



<b>Provisional Mark</b>	<b>68</b>
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## School of Social and Political Science – PG Feedback Form

<b>Course Instance</b>	<b>February 2014</b>
<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Involving Children and Young People in Research &amp; Consultation CPD</b>
<b>Component Name</b>	<b>Blog 1</b>

*Please note that both the comments and the grade remain provisional until ratified by the external Exam Board in May and will be subject to change, moderation and review by our external examiners. This includes whether or not any penalties imposed are upheld.*

<b>Exam number</b>	<b>Student B</b>
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**Overview**

<b>Marking criterion</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Grade A-H (if appropriate)</b>
Critical/conceptual analysis	The blog benefits from its final paragraph raising a potential critique. Further critical considerations would have further developed this aspect of the blog. Some suggestions are made below.	B
Strength/cohesion of argument	The blog proceeds very logically.	A
Use of sources/evidence	Good use is made of Kellett to further the discussion.	A
Structure & organisation	The blog was very well structured. The description of the resource might have been shortened, to allow for more discussion and critique.	A
Breadth and relevance of reading	See below. The reading was very sufficient for a blog.	B
Clarity of expression, presentation and referencing	The blog is very clearly written and structured. While not all blogs would have this, it is helpful to reader to have a fuller reference (i.e. to Kellett) so as to follow up the reference.	B
Suggestions for future work	The blog meets the task requirements squarely, with insightful discussion and a critical consideration at the end. It could be further improved by bringing in even more debates (perhaps from the literature – e.g. about the claims to participation).	

*Susan Elsley and Kay Tisdall, as course convenors, maintain a file of anonymised assessments with feedbacks for further students to consult. If you would prefer to have your assignment not included within this file, please inform Kay Tisdall [k.tisdall@ed.ac.uk](mailto:k.tisdall@ed.ac.uk).*

This blog post will explore how YP as young researchers became empowered (or otherwise), in the 2006 Barnardo's project, entitled 'Involving Young People in Research'.

In this project, Barnardo's Policy and Research Unit (PRU) aimed to: recruit a group of young people to be young researchers carry out a piece of research chosen by the young people themselves, and to produce a research report to influence Barnardo's work. Moreover, this project aimed to foster partnership working between the young people and researchers at the PRU (p.4).

Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRC require that all children should be "informed, involved and consulted about all activities that affect their lives". Whilst there has been a recent surge in including children and young people in research, much of this research is "generally adult-led, adult-designed and conceived from an adult perspective" (Kellet et al., 2004: 329). This Barnardo's project, however, aimed to reverse this.

Just as adults need formal research training, children and young people also need formal research training to enable them to carry out the research (Kellet et al., 2004: 332). If YP are provided with these skills, there is no reason why they cannot conduct research themselves, albeit with some guidance and partnership working with adult researchers.

In this project, the YP themselves choose the topic of bullying, since they all had experience of it (p.4). Giving YP the opportunity to choose their own topic allowed them to research a topic which was important to them (and whose impact may directly affect them), and not imposed on them by adults. Moreover, whilst we, as adults are aware of bullying, would they have chosen this topic otherwise? As various scholars have pointed out (for example, Coates and Coates 2006; Punch 2002), we as adults have an adult view of the world. Only children can *really know* their own world. By giving children this choice, they are being empowered. This may also help to produce data and knowledge which may not have otherwise been produced.

On reflecting on the process, the YP reported that their self-confidence had improved, their social skills had improved, and they also saw new skills created or existing skills improve considerably (p.13). Other case studies involving children as young researchers have reported similar findings, for example in Kellet et al's study.

Finally, in the Barnardo's project, the authors reported that the impact of this research was greater than it would otherwise have been (had adult researchers solely conducted this

Kay 1/7/14 10:22

**Comment [1]:** For the purpose of this assignment, it would have been advisable to provide a reference for this at the end of the blog – so the reader can follow it up.

Kay 9/7/14 14:02

**Comment [2]:** A productive discussion. Is there any counter argument to this positive view of young researchers? Even if you find the former more persuasive, it provides productive critical analysis to consider counter arguments.

Kay 9/7/14 14:02

**Comment [3]:** And what do you make of these findings? Why do we want to know if child researchers' skills are improved, but this is not a question we particularly inquire about for adult researchers?

research) since dissemination opportunities were raised (p.18). The importance of this is drawn sharply into focus if we appreciate that YP involved in the research wanted to 'make a difference' (p.14). Here, YP were empowered to 'make a difference' to a matter which affected them, which *they chose*.

In general, this project seemed to empower YP successfully and meaningfully. Here the only glaring issue regarding empowerment is that whilst YP did 'make a difference' in that their findings informed the Barnardo's work, it could be questioned how much this 'made a difference' on a wider scale, beyond the work of Barnardo's. There was perhaps room in this project for the Barnardo's research team to make clear what exactly 'making a difference' would involve (although it is acknowledged that this may have taken place and simply is not included in this report). Arguably, empowerment is undermined where YP are not given quite enough information about what the impact of their research is, or will be.

Kay 1/7/14 10:25

**Comment [4]:** Insightful critique