



Lessons from researching children at school

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Fieldwork at school – participants

- Part of PhD-project
- 'longitudinal' qualitative study in 2012-2013 at school
- School X: A-level group (N=21) and B-level group (N=12)
- School Y: BuSO groep (N=6)

Fieldwork at school – methods

- 9 group sessions
 - storytelling, role-playing, card-sorting tasks, group discussions, assignments on computer, ...
- 1 individual interview with each child
- Interviews and FGs with teachers and school staff

Creating word clouds







A-level group

Class discussion about online bullying



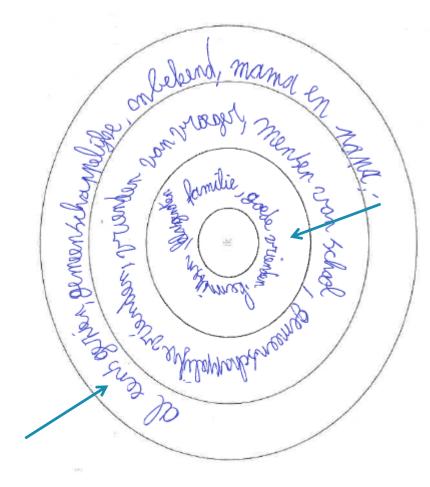
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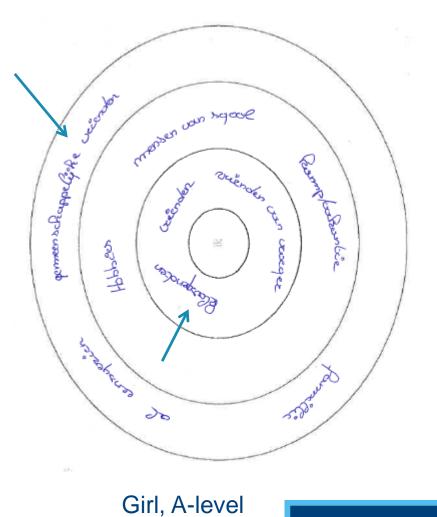
KU LEUVEN

A-level



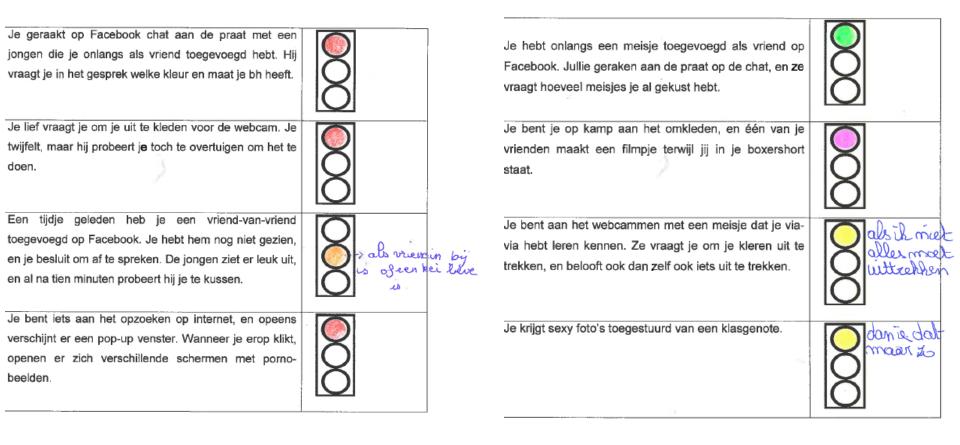
Circle-of-friends task





Boy, A-level

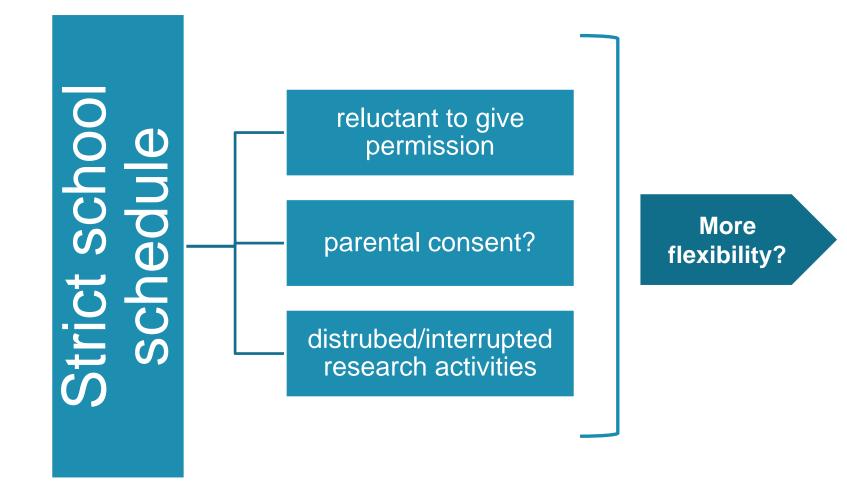
Role-playing in sexting situations







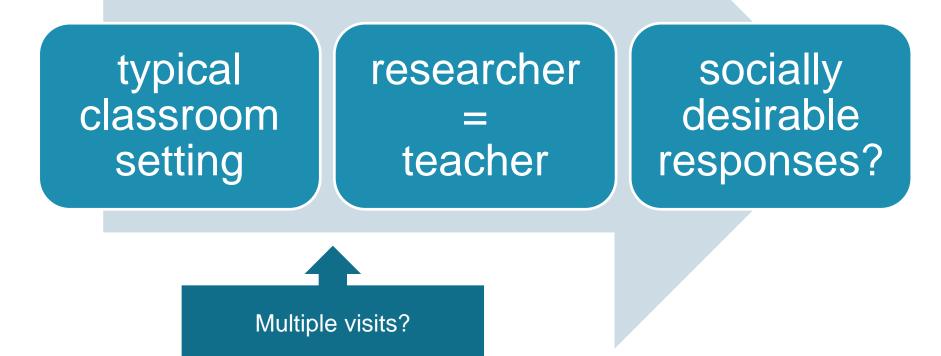
Getting access & consent



Getting access and consent

- How flexible can you be?
- How to negotiate parental consent?
 - Alternatives for 'traditional' consent forms?
- How to fit research activities in school schedules?
 Shorter interviews? Multiple sessions?
- How to give something 'in return' to schools?
 - o Information evening? Educational material?

Teacher or researcher?

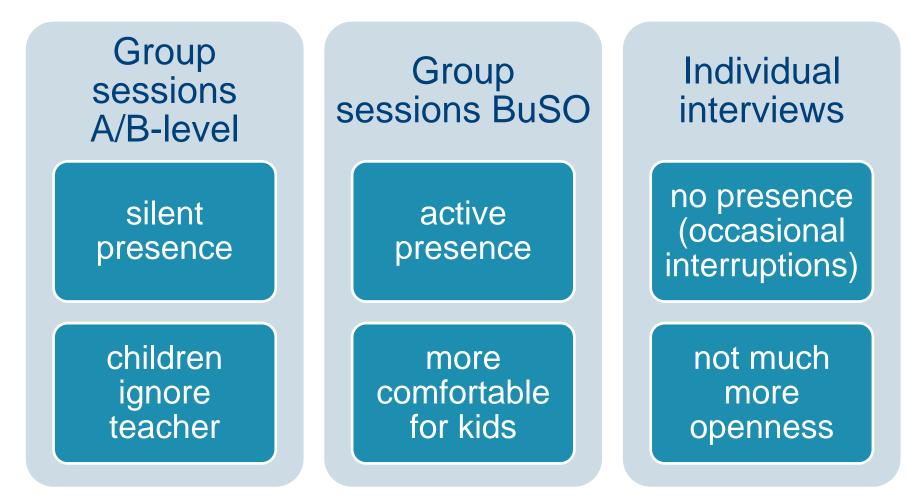


Teacher or researcher?

- Your experiences with role as researcher versus teacher?
 - Problematic or not?
 - Put effort in establishing role as researcher?



Presence of teachers



Presence of teachers

- How to deal with presence of teachers during group sessions and/or individual interviews?
- Under what circumstances is presence of teachers beneficial or problematic?



Dominant personalities in class

dominant children

impact on group dynamics more personal asignments?
focus on personal interviews?

Dominant personalities in class

- How to deal with group dynamics and peer pressure?
 - What about bigger groups?
- Should research activities be interesting and playful at all times? What about 'boring' tasks?
- How to motivate children to express their personal opinion and talk openly about **sensitive issues**?

Ethical issues – children 'at risk'

Case of girl being groomed

- Notify teacher 'something had bothered the girl'
- Private talk
- Extra attention from teachers
- Session with school counselor

interventions were not helpful



Ethical issues – children 'at risk'

- How to **provide adequate support** for children 'at risk'?
- How to find a balance between notifying teacher and respecting participant's confidentiality?
- How to build **relationship of trust** with participants?



Thanks for your input!

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