



## What is a Research Agenda?

**TOTAL SESSION TIME:** 125 minutes

**SESSION OBJECTIVES:** Youth researchers will learn about research agendas and how it can be used to help them answer big questions about their community.

**PREPARE:**

- Set up screen/projector to show slide deck.

### Opening Block: We Are Researchers

\*Activity adapted from Youthprise

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**OBJECTIVES:** Participants will recognize some of their current actions as being components of research.

**MATERIALS:**

- Candy

**ACTIVITY:**

- Create a circle with your team.
- Tell the participants to raise their hand if they have ever conducted research. Then ask those who have raised their hands to tell the group what kind of research they have done.
- Then tell your group that you will read a series of statements, and if the statement applies ask them to grab a piece of candy off the table.
  - I've talked with my neighbors about issues in our neighborhood.
  - I have read local newspapers and/or local news on social media.
  - I've had discussions with my friends or family about social issues.
  - I used the internet to get information about something I wanted to know.
  - I've taken notes at a meeting or in class.
  - I've "people watched" in a public space and noticed patterns.
  - I've taken photos of an important event
  - I've journaled my emotions, thoughts, and/or activities.
  - I've collected something before.
  - I've asked my family or friends about family history or about past events.
  - I've talked with a group of friends about an issue we were all experiencing.
  - I've kept a memory box filled with documents, photos, and trinkets.
- Tell participants that if they have a piece of candy in front of them, they have engaged in a component of research. Therefore, everyone has the expertise to contribute to the work we are doing.

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Learn more about Safety 7 at <https://www.childtrends.org/project/centering-youth-experiences-youth-participatory-action>.

**DISCUSS:**

- Ask participants if they had ever thought about any of the existing actions as key components of research.
- Tell participants that today we will be learning about creating a research agenda.

**Core Block 1: Intro to Research Agenda**

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**OBJECTIVES:** Participants will be able to define a research agenda and identify key components for a research agenda.

**MATERIALS:**

- Slide deck

**ACTIVITY:**

- Define research agenda
  - A high-level plan to help focus on topics and questions of interest.
- Talk through each step of creating a research agenda and give examples:
  - Identify a research goal (e.g., I want to decrease the number of shootings in my neighborhood)
  - Identify all the factors associated with the goal (e.g., lack of conflict resolution, mental health service needs, limited job opportunities, poor education)
  - Prioritize 2-3 of the key factors you want to explore further.
  - Develop interview questions and/or survey questions to explore the facts you want to understand.
  - Create a plan for data collection.

**DISCUSS:**

- Ask group if they have any questions about the process.

**Core Blocks 2: Identifying Research Priorities**

**\*Adapted from Youthrise**

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**OBJECTIVES:** Participants will reflect on personal experience and research knowledge to identify their research priorities.

**MATERIALS:**

- Paper
- Writing utensil
- Post-it notes
- Flip chart paper

**ACTIVITY:**

1. Split your team up into groups made up of three or more
2. While in their smaller groups, have them take Post-it notes and write down all of their concerns about violence in the community and potential contributing factors (7-10 min).
  - Sample issues: housing, police brutality racism, healthcare, food access, education, etc. Having a large list they can reference is helpful.
3. After writing as many issues as they can, have them stick the Post-its on their team's large flip chart paper.
4. Have them find themes. One way to do this is to group all repeating social issues.
5. Walk around to ensure that they are discussing their issues and are not confused.
6. Have the groups decide on a theme that almost everyone in their small group is familiar with.
7. Once they have decided, have the groups write their issue on the top of their big flip chart paper.
8. Their group should now add all of their experiences associated with this theme (10-15 mins).
9. Once completed, have groups move to the left, taking over the flip chart paper of the group closest to their left.
10. Have them now read the issue and the experiences. They should discuss with their team if these issues relate to them. If yes, they should add a Post-it with an exclamation point and their name, if not, individuals that do not relate should add a Post-it with an X and their name.
11. Have all groups add to all of the flip charts posted up around the room.
12. After they have added to all the groups' Post-its, have them reflect.

**DISCUSS:**

- Which issues would you like to learn more about?
- Which issues would you like to organize the community around?

**Core Block 3: Refining Research Priorities**

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**OBJECTIVES:** To solidify research priority areas from "Identifying Research Priorities."

**MATERIALS:**

- Paper
- Pen
- A sheet for voting on a top three

**ACTIVITY:**

- Ask participants to review the priorities discussed in the previous session.
- Lead participants in a discussion about the top three priorities.
- Rank the priorities by most important to address and least important to address.

**DISCUSS:**

- What considerations did you make in our rankings?
- How confident do you feel about addressing these priorities?
- What would it mean to act on these priorities?

**Closing Block: Closing Ritual**

**TIME:** 5 minutes

**OBJECTIVES:** Participants will end the meeting with their closing ritual.

**ACTIVITY:** Ask a participant to lead the group in the closing ritual.