



Working with young people as peer researchers in mental health research: what works and best practice?

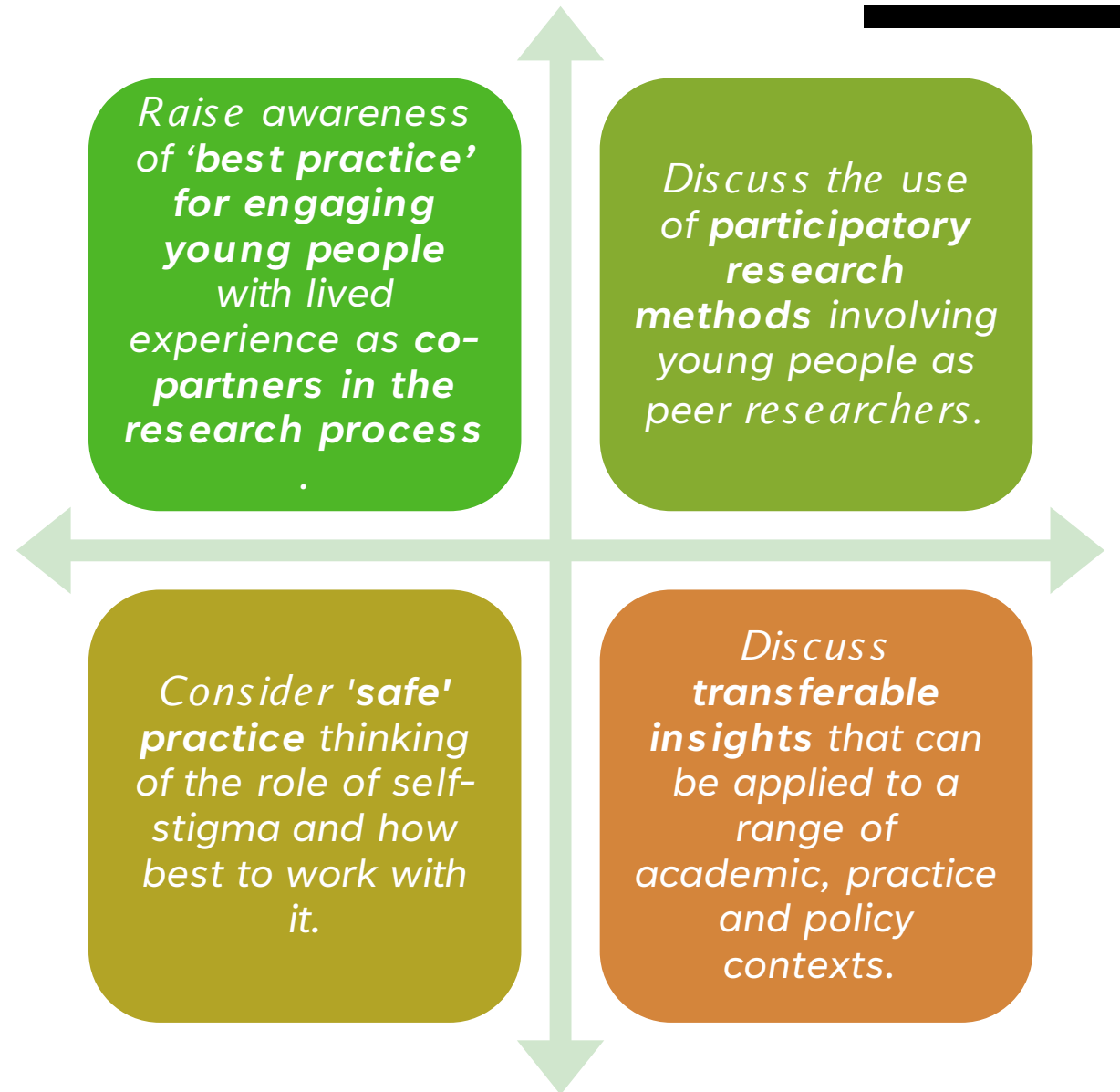
Emerging Minds Summit
17th October 2022

Tom Sharpe, Molly Murray & Nicola Cogan



Young people as peer researchers in mental health research :

Aims of workshop



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What comes to mind when you think of mental health and young people?

ⓘ Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

The need to engage young people with lived experience

Self-stigma occurs when young people internalise negative prejudice and discrimination directed at them.

This may come as a result of public stigma where negative attitudes and stereotypes are held against people with mental illnesses.

Common stereotypes include beliefs that they are dangerous, unpredictable or incompetent. Such stereotypes can lead to prejudices including fear, anger and pity.

Much of what is understood about self-stigma relates to adults' experiences.

Little is known about the unique understandings and perspectives of young people who experience mental illness self-stigma.

Involving children and young people in mental health research

Becoming more widely valued and recognised as essential to ensuring that research is relevant and responsive to their needs.

Young people are often eager and capable of being involved in all stages of the research process yet little information is available on best practice for their involvement in mental health research.

This is particularly true for younger children who have tended to be more the subject of research rather than active participants or partners in research.



How researchers engage is key!

How researchers engage with children and young people in mental health research is related to how **confident** and **competent** they feel in engaging with young people.

Whether researchers engage young people can be impacted by the **availability of resources, ethical issues, culture** and the **structures that their organisations** have in place to support youth participation.

Further complicated when considering research on mental illness **self-stigma as by virtue this may serve as a barrier to young people feeling confident and willing to engage in research** that seeks to understand their lived experiences.



How
might **challenges**
to youth
participation
in research be
overcome?

- One possible approach is to adopt **participatory methods** that include children and young people in the research process, from planning and developing research questions to disseminating the research findings.



What are participatory research methods?

Participatory research methods **facilitate the co-construction of knowledge via collaborative processes between the participants of the research and the researcher** (Sparkes and Smith 2014).



What do we mean by peer research?

Peer researchers (also referred to as 'community researchers') **use their lived experience and understanding of a social or geographical community to help generate information about their peers for research purposes.**



The value of lived experience: peer research

Gaining insight from their **experiential knowledge** and **inside understanding** of mental health issues

Enhances the **richness and nuance** of the research.

Empowers young people to affect positive change by not only participating in research but also leading on it too.

Potential to enable young people to gain **transferable skills** and gain **confidence**.

Helps **minimise the power imbalances** between researchers and participants.

Reduces bias and promotes improved understandings of young people's mental health experiences to inform policy and practice.

Makes the research process more **sensitive to the needs** of participants

The lived experiences that peers bring often results in important and **insightful research questions** being asked

Participants are more likely to be **open and honest** in their responses when working with peer researchers.





How to safely engage children and young people in peer research

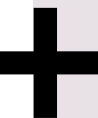
- Building trust and relationships among peer researchers and the wider research team is essential.
- Having an understanding of the developmental stage and needs of the children and young people is important.
- Engaging in collective decision-making, facilitating open lines of communication and providing support and time to reflect is fundamental to best practice.
- Involving primary care-givers and/or parents when needed, demands dedication and sensitivity to the issues this may raise among the participants, peer researchers and co-researchers.

Time, patience and relationship building

This process takes time to develop and involves **complex decision making** and **awareness of the rights of children and young people** throughout the research process.

Quality research requires the ability to **understand and interact** with those that experience the impact of mental illness self-stigma.

Consulting young people as **experts by lived experience** is a great way of getting an insight into their mental health experiences of stigma and some of the barriers they experience in seeking help and support.



Peer research, young people and self-stigma



Goals for this R-SIG are:

- Gain an **understanding** of what mental health self-stigma means to young people (drawing on lived experiences)
- **Raise awareness** of mental health self-stigma
- **Challenge** mental health self-stigma and discrimination
- **Co-produce resources** with young people on how to tackle mental health self-stigma and promote mental health and wellbeing
- **Reflect on best practices** for engaging young people within a SIG involving knowledge exchange and research activities concerning mental health self-stigma



R-SIG: What we do



- **Qualitative and quantitative research** using participatory methods with young people to understand young people's experiences of mental health self-stigma and the causes/impact of these experiences.
- Guide the production of **anti-stigma resources** co-produced by and for young people.
- **Themes and testimonials** resulting from discussions at various events; the Mental Health Arts Festival, Strathclyde Images of Research event and/or **oral presentations** at conferences, **knowledge exchange workshops** in schools and for third sector mental health organisations.
- Develop a series of **infographics** and **blogs** (impact dissemination materials) developed with young people to address mental health stigma.



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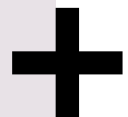


**HOW DO YOU ENGAGE WITH YOUNG
PEOPLE?**

ⓘ Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

HOW DO YOU ENGAGE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE?





Tips for getting peer research with young people right!

COMMONROOM

Young people and ethics: Key findings

January 2021

How to manage research and participation projects:
The ethics according to young people

Common Room North

January 2021

ayph | Association for
Young People's Health

Tips for conducting peer research with young people right!

Value

Show young people that you value their time and expertise. Make sure expenses and incentives are given and their contributions are always acknowledged

Authentic

Have a clear authentic purpose for involving young people. Avoid tokenism by making sure projects are meaningful and involve young people from day one

Promote

Promote involvement opportunities in a way that reaches the right young people. Use their platforms, language, and networks

Understand

Understand the young people you want to work with. Consider their experiences, needs and personal barriers they may face

Give Choice

Give young people choice. Where possible adapt to make the experience more comfortable for them



Tips for getting peer research with young people right!



Go extra mile

Don't just rely on the same usual suspects. Go the extra mile and take the time to ensure there is diversity among your participants



Support

Consider the impact of involvement on the young people. Think what you can do to support them throughout



Involve

Involve enough young people and the right young people to truly represent your project



Acknowledge and respect

Acknowledge and respect young people's involvement. To work alongside them as partners will require thought, planning and investment



Share

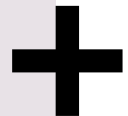
Share the outcomes with young people. Be clear and transparent about the impact of their work



CO-PRODUCTION

The background is a complex, abstract composition of organic, flowing shapes in various shades of green, brown, and orange. These shapes are layered and overlap, creating a sense of depth and movement. Interspersed among these shapes are several distinct patterns: a dark green area with a fine, dotted texture; a brown area with a circular pattern of small white dots; a brown area with wavy white lines; a teal area with a grid of small white plus signs; and a bright cyan area with wavy white lines. The overall aesthetic is modern and artistic, with a focus on texture and color contrast.

Co-produced logos



Co-produced video for R-SIG



<https://emergingminds.org.uk/self-stigma-sirg/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SaSbUgX_H-s&t=23s



Co-produced research recruitment poster

Co-produced with young people who are experts by lived experience

Critical considerations around how to design this in a way that would not reinforce any self-stigmatising attitudes



Have you experienced mental health self-stigma?



Take part in our research study!



We would love to hear from you if you are: aged 16-25 years old, English speaking, and living in Scotland.

You will receive a £20 Amazon voucher as a thank you for your time and participation.

If you are interested visit:

https://hass.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9KRmRjJRYrnjtYO
or scan the QR code

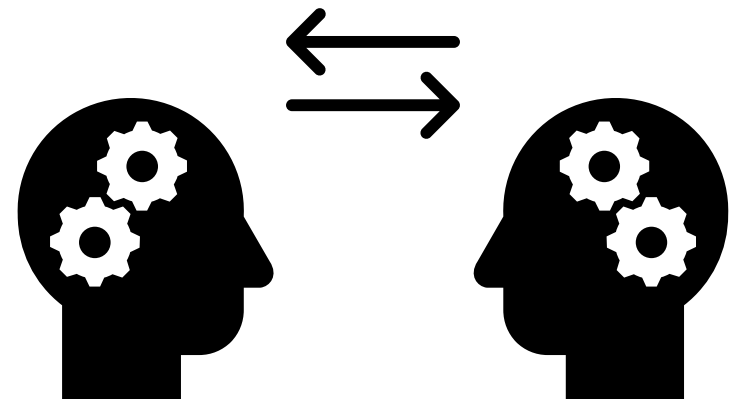
Study end date: 16th September 2022



Co-produced infographic

Infographic capturing best practices for safely engaging young people as peer researchers

How do we engage those with lived experience of self-stigma?





Findings from
knowledge
exchange

Best Practices for Safely Engaging Young

People in Peer Research

Encouraging the involvement of young people!

Promoting the opportunity

.....
e.g., use networks and platforms that young people use

e.g., use the language that young people use



Honesty about being a peer researcher: expectations

.....
e.g., be open, transparent and honest about what 'being a peer researcher' with you is like

Setting Ground Rules



Tips when engaging young people with lived experience!

Respect and Power Balance



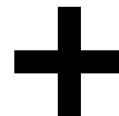
Empathy and Understanding



Flexibility and Choice

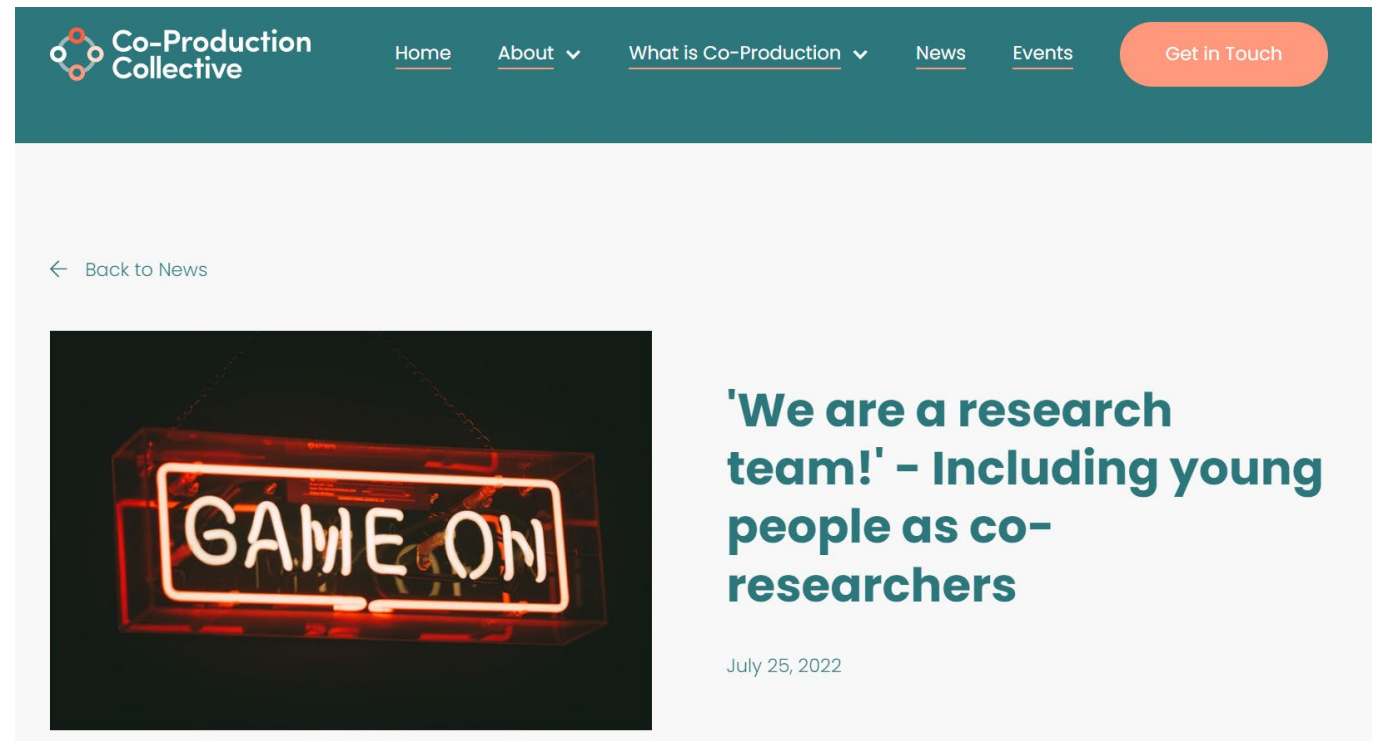


Infographic progression
and outline



Other great work – see co-production collective

- <https://www.coproductioncollective.co.uk/news/we-are-a-research-team-including-young-people-as-co-researchers>




The screenshot shows the website header for Co-Production Collective. The navigation menu includes links for Home, About, What is Co-Production, News, and Events, along with a 'Get in Touch' button. Below the header, there is a 'Back to News' link and a featured article. The article features a photograph of a neon sign that says 'GAME ON' and has the title 'We are a research team!' - Including young people as co-researchers. The date of the article is listed as July 25, 2022.

Co-Production Collective

Home About What is Co-Production News Events Get in Touch

← Back to News



'We are a research team!' - Including young people as co-researchers

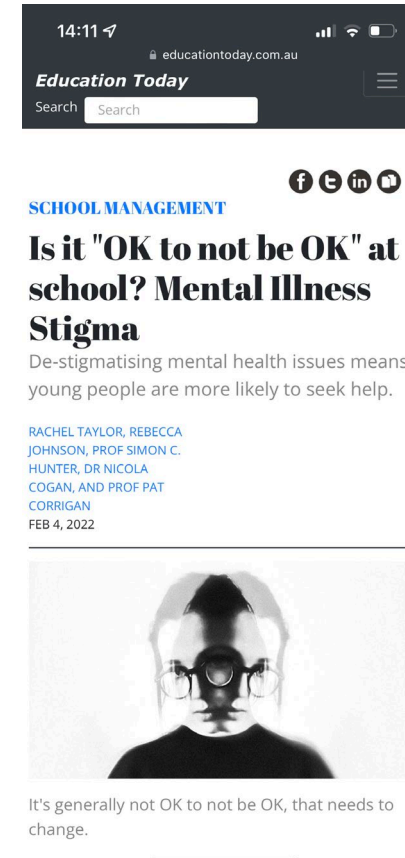
July 25, 2022

Co-produced articles for Education Today

Building on previous Education Today article by Rachel Taylor and colleagues:

<https://www.educationtoday.com.au/news-detail/Is-it--5509>

<https://www.educationtoday.com.au/news-detail/Engaging-Young-People-in-Mental-Health-Research--5757>




14:11 educationtoday.com.au
Education Today
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SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Is it "OK to not be OK" at school? Mental Illness Stigma

De-stigmatising mental health issues means young people are more likely to seek help.

RACHEL TAYLOR, REBECCA JOHNSON, PROF SIMON C. HUNTER, DR NICOLA COGAN, AND PROF PAT CORRIGAN
FEB 4, 2022

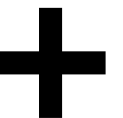


It's generally not OK to not be OK, that needs to change.

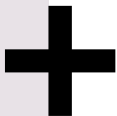
Engaging Young People in Mental Health Research - Addressing Stigma

Involving children and young people as collaborators in youth mental health research is becoming more widely valued and recognised as essential to ensuring that research is relevant and responsive to their needs.

TOM SWAPPE, UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE/EMERGING MINDS, MOLLY MURRAY, UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE/EMERGING MINDS, RACHEL TAYLOR, UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE/EMERGING MINDS, PROFESSOR PATRICK CORRIGAN, ILT, NICOLA COGAN, UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE
OCT 21, 2022



Next steps....



Take home messages

Being able to ensure that stigma does not prevent children and young people from engaging in research involves recognising that it exists and seeking to challenge it.

More work is needed to support children and young people's mental health in the changing and unique pressures of their lived experiences.

This involves awareness and consideration of diverse views and understandings of mental health and the subsequent impacts of stigma.

Seeking the perspectives of young people of colour, gender identity diversity, LGBT+ communities and those with diverse religious or spiritual beliefs are just some of the ways to help broaden awareness and understandings

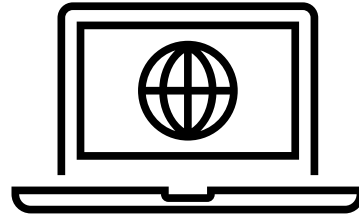
Safely and meaningfully engaging young people in the research process is key—through supporting children and young people to lead such work moving forward.



Peer research, young people and self-stigma



@yp_MHstigma



<https://researchinterest.wixsite.com/ypan-dselfstigmamh>

Linktree*



Young People and
Self-Stigma in
Mental Health
RSIG Linktree



Linktree*

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Pause and time to reflect – ask questions

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Thank you for joining us

• GET IN CONTACT!

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• MOLLY MURRAY

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