Child and Youth Care Research

Just getting started? Try working through the Research Process Worksheet (below). Find researching tips, tutorials, and worksheets on the Library Website, under Research Help. Looking for articles, books, or websites on your topic? Check out the Child and Youth Care library guide: http://libguides.macewan.ca/child_youth

Looking for more help? Come to the Library and ask at the Research Help desk, or contact Jody Nelson (CYCW and Social Work Librarian) to book a one-on-one research consultation.

Librarian Contact Information

- Jody Nelson, nelsonj84@macewan.ca, 780-497-4055

Research Process Worksheet

This worksheet will guide you through the process of defining your research topic and constructing a keyword search. Please remember: Help is available at the Library!

1. **What is your topic?** (Ex. depression)

2. **Define your topic in terms of who/what/when/where.**
   (Ex. Who = children. What = treatment. Where = in school. When = after a traumatic event.)

3. **Is there a way to further narrow your topic?**
   (Can you express your topic in more specific terms? ex. children = specific age group such as teenagers)

4. **What words would you use in a search on your topic?**
   (Ex. depression, teenagers, treatment. Try to use only the substantial words [nouns and verbs] of your topic for your search. Stay away from prepositions such as "of", "after," "with," etc.)
5. **Come up with some alternative or related terms for your topic keywords.**
   (Think in terms of synonyms [ex. teenagers = adolescents]. Also, think of more narrow ways to express your terms [ex. a specific level of schooling, different age groups / grade levels, different types of treatment or therapies]).

6. **Now construct a search by combining your terms in a way that reflects your topic.**
   (Try combining your keywords using the Boolean operators AND/OR to construct a search query. AND retrieves fewer results and limits your search, making your search more specific; OR retrieves more hits and broadens your search. Ex. “depression AND youth”; “youth OR teenagers”)

7. **Conduct your search, making sure that your search is constructed / formatted correctly for the database you are using.**

8. **Evaluate your search results. How many hits did you get?**
   (Remember the "right" number of hits will vary for each subject.)
   a. **Did you get a very large number of hits from your search?**
      (If so, think about further narrowing the scope of your search. Refer to questions 2&3.)
   b. **Did you get a very small number of hits but want more results?**
      (You may need to broaden your search by connecting more terms together using OR, removing some very specific terms from your search query, making use of synonyms, or using broader terms.)

9. **Look at the records for the hits you think may be most useful. Are the items appropriate for the assignment? Briefly summarize the criteria you are using to select resources for this assignment.**
   (Consider the accuracy, authority, objectivity, currency, and coverage of the source. For example, is the article from a popular magazine or a scholarly journal?)

10. **Write down some of the citations that seem the most promising. Email the article to yourself.**
    (Be sure to record the relevant information such as the title of the article, the name of the author, the journal title, and the volume/issue/date, in order to locate the item or e-mail or print the article.)