THE EUROPEAN FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

Training School

FAMILY SUPPORT SKILLS:
Creating an agenda for family workforce skills research development

cost
EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Funded by the European Union

Qualitative and creative methods in skills research

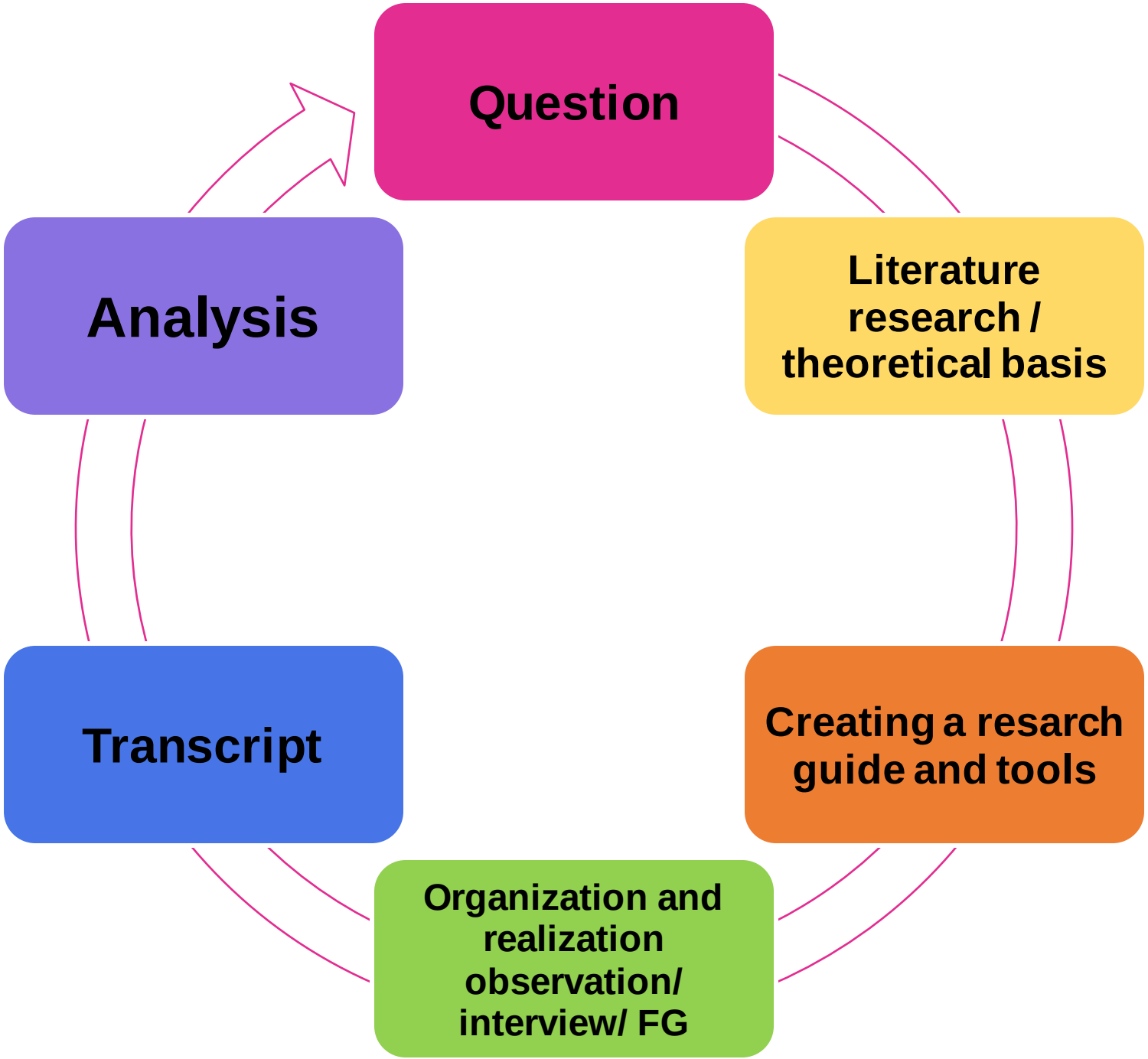
Prof. Nevenka Žegarac, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Political Sciences
Assoc. prof. Nina Mešl, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Work

cost EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Funded by the European Union

Qualitative research process

Communication practice that produces knowledge: sense/meaning that certain phenomena have for children/ families/ professionals and research into the quality and content of their experience



Theoretical framework of qualitative research – interpretive

Relying on **narrative forms** of explanation: a story/ narative that helps to explain how certain behaviors, practices, institutions become what they are and how they are maintained

- **Constructivism** - the construction of knowledge and reality through the interaction of cultural, historical, social and individual factors
- **Critical theory** - researchers strive not only to learn about the world, but also to change it; power and action
- **Grounded theory** - concepts are based or "grounded" in data obtained from participants who experienced the researched phenomenon/process - an explanation of a process and interaction
- **Feminist theories** - understanding the nature of inequality, focus on power relations and gender issues; equalizing power and/or reducing the power imbalance
  - **DATA COLLECTION METHODS**: Observation, interview, focus groups, case studies, content analysis, ethnographic method...) to determine the meaning and understanding of certain occurrences/phenomena/processes
  - **QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS:** Content analysis; Thematic analysis: Narrative analysis: Grounded theory analysis; Discourse analysis

To hear the voices of all involved

PARENTS /OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS

- Minoritized, marginalized and oppressed

CHILDREN

- Neglecting the experience of children;
- Child: natural, predictable, unimportant

PROFESSIONALS

- Work overload
- The role of the professionals in the research
- How to research work processes

MANAGERS

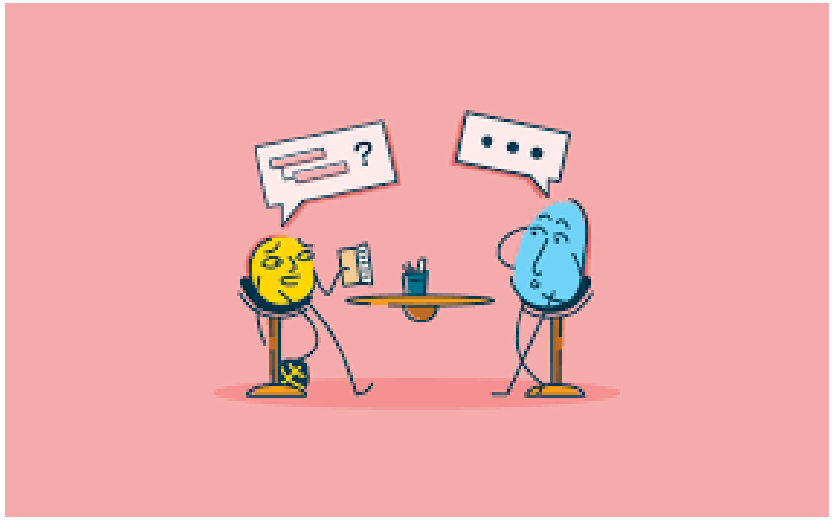
POLICY MAKERS

- **Values and principles (contribution, respect, trust, communication)?**
- **Meaningful participation and co-creation – to be heard**
- **Partnership or Engagement: research ON or WITH / BY?**
- **Potential vulnerability?**
- **Positive and encouraging experience**
- **Informed consent/ Power balance**
- **The environment: home, playground, school, office, community**
- **Adjusment of communication**
- **Unique insights and the practice of active creation of meaning**
- **Relevance and legitimacy of research for invoved parties**
- **Influence on research dessign, proces and interpretation**
- **Prophylactic against scientific harm and better public unederstanding**
- **Positive outcomes/ impact**

NEUTRALITY - OBJECTIVITY - GENERALIZABILITY - COMPLIANCE - VALIDITY

1) What does each of these characteristics mean in the qualitative research process?
2) How is it achieved?
3) How can it be compromised?

Discussion: specifics in research with children and families



- **APPROACHES**: Research subject; Consultiatve; Collaborative; Child/ Parents/ Family lead;
- **ROLES**: Advisors; Interviewees; Co-researchers; Development workers

Etical principles



- Respect and relevance
- Non- maleficence (“do no harm”) and beneficence (“do good”)
- Justice/ non discrimination / inclusivness
- Adapted/ tailored to a specific population, child / parents and family friendly
- Best interests of the child
- Voluntariness/ transparence/
- Confidentiality (including privacy and anonymity)
- Safety and risk sensitivity
- The right to be heard and properly researched

Critical reflection, cross-cultural, intersectoral and interdisciplinary dialogue
Context-specific problem solving

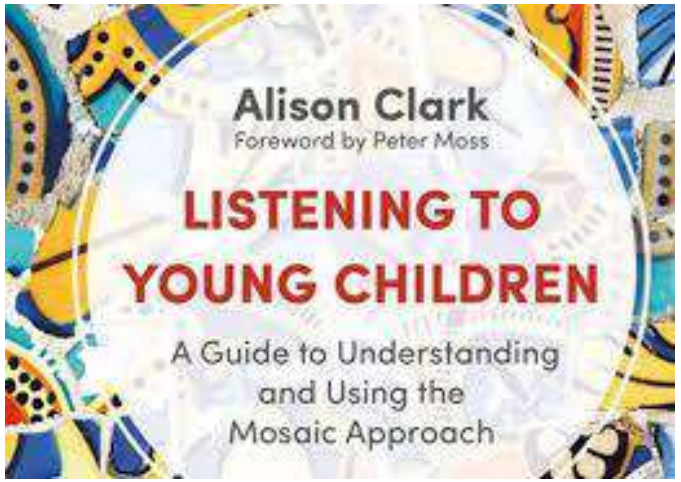
Discusion:
“hard to reach / research” children and parents/ families

Children	Parents/ families

Mosaic approach

- **Socio-constructivist paradigm** - adults and children are seen as co-constructors of meaning
- **Reflexivity**: adults need to be aware of the way they interpret children's experiences
- **Multiple methods** to highlight children's perspectives and experiences - a framework for incorporating different methods through which children and those who care for children can create a picture or 'mosaic' of children's lives. The artifacts produced are a stimulus for further exploration of meaning, together with long children, researchers and other adults - both results and implications are considered





Visual techniques

- Maps, drawings, photos, model building, ranking and grading, guided tours
- To show adults the environment in which the child resides, and the issues that are important to him/ her
- To indicate the child's attitude towards the environment
- For the child to give his assessment of the environment and ideas for its improvement



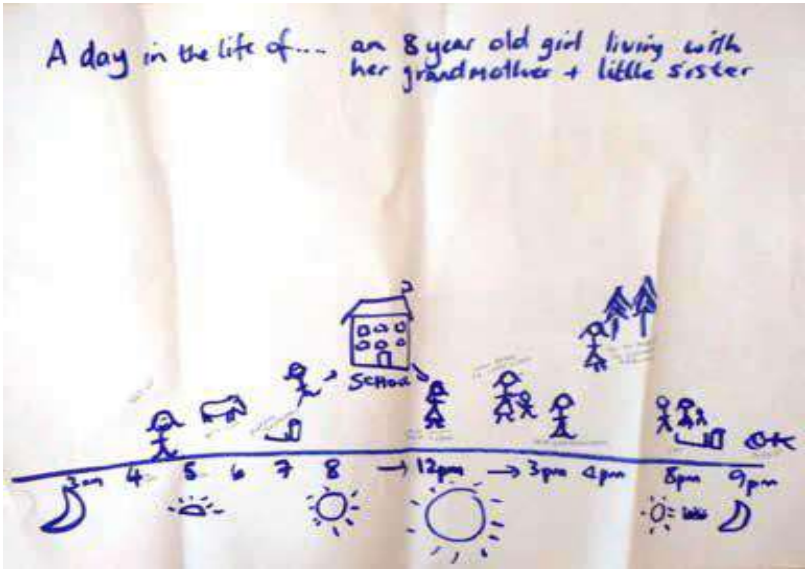
BODY MAPPING

- I like it / I don't like it
- To explore what children like and dislike about the work they do and how the work affects different aspects of their lives



ONE OF MY DAYS

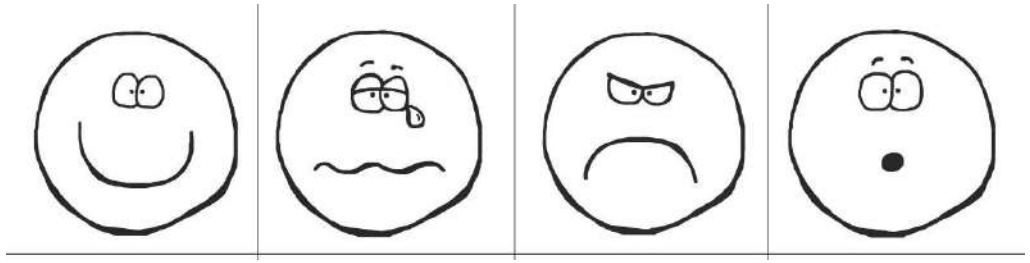
- A timeline to explore children's roles and responsibilities in everyday life and to reflect on the ways in which children balance housework, paid work, study, play and other opportunities



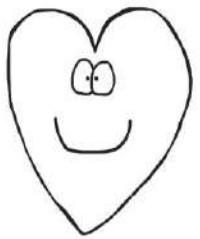
GUIDED TOURS - CHILDREN LEAD

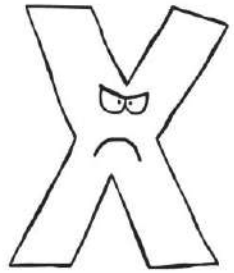
Objective: To investigate what children like/dislike about the work they do

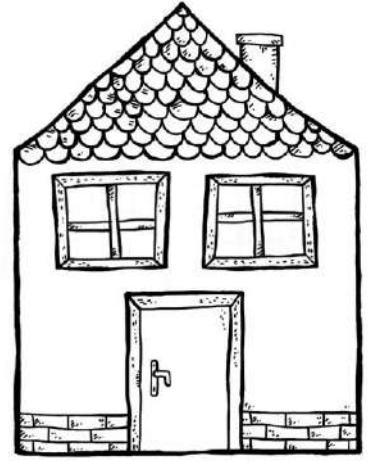


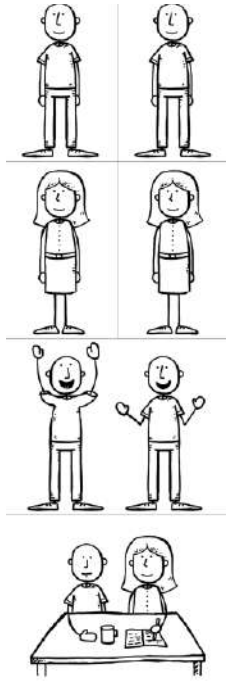


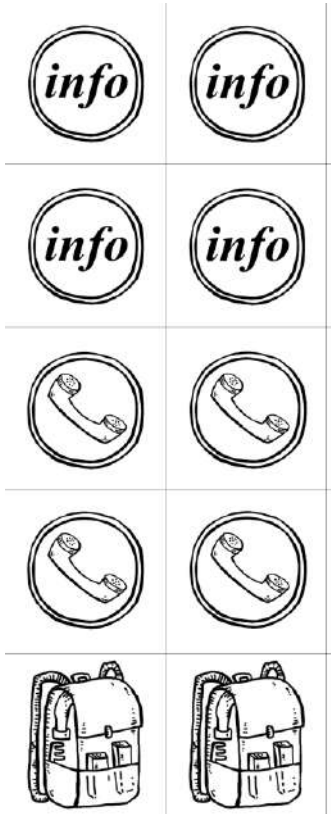






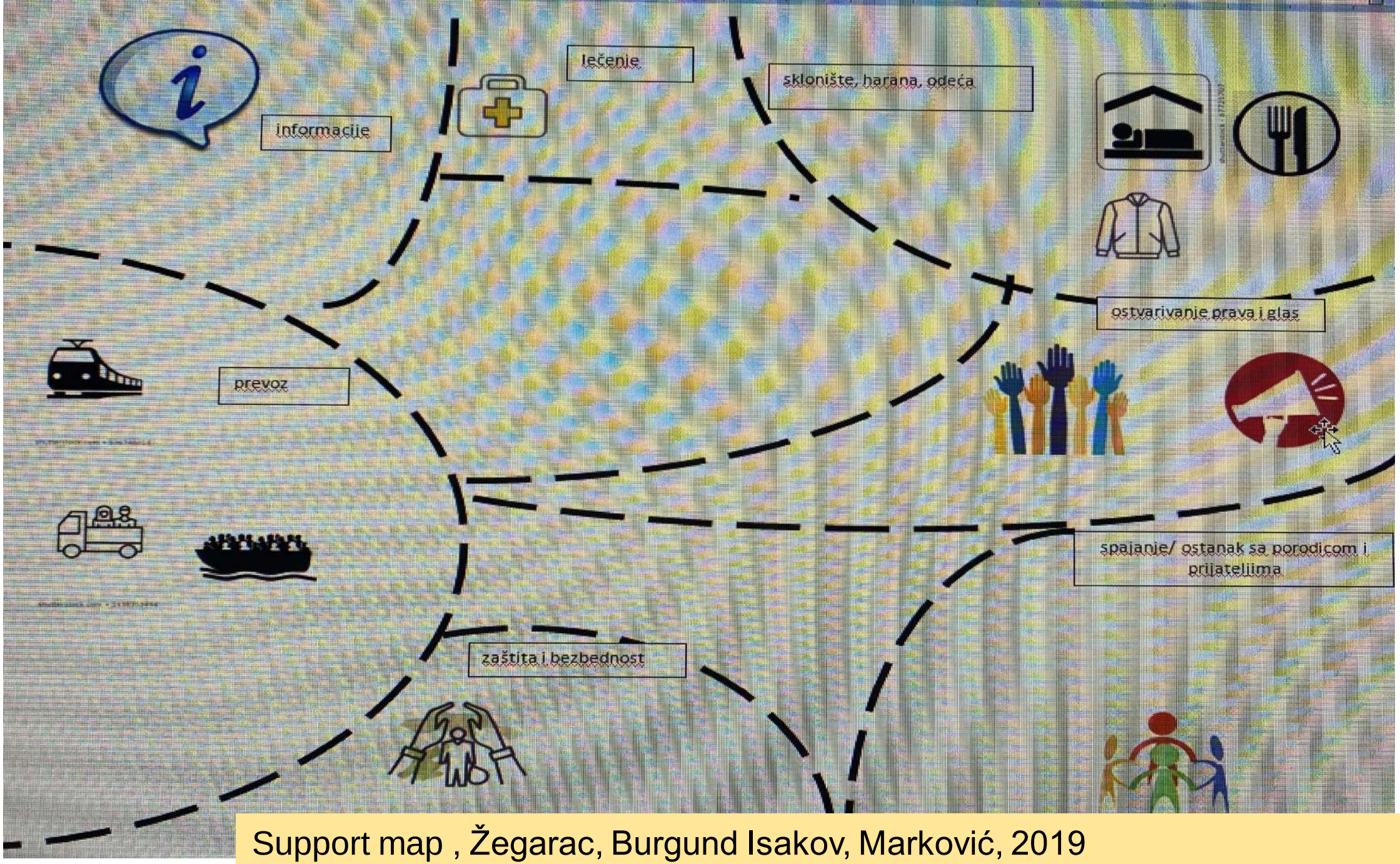




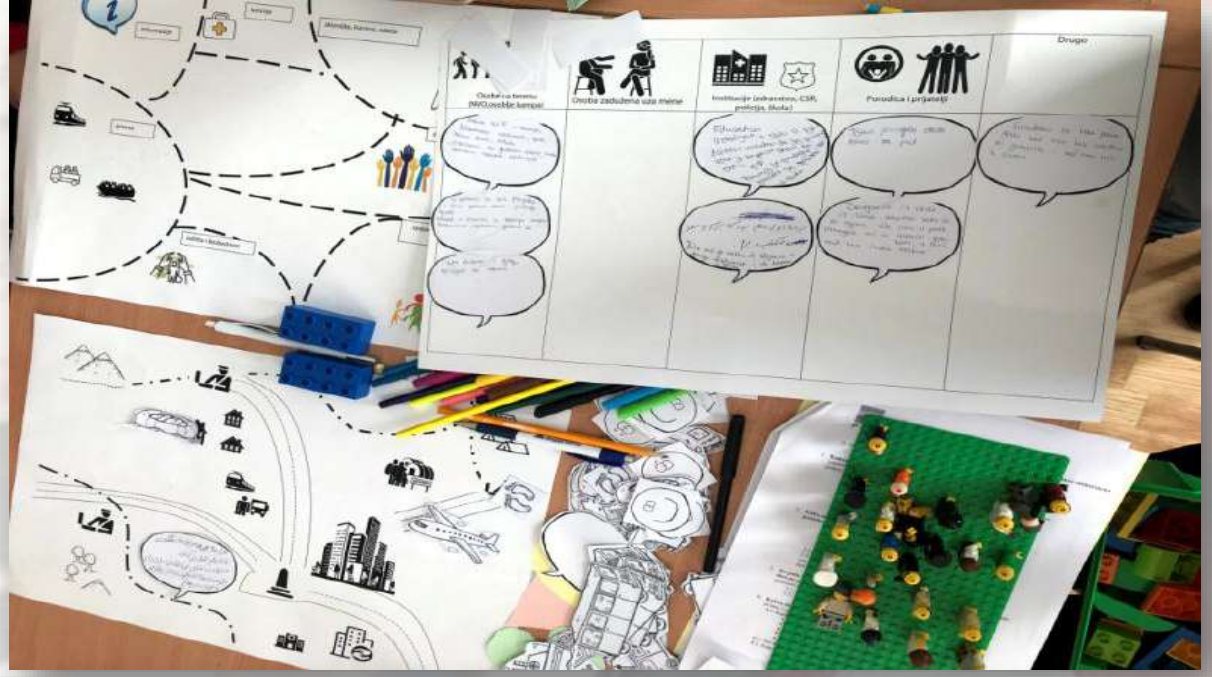

info
info
info
info

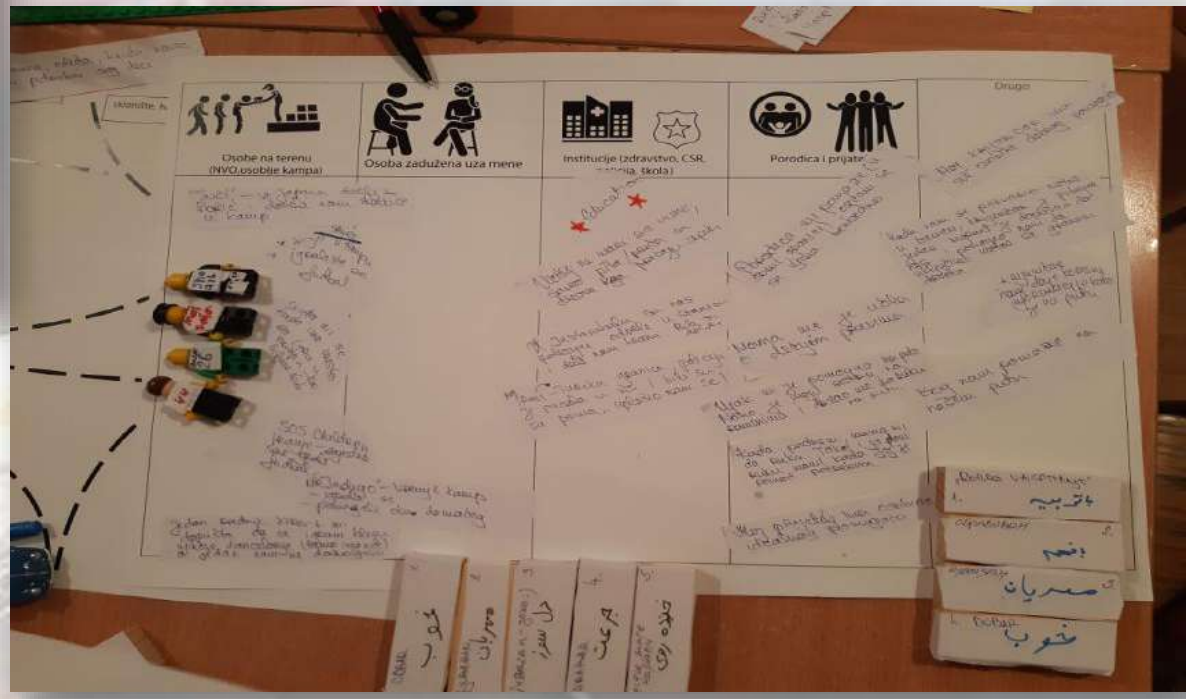


Road map, Žegarac, Burgund Isakov, Marković, 2019



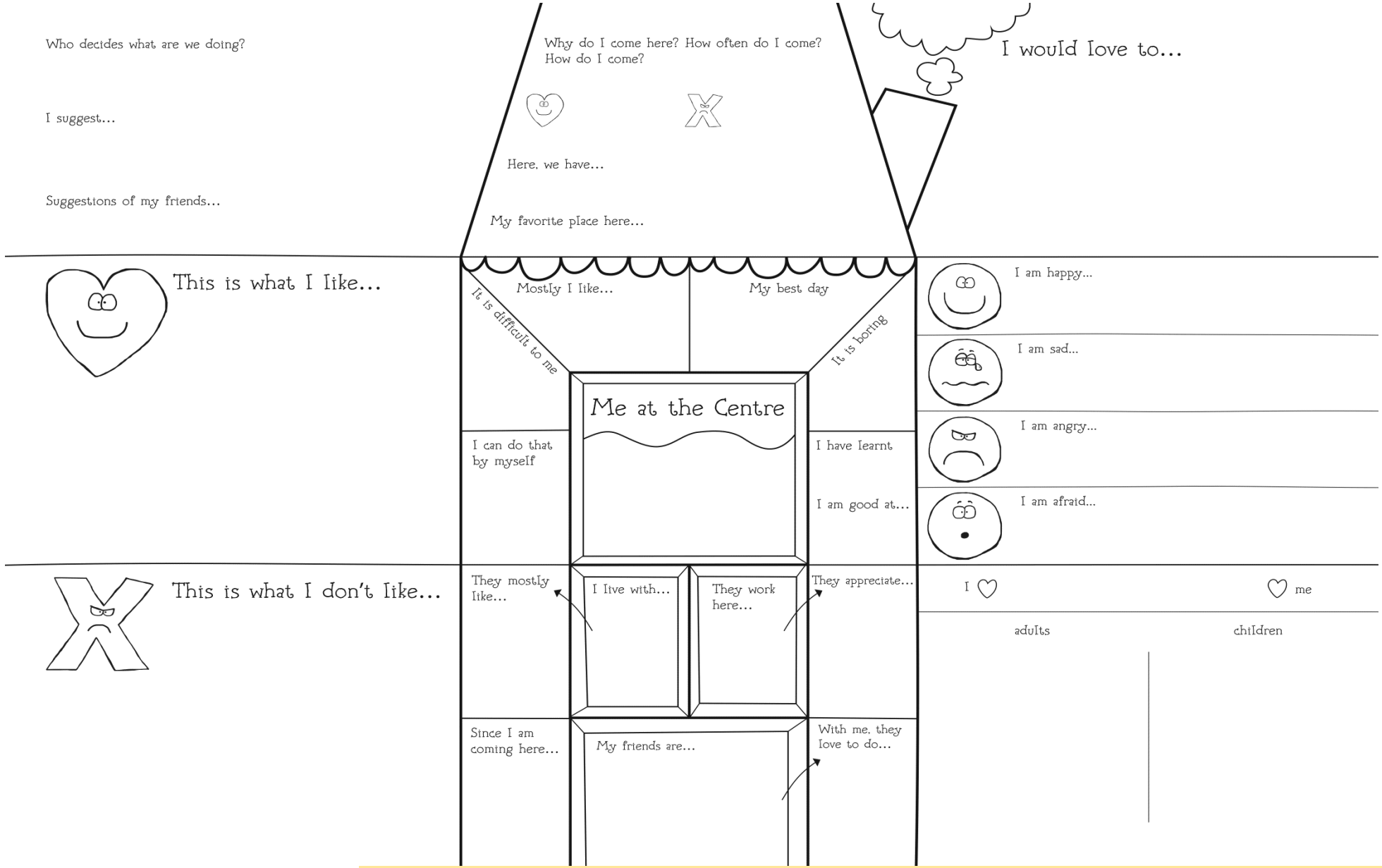
Support map , Žegarac, Burgund Isakov, Marković, 2019



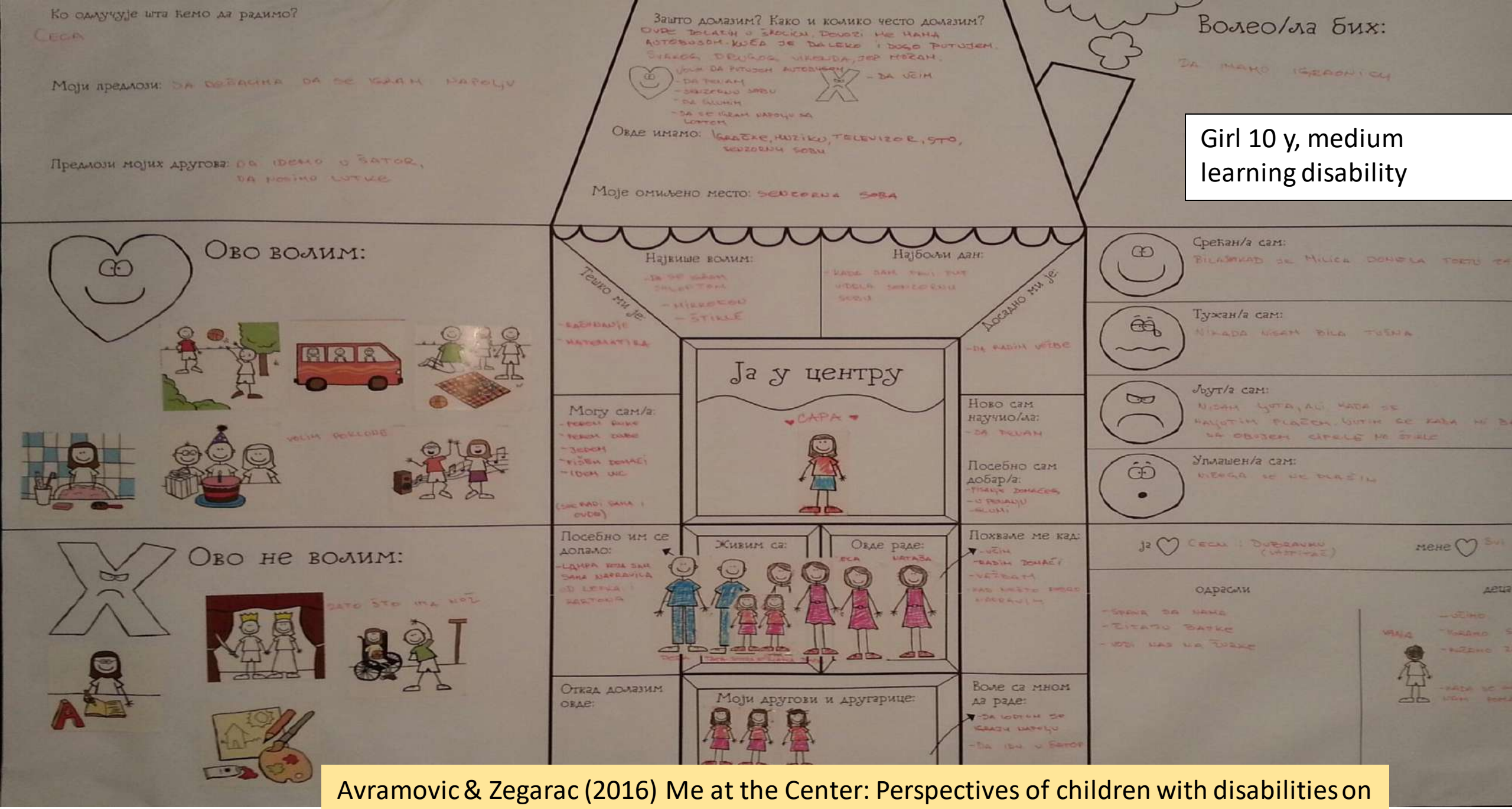




Faculty of political sciences, Belgrade
March 2020.



Avramovic & Zegarac (2016) Me at the Center: Perspectives of children with disabilities on community-based services in Serbia. *Children's Geographies*



Girl 10 y, medium learning disability

Avramovic & Zegarac (2016) Me at the Center: Perspectives of children with disabilities on community-based services in Serbia. *Children's Geographies*

Decision making in the shelter - girls included into sexual exploitation (De Sas Kropiwnicki, 2006)

	Eating	Sleeping	Friends	Boyfriend	Money	Jobs	Touch
Me	□	∇	•	•	•	∇	•
Educator	•	•	□	□	•		•
Manager of the shelter	∇	•	∇	•	•	∇	•
Friends	□	∇	□	□	□	∇	□
Family	∇	∇	∇	∇	∇	∇	∇

□ A little ∇ Somewhat • A lot

Decision making on the street - girls included into sexual exploitation (De Sass Kropiwnicki, 2006)

	Eating	Sleeping	Friends	Boyfriend	Money	Jobs	Touch
Me	∇	•	•	•	•	□	•
Friends	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Police	∇	•	•	□	□	•	∇
Madam	□	□	•	•	•	•	∇
Family	∇	∇	∇	∇	□	∇	∇
Man	∇	•	□	□	∇	∇	□
Teacher	•	∇	•	□	□	□	□
Older children	□	□	∇	∇	□	□	∇

□ A little ∇ Somewhat • A lot

Concensus bulding activities in 30 Focus groups

ADOLESCENTS		CASE MANAGERS AND COUNSELORS		FOSTER PARENTS	
1. Conectedness	14	1. Identity	7	1. Conectedness	5
2. Personal relationships	6	2. Conectedness	6	2. Identity	3
3. Adequate standard of living	5	3. Adequate standard of living	4	3. Personal relationships Adequate standard of living Self-satisfaction Education	1



Žegarac & Krnjajić (2019). Wellbeing of adolescent on foster care. Begrade: UB FPS

Expressive techniques

drawing, sculpting, expressing through movement, role-playing, etc., allow children to express their feelings and perspectives visually or kinesthetically, which may be a more accessible way of expression than verbal

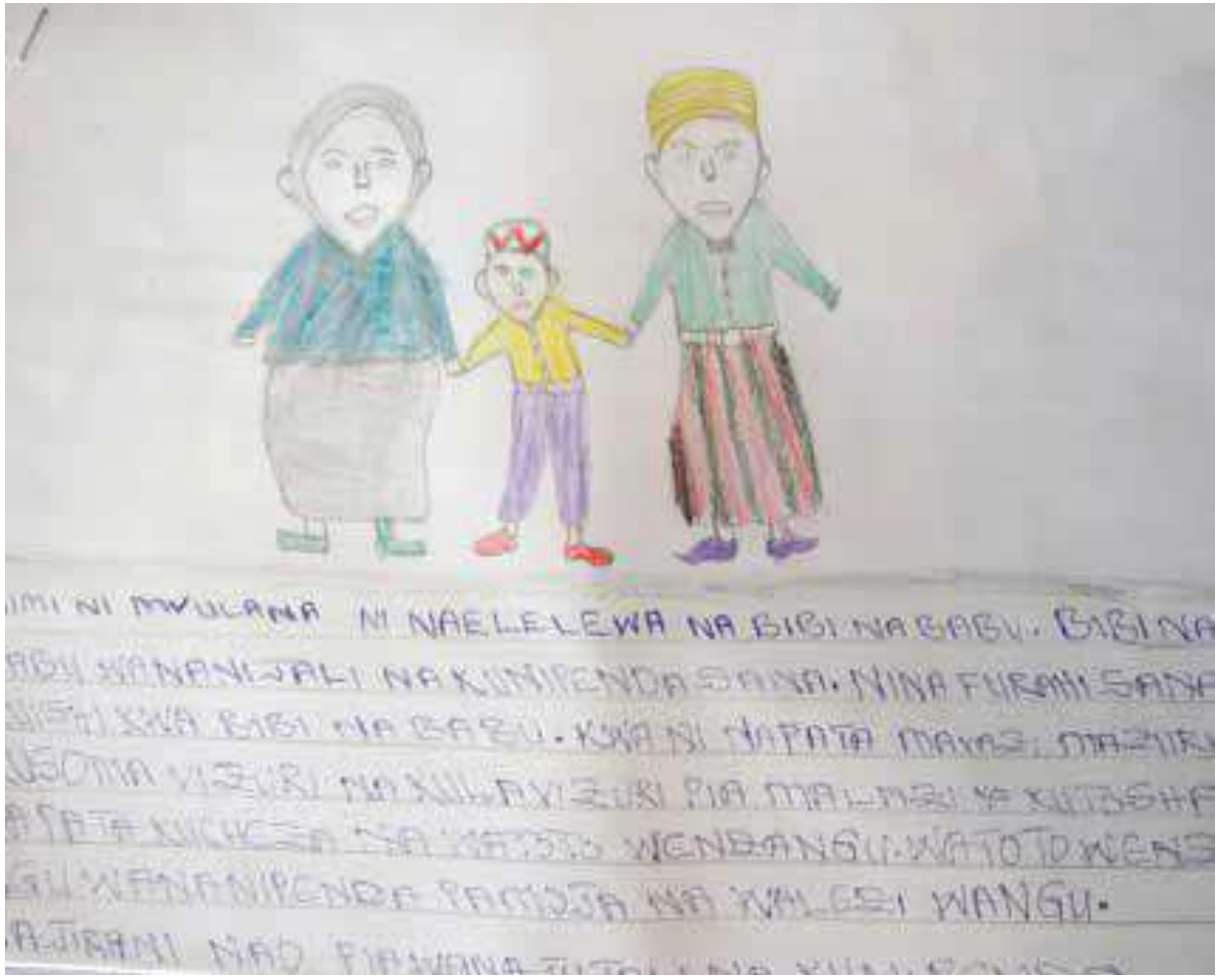




Draw and write a poem or story...



This is a boy of 14 years old. He stays with his maternal grandmother. He is 14 years old. He dislikes staying with his grandmother because he is given to work all day. Even he is the one generating the basic needs of the family. If he has done a small mistake or even playing with his friends, he is given to transport bricks 2 km away from their home. He is given to work like a donkey. At night he is told to sleep in the house of chicken and goats. If he complains about things in his feet



Creative techniques and other stimulating materials

- Creative techniques: journalistic reporting, use of puppets, making videos, films, creating and telling stories, theatrical performances, dramatizing problems or situations
- Theater for Development (TfD) conceptualizing, writing, performing: artistic objects, music, dance, song to analyze the problem and find its roots





The Tree of Vision

- Goal: both visual and creative children's / parents/ family view of:
- Their future vision and hopes - whether their current life and opportunities help/hinder them in achieving their future goals and dreams
- Existing strengths and services that can be enhanced and improve the lives of children and families
- Advocacy and action initiatives to improve children's working lives and to ensure that families are supported



H assessment of existing policies, laws and research approaches to children's views on family support

	**No of participants, age, sex, status**	
		

Guidelines for the use of creative / visual techniques

- Train researchers in the use of particpative/ creative/ visual techniques
- Inform children about the use of techniques
- Provide space and appropriate techniques for children to express themselves
- Balance fun with data collection
- Respect children's choice to (not) use visual and creative techniques
- Check the way children understand the use of visual and creative techniques
- Document both the process and the experiences of the researcher



Researcher's Bag



- Protocol
- Sufficient number of consent forms
- Sufficient amount of INFO about research
- Dictaphone
- Sticky papers & markers
- Flip chard paper
- Colored paper
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Adhesive tape





The voice of the professionals



There is less concern about experts not being involved in research.



The question is what kind of research material we collect.

PROFESSIONALS

How to get closer to what practitioners actually do in practice?

The methodological challenge is to explore work processes, theories in use, skills.

There may be a difference between what professionals say they do and what they do.



https://www.google.si/

PROFESSIONALS

Competent professionals usually know more about carrying out quality practice than they can articulate (Schön, 1987, 1991).

But we need a step further to be able to collaborate with families:

- knowledge and words to name our work in order to be able to co-create desired outcomes together.



https://www.google.si/

(Why) do we need research on work processes, theory in use, skills?

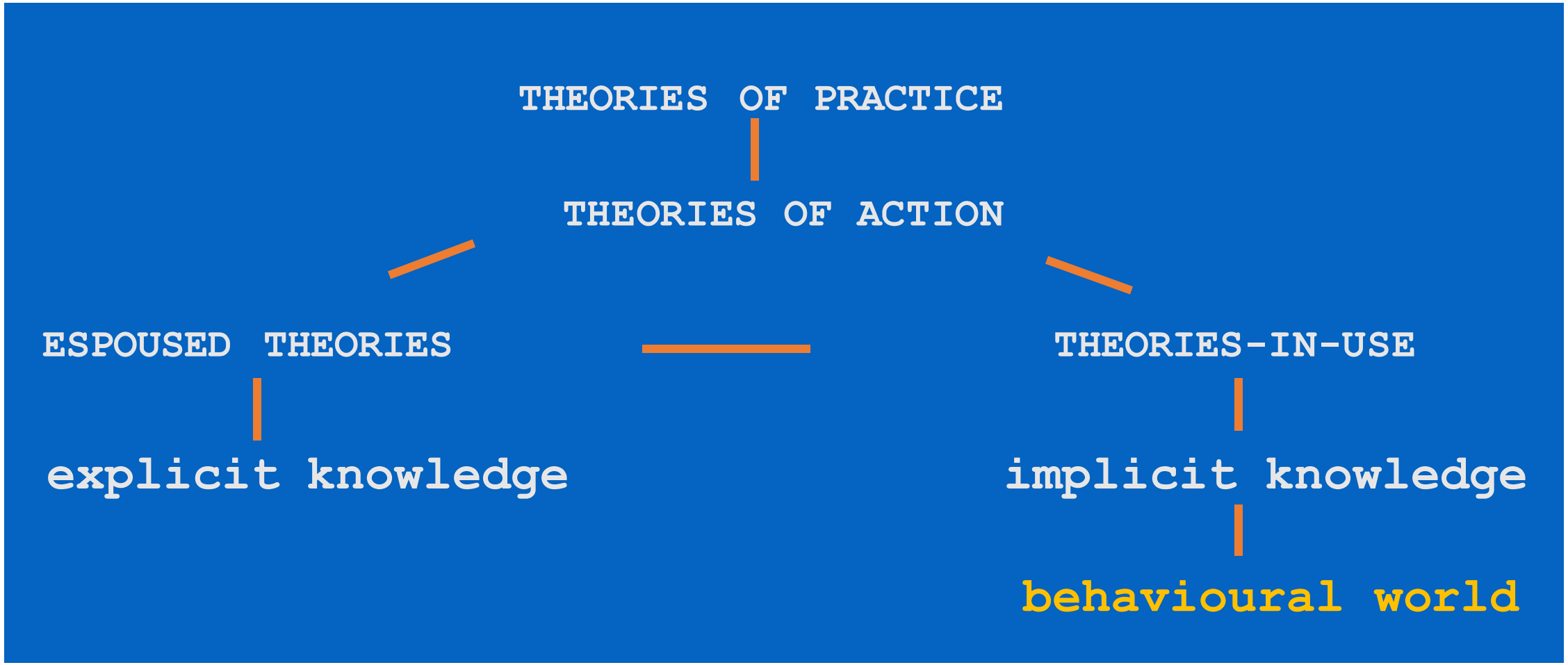
knowledge development, financing, reflection of practice, working in multidisciplinary teams etc.

! and to research ways that will allow moving closer to explicit definitions of our actions is a way moving towards collaboration with families



https://www.google.si/

THE USE OF THEORIES IN PRACTICE (Schön, 1987)



Research into the Use of Implicit Theories of Action in Social Work Practice

/The Case of Social Work with Families in Slovenia/ (Nina Mešl, 2004-2007)



https://www.google.si/

Research

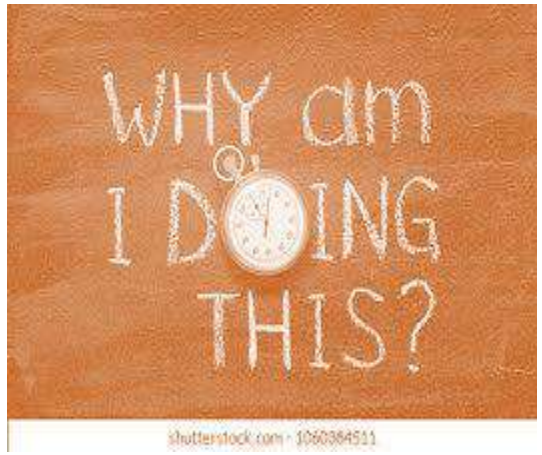


Qualitative and quantitative methods of data collecting and analyses

Three phases of research:

1. the interview in the field of their work, their theoretical starting points, etc. + collection of written documentation for the analysis
2. in-depth interview on the working process in the chosen case, the filling in of the evaluation scale for all cases chosen
3. the group interview (reflection on the research results)

In-depth interviews with each social worker on the working process



Three main questions framed the interview in the 2nd phase:

What happened in the case? What did you do? and Why did you do that?

The number of used codes in causal analyses of all interviews

code	event	action	purpose of action
number	70	105	30

COMPARISON OF THE MEANS OF THE INDEXES OF INDIVIDUAL WORKING CONCEPTS

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	delind	18,6800	25	3,14537	,62907
	delindn	13,2000	25	6,51920	1,30384
Pair 2	uprind	5,8800	25	9,02921	1,80584
	uprindn	7,0000	25	8,21077	1,64215
Pair 3	realinde	16,3600	25	2,84136	,56827
	realindn	4,4800	25	6,19892	1,23978
Pair 4	sisindek	13,6000	25	3,02765	,60553
	sisindn	10,1600	25	6,26950	1,25390

DISCUSSION

Various reasons for the differences in the mean estimates of the use of the different working approaches:

- the research method (researcher's evaluations were based on the analysis of written documentation)
- the gap between the espoused theories and the theories-in-use which define the social workers' behavioural world in practice.



https://www.google.si/

Both interpretations were confirmed by the social workers in the third research phase.

When we collect a lot of material in qualitative research



https://www.google.si/

let's start with the analysis…



https://www.google.si/

Qualitative analysis



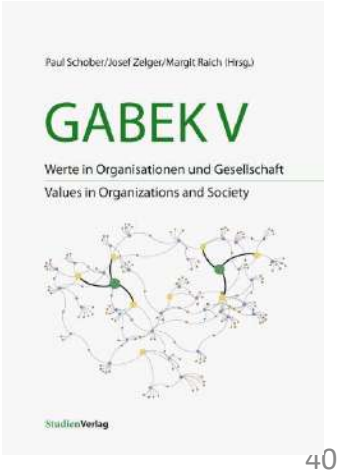
manually

using a computer programme for qualitative analysis

MAXQDA
The Art of Data Analysis

ATLAS.ti
QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

NVIVO



https://www.google.si/

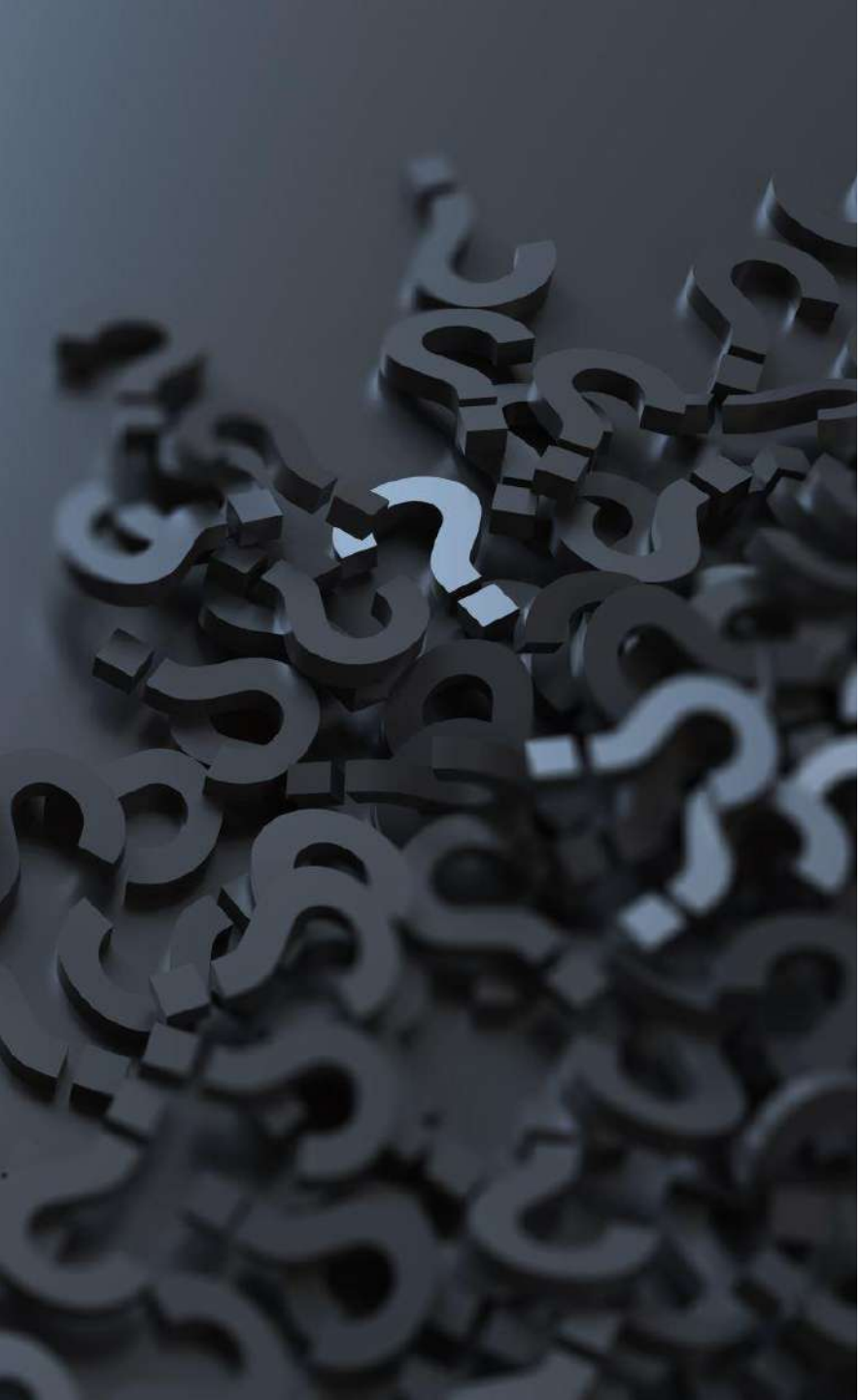
The Delphi study on family support skills (FSS)

1st round: open-ended questions

from the analysis of the qualitative material to the design of the questionnaire for quantitative research (2nd and 3rd round)



https://www.google.si/



Analysis 1st round: open-ended questions

- 31 experts, 23 countries, different areas of family support
- a qualitative analysis of the collected material
- two researchers conducted the coding separately
- the first round of analysis included all the statements identified by the participants in each questions as a predefined theme
- MAXQDA qualitative data analysis software (categorisation of text into thematic codes, overall representation of various codes, and analysis of the coded text) + coding by themes and categories in text (using Word).

SKILLS	KNOWLEDGE	APPROACH	TRAITS	AMALGAM of FS workforce features
Communication skills - good listening - asking questions - inter professional - nonverbal - informing and referral - user friendly - clarification **Relational skills** - partnership and collaboration - building trust and confidence* - (appropriate) self-disclosure* **Technical/instrumental skills** - facilitation - problem solving - modelling - managing a crisis* **Organisational skills** - inter professional coordination - teamwork - documentation and reporting - administrative management - self-care (including family-work balance) **Compound skills** - Assessment and planning skills - Set of empathic skills - Decision-making skills - Mediation skills - Advocacy & empowerment skills	• legal concepts • family life cycle, dynamics and stresses • neglect and violence • cultural norms • social context, poverty and discrimination • child development • services and systems of support • attachment	• child-centred • strengths-based • whole family approach • relationship-based • rights-based approach • trauma informed approach	• flexibility • intuition • reliability • openness • honesty • patience • commitment • warmth • genuineness • integrity	• Empathy and • compassion • Managing emotionally demanding situations • Non-judgemental • Authority • Simultaneous engagement with family members and professionals • Well-considered use of confrontation and instruction • Raising difficult and sensitive issues* • Ethical stance and conduct

Table of grouping skills definitions after the first round of the Delphi study to skills/knowledge/approach/traits/combination (of skills, traits etc.)

FS skills in different areas - most frequently mentioned (more than twice)

skills in the field of social welfare	No of codes (more than twice)
communication skills	5
listening	6
safeguarding children	5
ameliorating social and contextual stressors	4
empathy	4
relational skills	4
strengths perspective	4
knowledge about legislation	3
advocacy	3
all as FSS	3
non-judgmental stance	3
partnership working	3
understanding	3

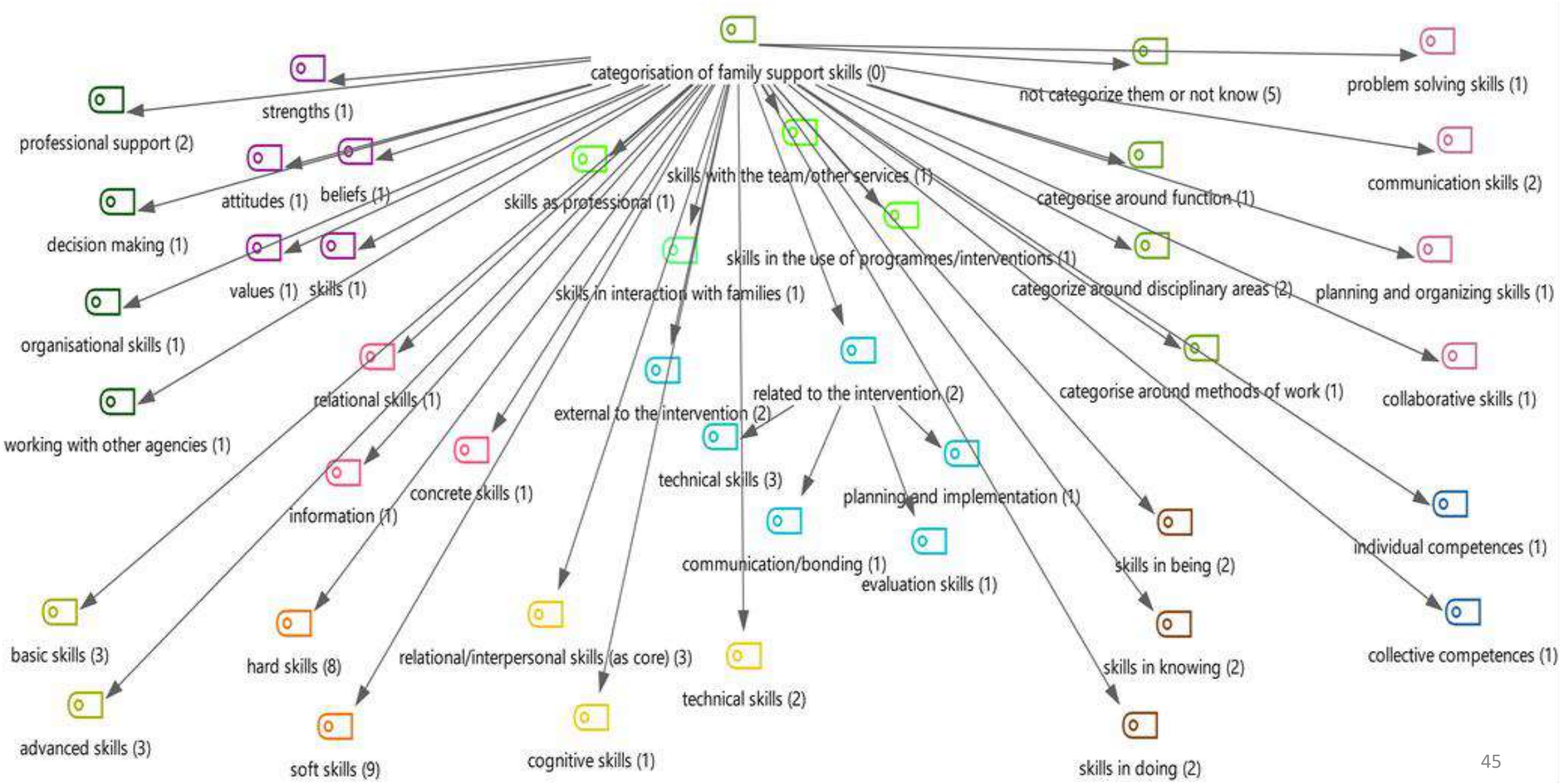
skills in the field of education	No of codes (more than twice)
all as FSS	6
communication skills	6
listening	3
partnership and collaboration	4
collaboration with all participators	3
empathy	3
understanding	3

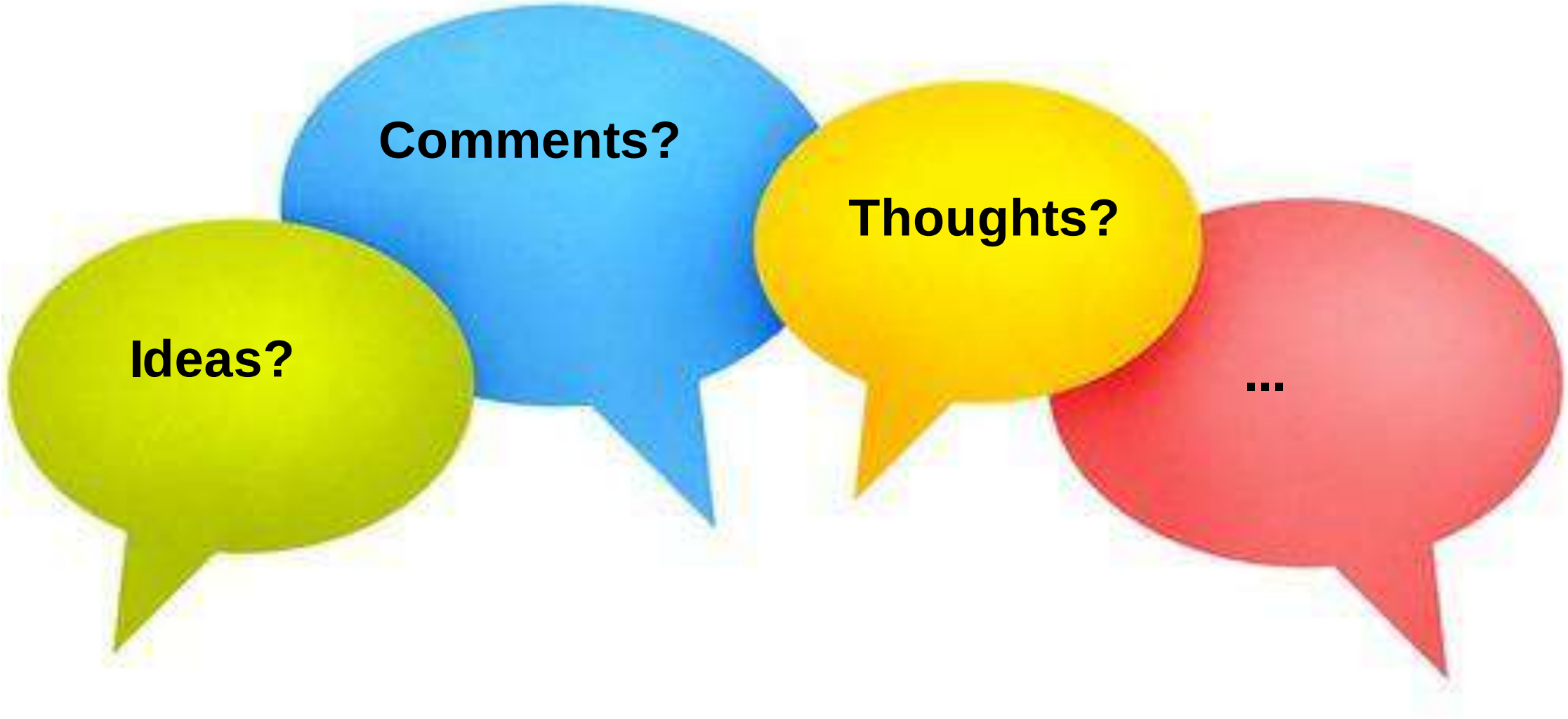
skills in the field of medicine	No of codes (more than twice)
all as FSS	5
collaboration with other professionals	4
communication skills	4
listening	3
empathy	3
sharing information	3

skills in the field of mental health	No of codes (more than twice)
all as FSS	5
knowledge about mental health	5
empathy	4
communication skills	4
listening	1
collaboration with other professionals	3
caring approach	3

skills in the field of law	No of codes (more than twice)
knowledge about legislation	7
communication skills	7
listening	2
all as FSS	5
advocacy	4

Proposed categorisations of FSS




Comments?
Thoughts?
Ideas?
...

Literature

- Clark, A. (2017) *Listening to young children: a guide to understanding and using the Mosaic approach.* Third edition. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishing.
- Creswell, W. J. And Creswell J.D. (2017). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches.* 5th edition SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, W. J. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design – Choosing Among Five Approaches*
- Ferguson, H. (2014). Researching social work practice close up: Using ethnographic and mobile methods to understand encounters between social workers, children and families. *The British Journal of Social Work*, *46*(1), 153-168*aches*. London: SAGE Publications
- Holland, S., Renold, E., Ross, N. J., & Hillman, A. (2010). Power, agency and participatory agendas: A critical exploration of young people's engagement in participative qualitative research. *Childhood*, *17*(3), 360-375.
- Schön , D. (1991). The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action. Aldershot etc.: Ashgate-Arena.
- Shaw, I., Ramatowski A., Ruckdeschel, R., (2013) Patterns, designs and developments in qualitative research in social work: A research note, *Qualitative Social Work* 12(6) 732–749
- Ritchie, J. And Lewis, J. (Ed) (2013) *Qualitative research practice - A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. London: SAGE Publications.