidence is being mapped to relevant indicators under the BOBF Outcomes.

## Preliminary Results

A total of 27,232 articles were identified through database and grey literature searches combined (Figure 2).

**Peer-reviewed studies:** Following deduplication and screening of titles and abstracts, there were a total of 438 studies to full-text screen and map to the relevant indicators. This process is currently underway.

**Grey literature:** Title and abstract screening and indicator mapping is ongoing for 588 articles.

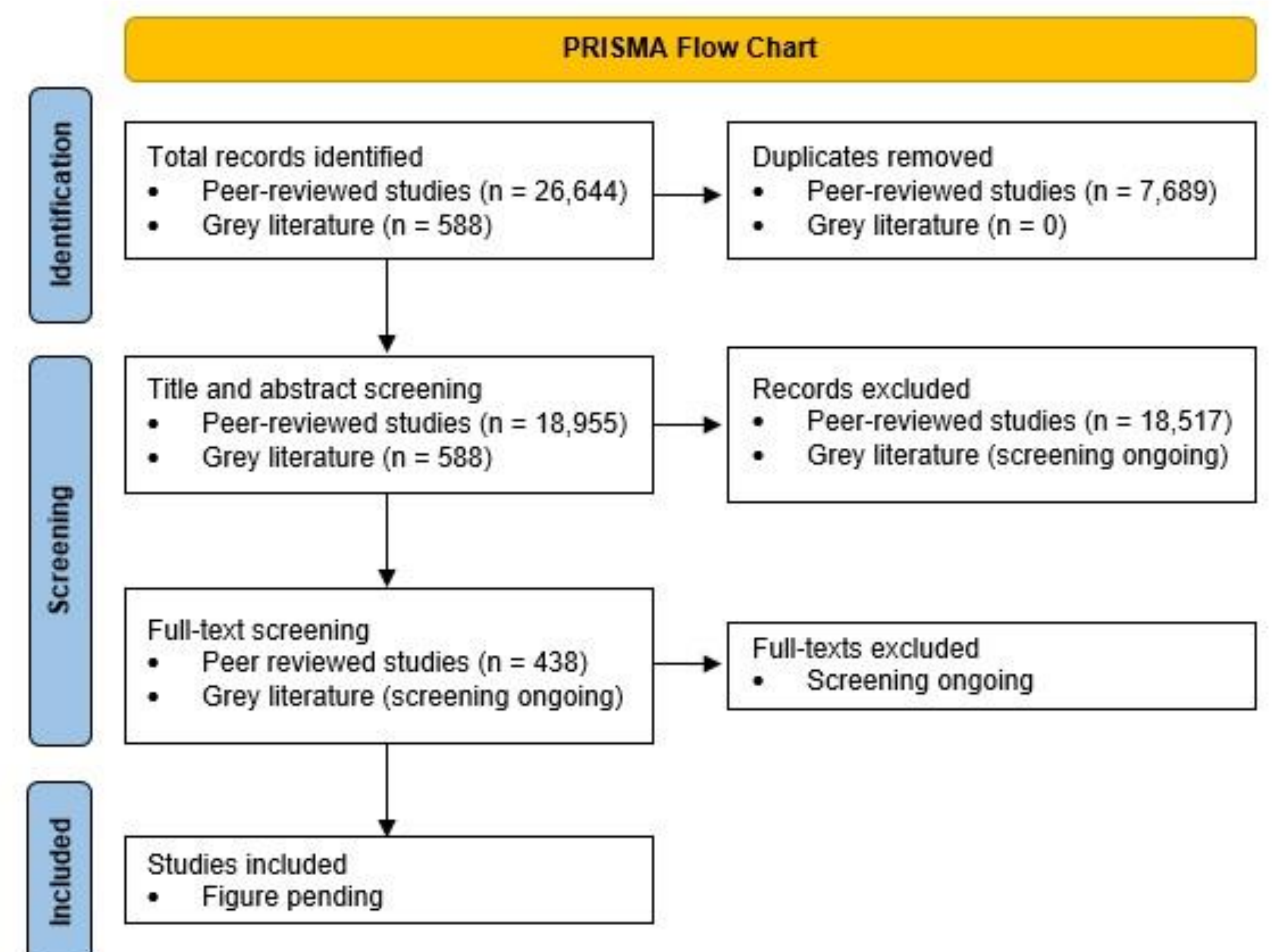


Figure 2: Flow diagram of included studies and the study selection process.

## Conclusion

Findings from this review will be used to inform the development of the new Cross Government Children and Young People's Research Programme, which will run from 2024-2028.

## References

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