

# “In the wild”: The pitfalls of conducting paediatric pain research outside clinical settings



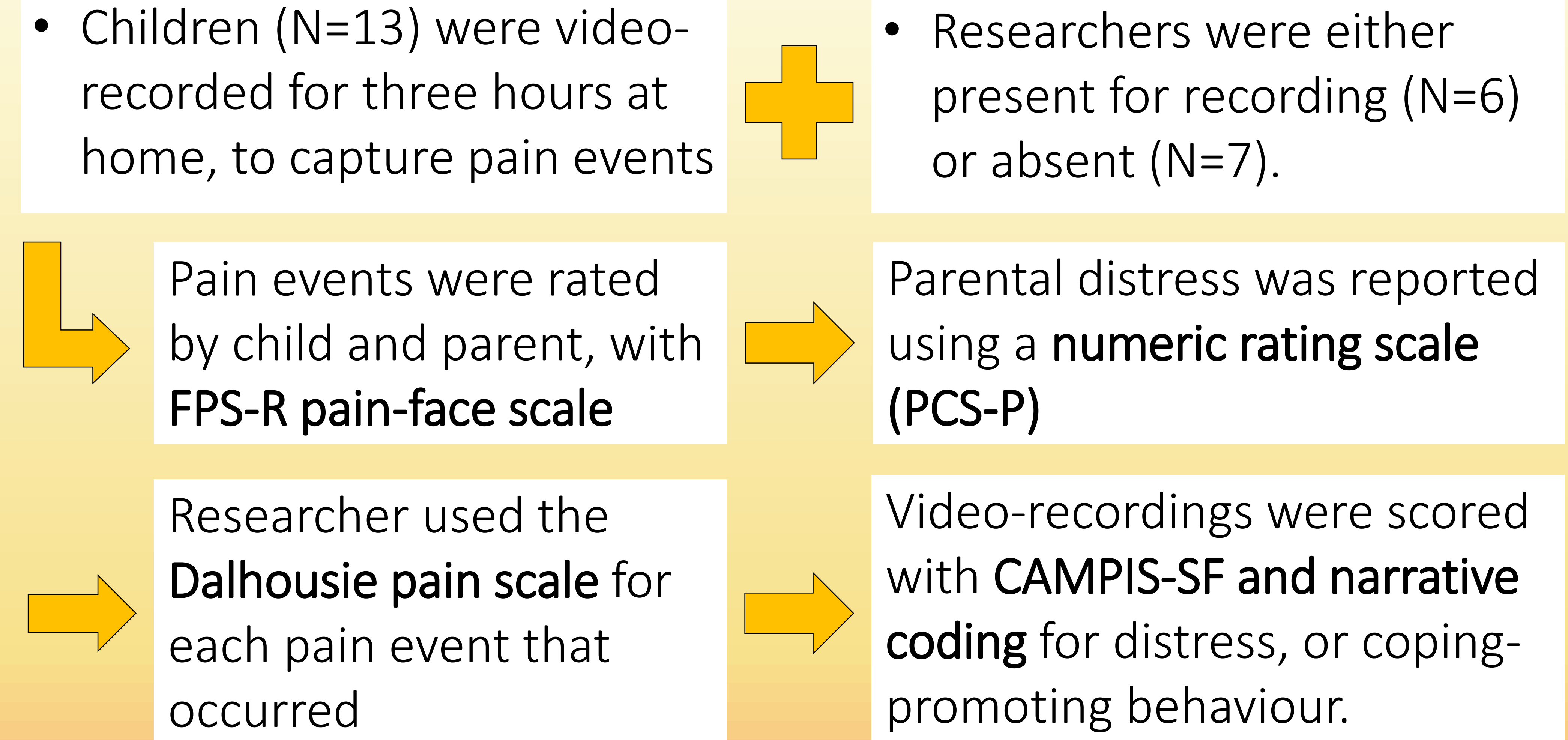
## Background

- Paediatric research has begun to focus on ‘everyday’ pains that children experience at home with their parents.
- Natural settings** provide significant opportunities to understand how children manage pain.
- Non-clinic-based research is **difficult**: less control over events; lack of suitable methodologies.

## Aims

- To compare two home-based methods of observation for ‘everyday’ pain events
- To assess the feasibility of paediatric pain research in non-clinical environments

## Methods



## What went wrong?

- ### Researcher being present in the home
- pain events less likely
  - child distress was higher (p=.006)
  - lower child pain estimates (p=.03)
  - parents aware of cameras
  - researchers rated pain more highly in person than if watching recordings (p=.04)

- ### Equipment issues
- Not enough video-cameras
  - Batteries running out!

- ### Lack of data
- some children had zero pain events during the three hour window

## Possible solutions

- ### Remove the researcher!
- reduced feelings of intrusion
  - increased participation
  - more natural behaviours (no “stranger effect”)
  - more pain events

- ### More cameras
- to capture more behaviour
  - to allow more natural movement

- ### Compare with day-care
- larger number of pain events
  - richer context of events

## Conclusions

- ‘Everyday’ pains offer valuable opportunities to observe how children manage pain.
- Home-observation can feasibly assess parent-child interactions during painful events and provide insight into pain experiences beyond clinical environments

**Grace O’Sullivan<sup>1,2</sup>; Brian E. McGuire<sup>1,2</sup>; Line Caes<sup>3</sup>**  
<sup>1</sup> Centre for Pain Research, NUI Galway, Ireland; <sup>2</sup> Department of Psychology; College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies, NUI Galway, Ireland; <sup>3</sup> Division of Psychology; Faculty of Natural Sciences, University of Stirling, Scotland, UK