

# **‘Kids Say’ Cards: Feasibility Study**

REBEKAH GRACE, KIM MILLER, GILLIAN BONSER, PAULA HAYDEN, AUNTY SUSIE BLACKLOCK

Child Aware Approaches Conferences, Brisbane, 16 May 2017



# Why do we care what 'Kids Say'?

---

IT IS THEIR RIGHT TO BE HEARD AND TO PARTICIPATE IN DECISION MAKING

IT IMPROVES THEIR OUTCOMES

For kids in out of home care, meaningful participation leads to an increase in:

- Self-esteem and sense of worth (Vis et al., 2011; Bell, 2012);
- Self-determination (Healy & Darlington, 2009);
- A feeling of control over their own life (Lesson, 2007; McLeod, 2007);
- The capacity to make decisions (Cashmore & O'Brien, 2001);
- The effectiveness of intervention programs (Woolfson et al., 2010; Barnes, 2012)

## **THE THREE MAIN CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING (Bessell, 2011)**

1. Young people are supported and provided enough information to be able to engage in making a decision.
2. Young people are given adequate opportunity to convey their point of view.
3. The young person's view must effect the outcomes of the decision.

# Barriers

- 
- Perceptions about the capacity of young people to engage
  - Conflicting beliefs regarding the right to participate Vs. protection and safety
  - The difficulty of providing opportunity for child voice in mandated situations or where options are limited
  - Increasing scrutiny and rigid accountability requirements
  - Time constraints
  - Limited capacity of workers to engage young people

Overcoming barriers is about capacity building, relationship building, allowing for choice whenever possible, appropriate activities and language, providing spaces that are comfortable (perhaps less formal than case conferences).

Newton et al. (2015) argued that we need tools, particularly those that are appropriate for use with Aboriginal populations.

# Methods

## INDEPENDENT FEASIBILITY STUDY

---

### ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

N = 20

10 lived with  
extended family

Females = 8  
Males = 12

Recruitment with  
support of  
Aboriginal Elders

### CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

N = 10

4 in OOHC

Females = 4  
Males = 6

Recruitment with  
the support of  
'Creating Links'

### MAINSTREAM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

N = 17

1 in OOHC

Females = 9  
Males = 8

Recruited through

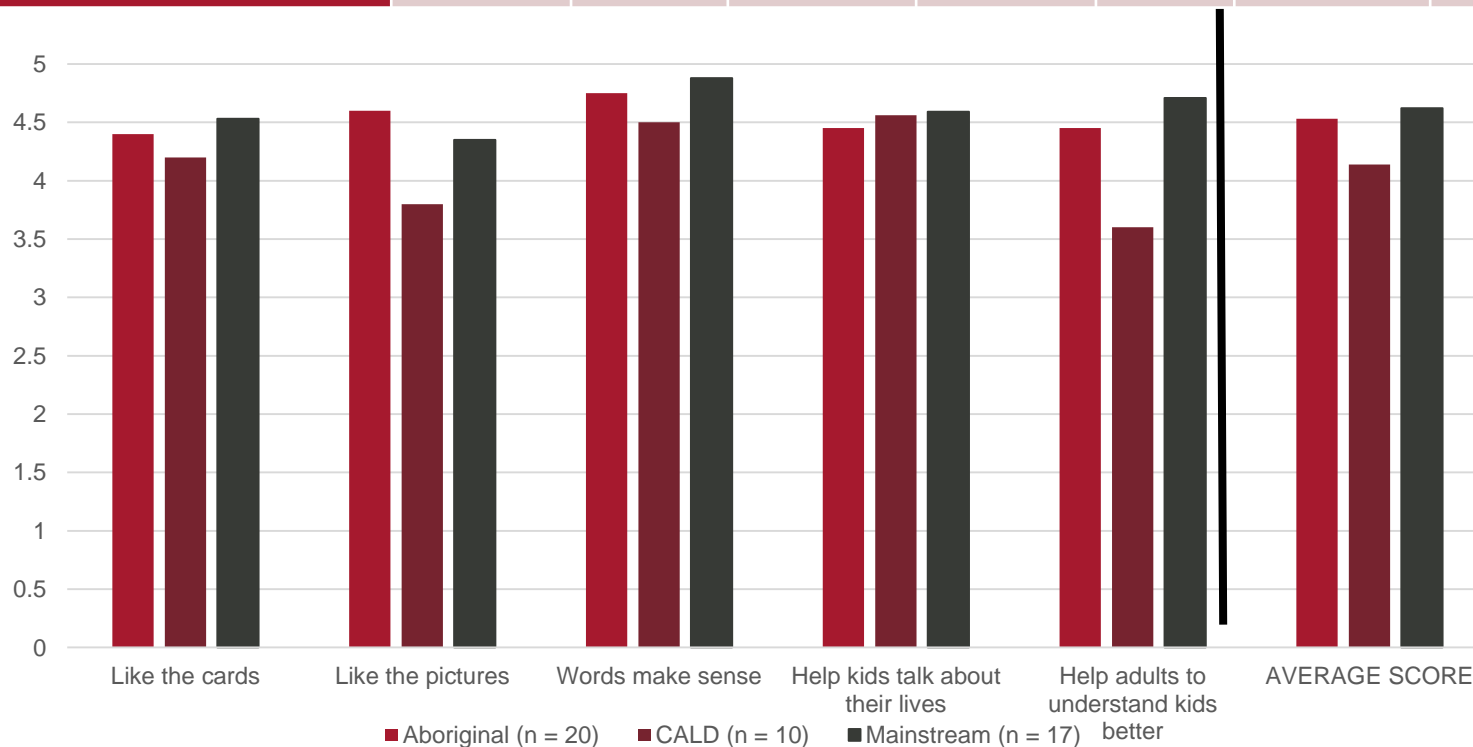
Each young person responded to 10 random cards.

5-point Likert Scale questions:

1. How much did you like the cards overall?
2. Did you like the pictures?
3. Did the words make sense to you?
4. Do you think these cards would help kids to be able to talk about their lives?
5. Do you think that if adults used these cards they would understand kids better?

# Response by Culture

	Aboriginal (n = 20)			CALD (n = 10)			Mainstream (n = 17)		
	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
How much did you like the cards?	4.40	0.68	3.00-5.00	4.20	0.63	3.00-5.00	4.53	0.60	3.00-5.00
Did you like the pictures?	4.60	0.75	3.00-5.00	3.80	0.79	3.00-5.00	4.35	1.00	2.00-5.00
Did the words make sense to you?	4.75	0.64	3.00-5.00	4.50	0.71	3.00-5.00	4.88	0.33	4.00-5.00
Would these cards help kids to talk about their lives?	4.45	0.76	3.00-5.00	4.56	0.53	4.00-5.00	4.59	0.66	3.00-5.00
Would these cards help adults to understand kids better?	4.45	0.69	3.00-5.00	3.60	1.26	1.00-5.00	4.71	0.69	3.00-5.00
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	4.53	0.44		4.14	0.44		4.62	0.39	



# Qualitative Responses by Culture

## ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

*“They help remind me how I feel. They help me remember that when I’m sad, or if I hit Dad, my nan just gives me a hug and cuddles me.”*

*“Yeah, they [the pictures] pop out. They have lots of colours. They’re creative and they show lots of different people.”*

*“I can focus on the pictures and the words on the cards and not be shamed about what I’m saying .”*

*“They helps kids have more confidence to tell about their problems and stuff.”*

*“It’s easier to talk with the cards than just talk because .. if I can’t think of the words the pictures can help me.”*

## CALD CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

*“I like that they ask questions for feelings that we don’t normally talk about and questions that people don’t really ask .”*

*“Because with kids, mainly we don’t talk about these things. Like what choices we can make, or our culture, or even rules. Especially rules, with parents and their kids.”*

*“I’m not used to the people .. I haven’t seen those sort of pictures before.”*

*“It’s important because a lot of people in the world don’t like talking about how they feel and they might get really upset and the cards would help them to talk about it.”*

*“It’s been a while since I’ve felt much emotion about anything .”*

## MAINSTREAM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

*“I don’t talk to people. I’m not confident about talking about important things but these cards helped a lot.”*

*“I really liked them, especially the one about caring. I also liked to be able to talk about the rules I would like to change because it is good to have some choices.”*

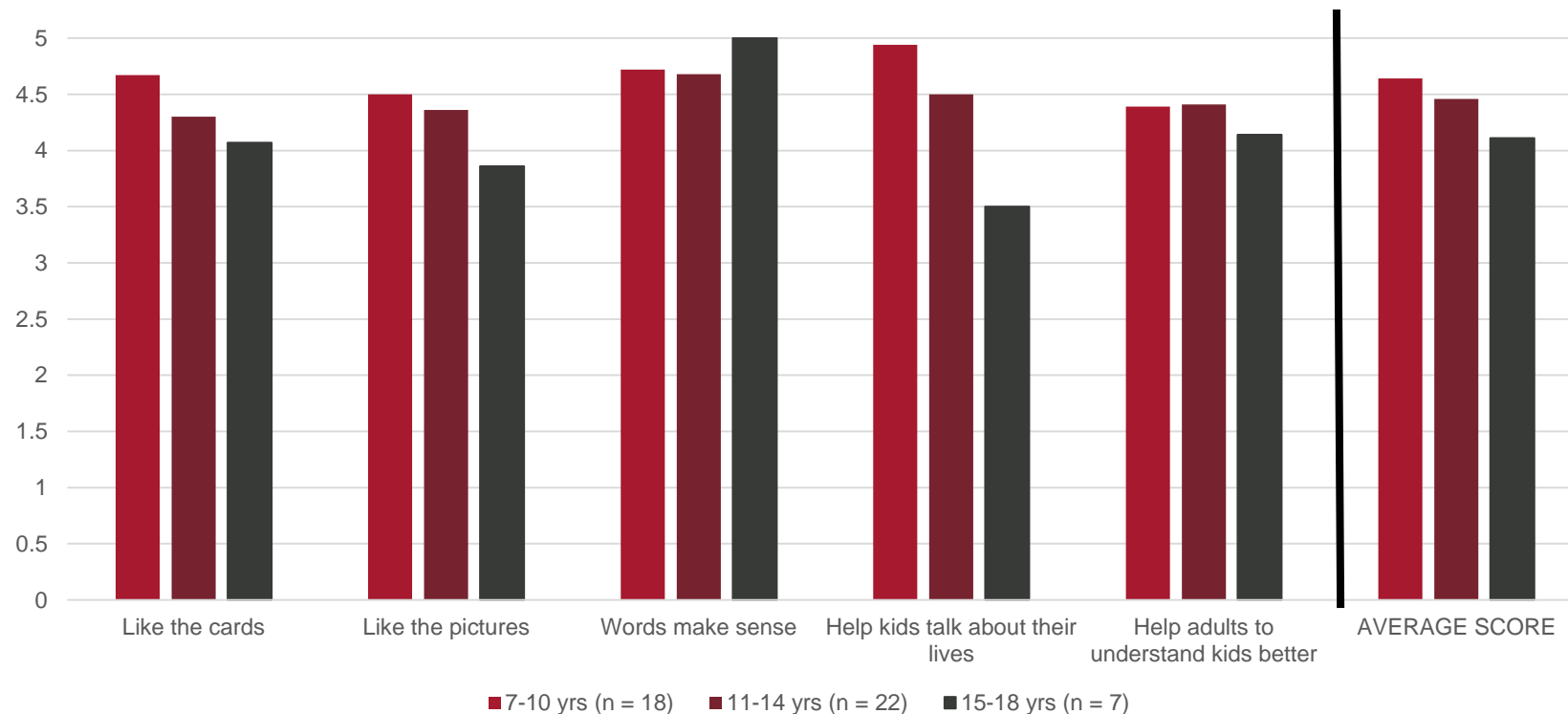
*“They’re funny. You didn’t have to think in a square, you could think out of the box. The cards are the box but you could have your own ideas.”*

*“The people look like real people, but look different to my friends and family.”*

*“Those boobies aren’t very age appropriate.”*

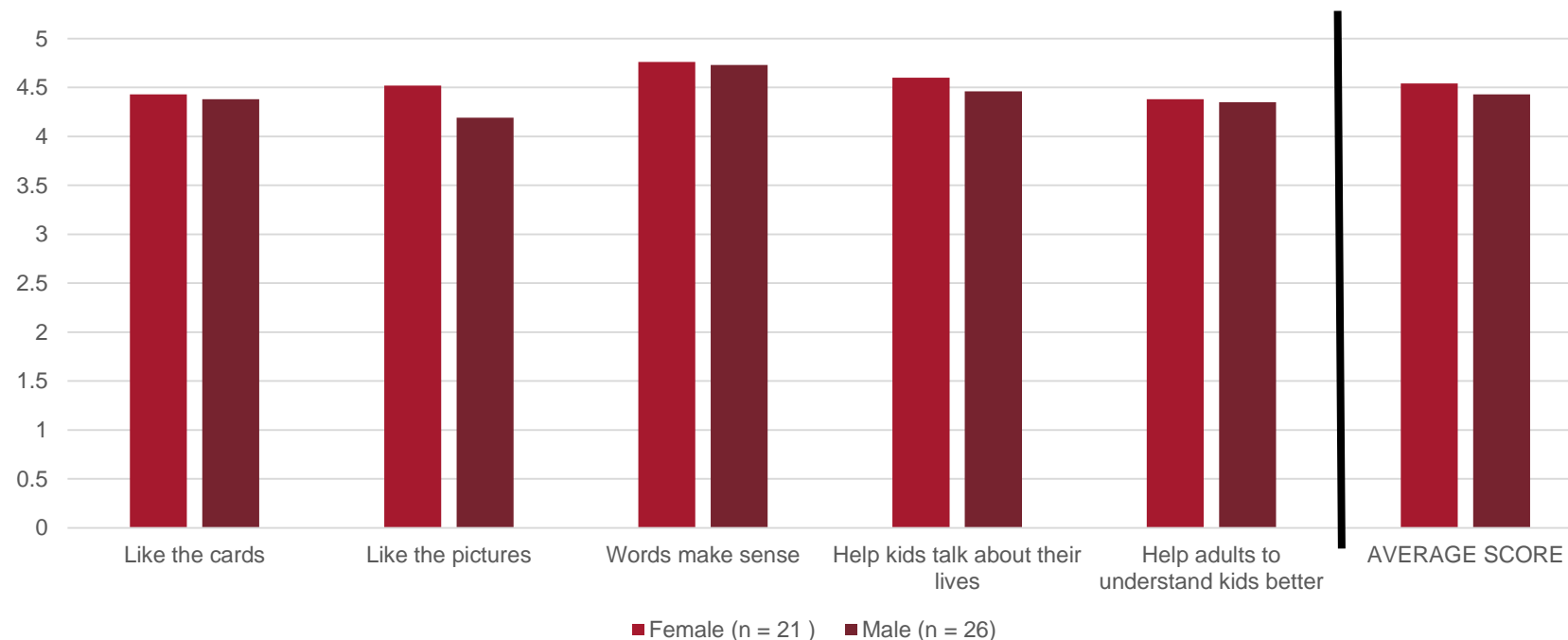
# Response by Age

	7-10 yrs (n = 18)			11-14 yrs (n = 22)			15-18 yrs (n = 7)		
	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
How much did you like the cards?	4.67	0.49	4.00-5.00	4.30	0.63	3.00-5.00	4.07	0.84	3.00-5.00
Did you like the pictures?	4.50	0.79	3.00-5.00	4.36	0.79	3.00-5.00	3.86	1.35	2.00-5.00
Did the words make sense to you?	4.72	0.57	3.00-5.00	4.68	0.65	3.00-5.00	5.00	0.00	5.00-5.00
Would these cards help kids to talk about their lives?	4.94	0.24	4.00-5.00	4.50	0.61	3.00-5.00	3.50	0.50	3.00-4.00
Would these cards help adults to understand kids better?	4.39	1.14	1.00-5.00	4.41	0.73	3.00-5.00	4.14	0.90	3.00-5.00
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	4.64	0.43		4.46	0.46		4.11	0.26	



# Response by Gender

	Female (n = 21 )			Male (n = 26)		
	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
How much did you like the cards?	4.43	0.66	3.00-5.00	4.38	0.64	3.00-5.00
Did you like the pictures?	4.52	0.75	3.00-5.00	4.19	0.98	2.00-5.00
Did the words make sense to you?	4.76	0.54	3.00-5.00	4.73	0.60	3.00-5.00
Would these cards help kids to talk about their lives?	4.60	0.68	3.00-5.00	4.46	0.68	3.00-5.00
Would these cards help adults to understand kids better?	4.38	0.86	3.00-5.00	4.35	0.98	1.00-5.00
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	4.54	0.50		4.43	0.41	





# Reflections on our experiences of using the cards

## FIELD NOTE DATA

---



1. Relieving the pressure to make eye contact
2. The need to prompt beyond the cards
3. The ease with which conversations ran deep
4. An important lesson learned in adults being prepared to hear what kids have to say

# Dr Rebekah Grace

MACQUAIRE UNIVERSITY VICE CHANCELLOR'S  
INNOVATION FELLOW

Email: [rebekah.grace@mq.edu.au](mailto:rebekah.grace@mq.edu.au)