



Annual report Dynamics of Youth 2021 – 2022



Preface

Childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood are periods of extraordinary opportunity for learning and exploration and for laying a strong foundation for a successful, happy, and healthy life. How youth develops and navigates these developmental periods is critical for both their own future and for the progress of the social and physical world we live in. Unprecedented global changes such as digitalization, climate change, migration and the COVID-19 pandemic are but some examples for the array of complex challenges facing youth. These challenges shape youth development in important ways. For some, they offer opportunities to thrive and realize their potential. For others, they curtail the promise of youth by widening social inequalities and exacerbating adversity. These challenges also raise the stakes for improving youth development, health, resilience, and wellbeing. So, the question Roosevelt raised is more important than ever: How can we build youth for the future?

Dynamics of Youth, one of the four Strategic Themes of Utrecht University, aims to answer this question by connecting science and society. This connection is crucial to promote equal opportunities for all youth to thrive in all domains of life. Given the complexity of current challenges, interdisciplinary collaborations and partnerships are key.

This annual report describes our activities and achievements based on the four impact areas we have developed: research impact, societal impact, capacity building and sustainability (see [Strategic Plan](#)). In the year to come we will build on what we have accomplished. This annual report can be used to inspire, to transform, and to excite. We hope you enjoy the journey.

Warm regards,



Prof.dr. Catrin Finkenauer

“We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.”

(Franklin D. Roosevelt; Address at University of Pennsylvania. September 20, 1940)

Prof. dr. Catrin Finkenauer, Scientific director Dynamics of Youth

Dynamics of Youth

Dynamics of Youth invests in our future. Inspired by societal issues, researchers from different disciplines integrate their expertise to answer crucial questions for future generations. In today's rapidly changing world, facilitating interdisciplinary research and collaboration is more important than ever. Our interdisciplinary collaborations on youth development have proven to be fruitful. The results that we have realized in the last years provide evidence of the promise and scalability of our efforts.

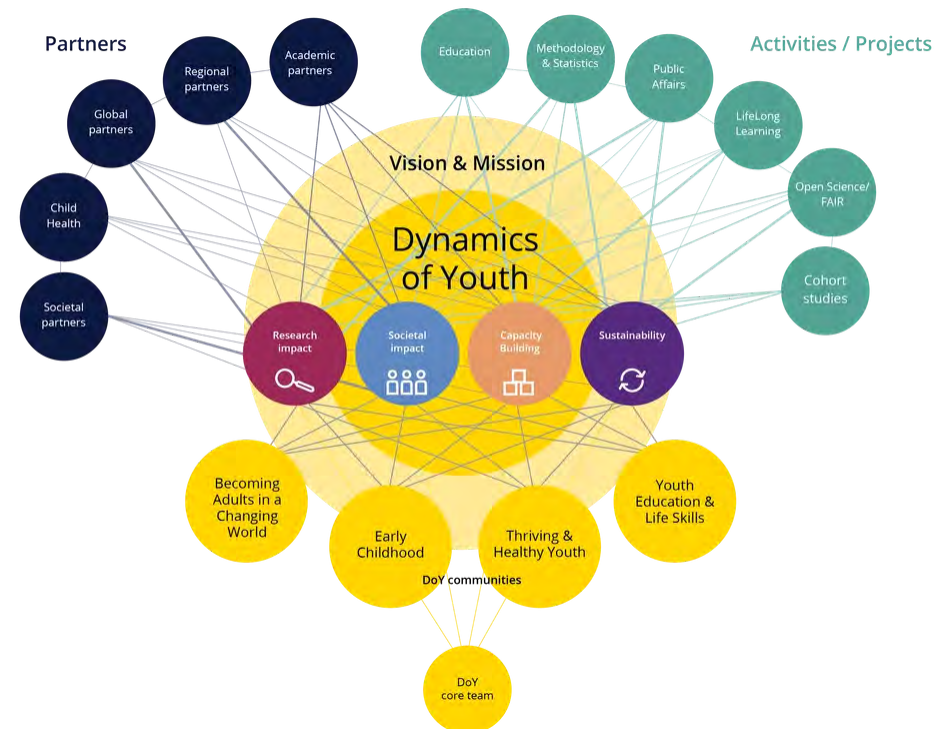
Our vision

We want to connect science and society to promote equal opportunities for all youth to thrive in all domains of life. This connection is essential for a better future of individual children, adolescents, and emerging adults. It is a pre-condition for youth to respond to social and global challenges and participate in shaping our future.

Our mission

Dynamics of Youth generates and provides independent, trustworthy evidence that raises awareness and identifies opportunities to successfully respond to complex challenges facing youth. We facilitate networks, expertise, practice, and support for interdisciplinary collaborations to increase inclusiveness, reduce social inequalities, and improve youth health, wellbeing, and education.

Elevator pitch Dynamics of Youth



Preliminary Remark: 'DoY Research Domains' became 'DoY Communities'

Earlier, we used the term Research Domains within Dynamics of Youth. From now on, however, we will use the term Communities, starting with this DoY Annual Report.

Why? The harmonisation of strategic themes is important. Alignment in terminology has been an important concern from the start, because equal terms and labels facilitate focus on content. By using the term Communities, we ensure that 3 of the 4 strategic themes use the same terminology. As a consequence of the new label Communities, the term 'Domain Chair' will be changed to 'DoY Chair'.



Highlights of our impact areas

Research impact

Dynamics of Youth research on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on youth wellbeing, mental health and academic adjustment.



The COVID-19 pandemic has had a strong impact on adolescents worldwide, including in the Netherlands. After the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, several researchers of DoY joined forces to examine the impact of the pandemic on youth wellbeing and mental health. Ongoing longitudinal samples such as YOUth, Youth got Talent and InTransition were followed to examine change in wellbeing and adjustment over the course of the pandemic and new data collections were initiated, for example to examine youth prosocial behavior during the pandemic. Results of these studies demonstrate that many youth experienced increased depressive symptoms, negative affect, and loneliness, and lower academic adjustment during the pandemic, particularly those that were already at risk before the pandemic. At the same time, many adolescents had individual, family, and community resources that made them resilient and helped them to continue to function well despite the adverse circumstances. Researchers from Dynamics of Youth organized several special issues in international journals on this topic to synthesize high-quality research on the impact of the pandemic on youth. They also presented their findings in the media and in several meetings for practitioners and policy makers. They also participated in a national endeavor together with the Netherlands Youth Institute to integrate all research in The Netherlands on the impact of the pandemic on youth, with the aim to steer policy during future pandemics to prevent the many negative effects of social distancing measures on youth wellbeing.

Do you want to read more about Dynamics of Youth research on Covid-19? Click [here](#)!



Societal impact

Dynamics of Youth podcast 'Jong Geleerd'

Dynamics of Youth started the Dutch language podcast series JongGeleerd in January 2022. A different theme from the interdisciplinary youth research of Dynamics of Youth is highlighted every month. The aim of the podcast is to share scientifically substantiated knowledge of our UU-researchers and information of social partners with youth professionals. The podcast series ties in closely with Utrecht University's Open Science Program and its focus on public engagement.

The podcast series is explicitly aimed at a listening audience of professionals who work with or for children and youth and who look beyond the boundaries of their profession. These are for example teachers, social workers in the youth mental health care, child physiotherapists, child care workers, pediatricians and nurses or policy makers. The podcast is also interesting for a listeners audience of scientists and parents, as the podcast offers them in-depth knowledge, new insights, practical tools and inspiration.

The podcast is produced by Dynamics of Youth and recorded at the Radiofabriek in Hilversum. Each episode a UU-researcher and a professional are being interviewed on a certain topic. The conversations are interspersed with quotes from children and youth, so that their perspective on the subject is also included. The podcast is broadcast on various podcast channels (Spotify, SoundCloud and Apple Podcasts) and distributed via several social media channels and newsletters of UU, UMCU and partner organizations.

So far, the podcast series (6 episodes) has reached an audience of 3000 listeners. Per podcast, the listening figure averages 500 people. This number will increase in the coming months as the channel becomes more and more well-known.



Capacity building

Interdisciplinary Dynamics of Youth master

The core team of one of the Dynamics of Youth hubs ('Youth got Talent') has taken the initiative to reform an existing master in such a way that it became an interdisciplinary master crossing different UU faculties: Youth Development and Social Change (YDSC). This innovative master program teaches disciplinary and interdisciplinary theories and concepts to students from different disciplines to understand and analyze youth issues by taking different perspectives and collaborate on societal challenges. Only by connecting science and society, different disciplines, perspectives, and methods can we conduct the innovative research that provides new answers to sometimes longstanding questions on youth development. Therefore, the YDSC Master program aims to train academic youth professionals to build bridges between professionals from different disciplines and connect research with practice. To do so, the YDSC Master has a strong emphasis on developing academic and interdisciplinary skills, such as critical thinking, collaboration, reflection and communication. This pioneering work of the core team would not be possible without the expertise and support of the Educational Development & Training department of Utrecht University. The close collaboration between researchers from the faculties of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Law, Geosciences, and the Utrecht Medical Center with support staff trained in interdisciplinary teaching contributes both to developing a cutting-edge Master program for students as well as to the capacity building of the researchers from the core team. It empowers them to design a Master program that responds to the need for interdisciplinary skills that bridge research, education, and professional practice by developing and implementing new teaching and assessment methods.



Sustainability



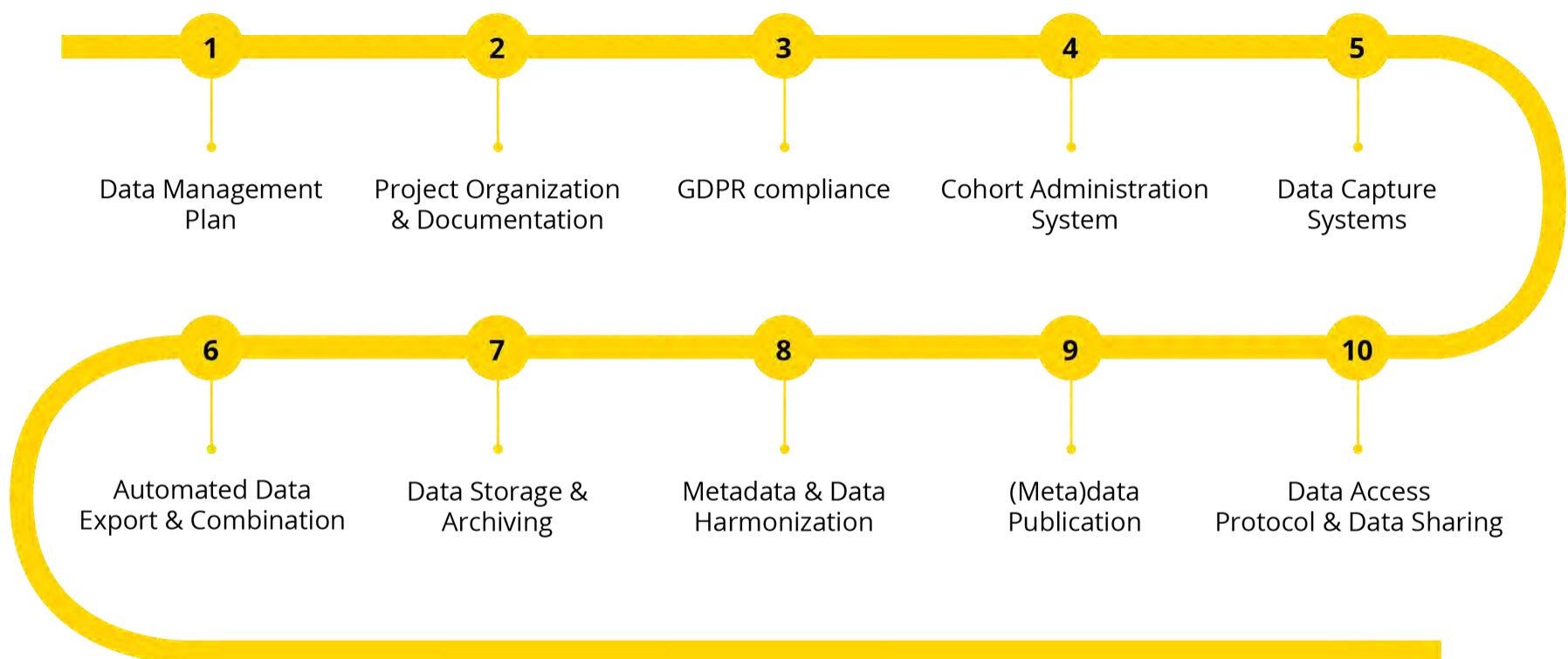
FAIR data project – Supporting DoY researchers in FAIRifying their data

Dynamics of Youth has the ambition to make all projects within the theme as FAIR as possible, i.e. Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable. The projects and cohorts within Dynamics of Youth can benefit from greater visibility, so researchers can find and reuse data in order to answer a wider range of questions. Datasets could be exchanged or combined to form novel collaborations, start exciting projects, and address pressing issues.

Despite the benefits, the process of FAIRifying youth data can seem daunting. It's difficult to determine which data can be safely shared, with whom, and under which circumstances - particularly when there is (personal) data of minors involved. The FAIR data project was set up, in collaboration with [RDM Support](#), with the aim to support DoY researchers to make their data FAIR more easily.

The [PROactive cohort](#), comprising of children with chronic diseases at the Wilhelmina Children's Hospital (WKZ), was a first test case in the FAIR data project. A FAIRification workflow (see figure) was developed for the PROactive cohort, which can be adapted to fit other projects within Dynamics of Youth as well. Additionally, a FAIR data handbook will be developed, containing guidance on how to FAIRify data and related RDM subjects. Lastly, there is a goal to create an overview of research projects and associated data within Dynamics of Youth. This overview would take the form of a searchable and informative catalog which could be helpful for data sharing and collaborations. Through the aforementioned efforts we will contribute to making it easier for youth researchers to FAIRify their data and thereby the sustainability of existing research, activities, and investments.

PROactive: THE FAIRification PROCESS



Sustainable and FAIR data within the YOUth cohort

YOUth has a focus on producing safe, high quality and FAIR data. YOUth data is available for GDPR-compliant use in scientific research on brain- and behavioral development of children through safe, managed access. After developing Yoda (a now widely adopted data-infrastructure for secure data storage and sharing), YOUth has recently launched an extension to Yoda: [an online data request module](#). In addition, there is an [interactive prospectus](#) that constitutes a real-time overview of available data and broad communication about data access through (social) media, conferences, and presentations.

To advance transparency as part of open science, YOUth now requires public pre-registration of approved data requests in the newly launched [YOUth Registry](#) on the Open Science Framework (OSF). YOUth also fosters transparency towards participants, for example through a [blogpost](#) about why, how and with whom we share the YOUth data.



(Inter)national collaborations

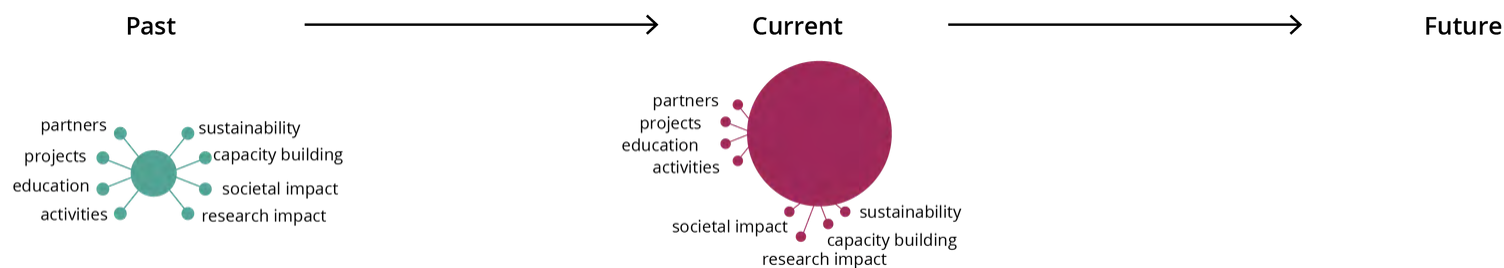
This year DoY has continued to make concerted efforts to engage with both professionals and policymakers. At the national level, DoY researchers have been involved in advising the Nationaal Programma Onderwijs by conducting the Wetenschapstoets and participating in the scientific expert group installed to monitor and evaluate the program. The Ministry of Education (OCW) also invited DoY to provide a quickscan to advise which extra-curricular initiatives to invest in to support equal opportunities for all children (Rijke Schooldag). Also, we consolidated our collaboration with Child Health (speerpunt UMCU), aligning our strategic goals and harnessing the complementary diversity of expertise.

At the international level, DoY in partnership with UUGlobe facilitates the Global Learning Community on education in which around 80 organisations work to improve the quality of primary and secondary education systems, especially for children in adversity. These efforts are funded by the Porticus foundation. DoY was invited to speak at this year's European Development Days in Brussels, spreading the important message that Europe should invest more in children and youth globally. Furthermore, DoY has continued to be an active member of EuroChild, providing input on consultations and access to research that supports the network's advocacy efforts. DoY has had fruitful meetings with the OECD (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation) this year that will lead to new joint activities in the future. Also, we have been happy to share experiences with the newly launched KU Leuven Child and Youth Institute in setting up similar initiatives at our respective Universities and are confident we will find many more opportunities to expand our collaboration.

Finally, DoY has this year been a consortium member in a number of consortia that developed competitive and in a number of cases successful applications in national and international funding instruments, such as Horizon Europe, NWA, NWO and the Lego Foundation.

Looking back, moving forwards

Vision & Mission Dynamics of Youth



Dynamics of Youth started in 2013. Since then, we invested in sustainable collaborations that bridge disciplines and sectors. Our goal was to create an open, participatory, and inclusive approach where we worked towards the shared goal of being a driving force for the optimal development and thriving of all youth. All activities contributing to our mission and vision were organized in and across hubs – interdisciplinary breeding places for fundamental and applied research on specific youth issues. Furthermore, different cohort studies, such as the longitudinal YOUth cohort study, formed the backbone of the breeding places.

Our youth, our future

We can now build on this wonderful foundation. By standing on the shoulders of giants, we move on towards four DoY communities, that allow us to span the entire development from conception to emerging adulthood (-1 to 24 years). DoY will concentrate its efforts in these communities which are well-aligned with the research interests of UU and UMCU researchers. The four DoY communities are: Early Childhood, Becoming adults in a changing world, Thriving and healthy youth, and Youth education and life skills. Every community will define its own aims, based on four impact areas: Research impact, Societal impact, impact on Capacity building, and Sustainability. Together we want to contribute to understanding and advancing scientific method, theory, and application. We aim to solve societal challenges and increase professional skills and qualifications. Furthermore, we promote the sustainability of existing networks, research, activities, and investments.

Interdisciplinary hubs and the YOUth cohort

The first 1001 days of a child's life



Research on the most crucial period

The first 1001 days of a child's life, from conception to their second birthday, are critical to the development of their complex brains and the cognitive skills that depend on them. This time marks the occurrence of milestones in motor skills such as sitting up and walking, but also language acquisition. Most of the process involved in learning to understand, speak and use your native language takes place in the first 1001 days of your life. The hub 'The first 1001 days of a child's life' focuses on three areas: language problems, brain development and projects in society.

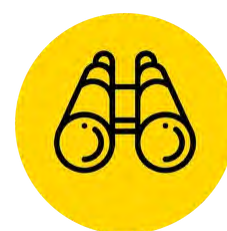


Where do I belong? Children in multi-resident families

How and where do children feel at home when they grow up with divorced parents?

A sense of belonging or being part of something bigger than yourself is a fundamental human need. This feeling develops in the early stages of our relationships with parents or primary caregivers and has a profound effect on children's well-being and cognitive performance. Nowadays, over one in six children living at home in the Netherlands experience parental divorce. Knowledge about this sense of 'belonging' is thus becoming increasingly important. After all, if you feel at home among your family, at school, among friends or in your neighbourhood, you will feel better and have a better chance of developing optimally. The 'Where do I belong' hub focuses on the sense of 'belonging' after divorce.

Change your perspective!



Research on polarisation and antagonism

The 'Change Your Perspective' hub brings together scientific scholars and practitioners from various disciplinary perspectives, not only to discuss pressing issues in our society related to increasing polarisation, social divides and oppositions, but also to share insights based on research and practical experiences. The hub members are interested in the question of how to create successful conditions to tackle potential controversies, divides and oppositions, with a specific focus on youth and education. They explore, among other things, how young people process information and how this affects their world view, their attitudes and behaviour as well as their interactions with others.

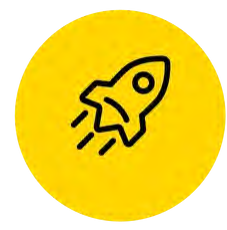


Healthy Play, Better Coping

Why is play important for healthy development?

Play begins in the earliest phase of child development. Babies develop their senses by mouthing objects or playing with soft books. Play stimulates a child's imagination and logical thinking. By playing together, children also learn social skills and how to cope with disappointment. Play is essential for healthy development. By playing, children learn forms of social interaction, motor skills and problem-solving. Moreover, play promotes the development of emotional abilities and creativity. Through play, children experiment with their own (social) behaviour by imitating various situations and circumstances. But play is not self-evident for all children, for instance, those with a chronic disease. At the 'Healthy Play, Better Coping' hub, they focus on the question: 'How does play help children to develop healthily and to cope with setbacks or illness?'

YOUth Got Talent



How do young people see their future?

A happy life and a bright future – that is what most young people in the Netherlands want. However, there are clear differences in well-being, mental health and social participation between young people from different social groups. The 'YOUth Got Talent' hub investigates how experiences in the family, with friends, at school, in the community and in society influence young people's well-being and their ideas about the future.

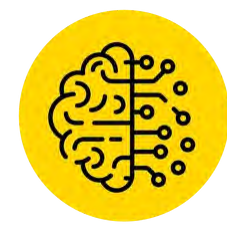


Developmental labels: the good, the bad and the contested

How do diagnostic classifications affect children's wellbeing?

Sometimes, children encounter difficulties in their development that require more guidance or help than is available at home or school. This often leads to children being given a 'label': a diagnostic classification such as ADHD, autism spectrum disorder or dyslexia. Such classifications are necessary to obtain appropriate care. On the other hand, there is social unrest about the increasing number of labels. Parents, schools and social workers increasingly question the effects of such a label. What happens to a child's self-image? And does a label influence the way his family, peers and others interact with the child? The 'Developmental labels' hub investigates the effect of diagnostic labels on children and their environment.

YOUth cohort



The YOUth cohort focuses on neurocognitive development involved in two core characteristics of behavioural development: social competence and behavioural control. From an early age, deficiencies in social competence and behavioural control have been linked to a variety of behavioural, psychological and psychiatric problems. To understand why some children develop problematic behaviour, and others show resiliency, a broad range of biological, child-related and environmental determinants is measured. Specifically, it is investigated how these determinants influence the development of social competence and behavioural control and how this relationship is mediated by the developing brain.

Impact highlights of our interdisciplinary hubs

Research Impact – Scientific publications

Contribute to advancing understanding and advancing scientific method, theory, and application across and within disciplines by conducting and supporting excellent, robust, and FAIR research on youth development



The first 1001 days of a child's life

Robustness of the rule-learning effect in 7-month-old infants: A close, multicenter replication of Marcus et al. (1999)

Several Dutch child language researchers, including three 1001 critical day-hub researchers, joined forces in NWO project 'The building blocks of cognition'. This [project](#) focuses on replicating two major baby studies. Both studies could not replicate results of the original study, which has a major impact on the fields of child language development.

Where do I belong? Children in multi-resident families

Adolescents' post-divorce sense of belonging: An interdisciplinary review

This [interdisciplinary review](#) of empirical research provides insight into the mechanisms and conditions that affect adolescents' sense of belonging following parental divorce. Adolescents' sense of belonging to one or multiple social contexts, such as the family, school, peer group, or neighborhood, can be an important protective factor after parental divorce, and is affected by processes at the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrolevel.

Change your perspective!

Brokers of multiperspectivity in history education in post-conflict societies

This [qualitative and exploratory research](#) aims to answer the following questions in order to advance the use of multiperspectivity in post-conflict history education and enhance history-teacher training design: what boundaries do expert teacher trainers believe that teachers in post-conflict societies encounter when brokering multiple perspectives in the classroom? Which teaching or training methods can teacher trainers use to help teachers reduce the impact of these boundaries?

Healthy Play, Better Coping

Ruby's Mission: Towards an Applied Gaming Intervention for reducing Loneliness of Children with Chronic Illness

Dionysis Alexandridis published a [conference paper](#) that contributes to (1) a literature-based understanding on training socioemotional skills as a novel means to reduce feelings of loneliness in chronically ill children, (2) intervention objectives that are aligned to this goal, and (3) a structured proposal for design guidelines that implement the intervention objectives into 'Ruby's Mission'; an applied gaming intervention for reducing loneliness of children with chronic illness.

YOUth Got Talent

'I Think It'll All Blow Over in the End': How Young People Perceive the Impact of COVID-19 on Their Future Orientations

Since the beginning of 2020, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and its lockdowns have changed the current lives of young people drastically. Given the importance of future orientations for young people's mental well-being, it is important to investigate if and how this lockdown affected young people's future orientations. This [paper](#) investigates if and how young people's future orientations are affected during the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic by interviewing 34 Dutch young people in spring 2020.

Developmental labels: the good, the bad and the contested

Who benefits from diagnostic labels for developmental disorders?

Diagnostic labels can play an important role in helping those who display atypical behaviour and their caregivers to cope with associated challenges and, possibly, to get treatment. But these labels are increasingly contested and associated with a variety of harmful effects. In this [paper](#), the role diagnostic labels can play in four different contexts (scientific, therapeutic, social, and administrative) is analyzed and it is identified what various stakeholders stand to gain or lose with continued, expanded, or abolished use of those labels.

YOUth cohort

The emergence of a theta social brain network during infancy

One of the most important milestones in the first year of a child's life is its development of social behaviour. But how is this crucial social development in babies achieved? In an [article](#) – entitled 'The emergence of a theta social brain network during infancy' – published in the NeuroImage Journal recently, Bauke van der Velde, a junior researcher at Utrecht University, concludes that the developing baby brain focuses on processing social stimuli initially.



Societal impact

Contribute to solving societal challenges in the field of youth development

The first 1001 days of a child's life

Buikpraat

[Buikpraat](#) (belly talk) is a start-up focusing on parents in vulnerable positions, collaborating with the 1001cd-hub. Qualitative research serves as input for the development of an app, aimed at strengthening the emotional connection between parent and child as well as language development, physical and mental health and safety.

Where do I belong? Children in multi-resident families

Radio program 'De nacht van EO'

Zoë Rejaän was a guest in the radio program De nacht van EO. She talked about her research on feelings of belonging and security among youth growing up in families after divorce. Listen to the fragment [here!](#)

Change your perspective!

Lesson about the Russian invasion of Ukraine

The hub Change your perspective developed a [lesson](#) about the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The lesson is intended to support teachers in primary, secondary and secondary education in talking about the war with their class.

Healthy Play, Better Coping

Podcast about Play

The hub Healthy Play, Better Coping developed a podcast about Play, in the series 'JongGeleerd'. Play is fun, but play is also important for a healthy development of children. In this [podcast](#), Dr. Lesscher (Healthy Play, Better Coping) and Jitske Rienstra (Kind & Co Ludens childcare), discuss why play is so important and how play can be stimulated

YOUth Got Talent

Factsheets

YOUth Got Talent developed several factsheets to translate research outcomes to professionals and other stakeholders, for example a [factsheet](#) on the wellbeing of vocational education students during Covid-19, a [factsheet](#) on future orientation of youth before and after Covid 19 and a [factsheet](#) on financial worries of vocational educational students.

Developmental labels: the good, the bad and the contested

Kletsbaar

[Kletsbaar](#) is a research and outreach project. It investigates how labels affect our understanding of people and their mental health issues. The project visits festivals and events throughout the Netherlands. The public can experience what it feels like when your sensory experience changes by entering the #colourcross, an inflatable cocoon shape with four arms. The researchers then use this as a starting point to invite participants into a conversation about differences in perception and experience between people and invite them to watch a short video online before answering a few questions about it #kletsbaar.

YOUth cohort

Exhibition at the Utrecht University Museum

The YOUth cohort will be included in the permanent exhibition of the Utrecht University Museum. The aim is to show children and parents how research is carried out into children's development. Visitors can do tests themselves and scientists will explain (on video) how and what they use results like these use for their research. The new museum opens in 2023.

Capacity building

Increase professional skills and qualifications of students, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners in the field of youth development, thereby also contributing to a changing sector that recognizes and rewards talent in research, societal impact, knowledge exchange and education.



The first 1001 days of a child's life

DoY dialogue session

The first 1001 days of a child's life hub participated in the first DoY dialogue session in which researchers from various disciplines explained the need to support the infant brain. This was later translated to a blog, including topics on sensitive periods, speech sound development and sleep. Want to read the blog? Click [here!](#)

Where do I belong? Children in multi-resident families

Interdisciplinary Bachelor and master courses

Interdisciplinary knowledge on child development in the context of parental divorce is included in several Bachelor and master courses, such as Kind en Omgeving and The voice of youth (Ba3). An interdisciplinary course on children and divorce is being developed in collaboration between social sciences and family law.

Change your perspective!

Trajectory for teachers

Steven Raaijmakers and Eva Janssen are designing a trajectory for teachers to stimulate critical thinking. Want to know more about this trajectory? Click [here!](#)

Healthy Play, Better Coping

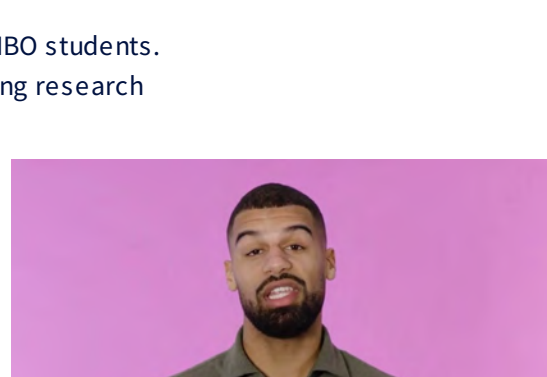
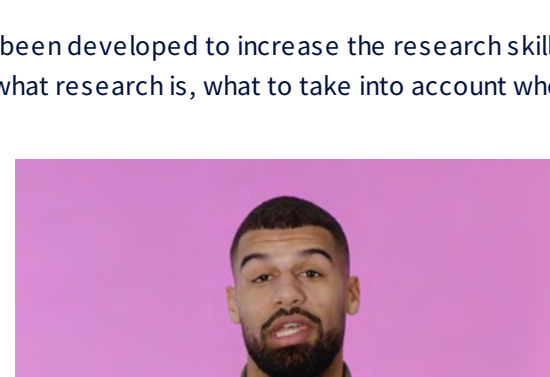
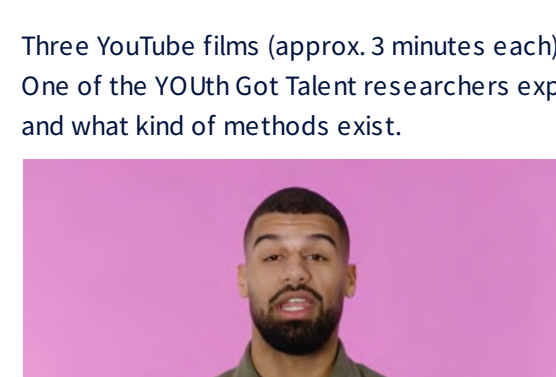
Interdisciplinary DoY research master

Sanne Nijhof is involved in the development of interdisciplinary DoY research master 'Youth Development and Social Change'. The participating faculties are the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Geosciences and the Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance.

YOUth Got Talent

Youtube films

Three YouTube films (approx. 3 minutes each) have been developed to increase the research skills of MBO students. One of the YOUth Got Talent researchers explains what research is, what to take into account when doing research and what the kind of methods exist.



Developmental labels: the good, the bad and the contested

Talks for professional organizations

In the last year, a number of talks were given for professional organizations. One such event was a workshop at the ADHD network – a group of clinicians all specialized in ADHD research and treatment. Video material from the research activities of the hub was used and ethical analysis of how (not) to employ labels in practice was discussed.

YOUth cohort

Training for professionals

Over 10 years, YOUth has been a place where (over 100) students and researchers have been professionally trained in conducting high quality research on pregnant women, babies, toddlers, children, and adolescents.



Sustainability

Promote the sustainability of existing networks, research, activities, and investments (e.g., FAIRification, strengthening in sustainable collaborations). But also increase DoY's visibility, by strengthening coordinable mechanisms and expanding networks, we increase the sustainability and scalability of our activities and create opportunities for connection and innovation.

The first 1001 days of a child's life

Health Hub Utrecht

Health Hub Utrecht is a collaboration between several health-associated organizations, including Utrecht University and UMC-Utrecht, and the first 1001 days of a child's life hub. The goal is to connect different parties on health and use the shared knowledge to improve child health and happiness in Utrecht. [Young HHU](#) has an advisory function, providing feedback from a young professional perspective.

Where do I belong? Children in multi-resident families

FAIRifying data

Using a Dynamics of Youth Invigoration Grant Plus, the data of Where do I belong and related projects is FAIRified. To use these multidisciplinary data on child development in the context of divorce to their full potential, we are in the process of developing information about the data (metadata) and depositing the data to a repository, together with clear guidelines and regulations on how to use the data.

Change your perspective!

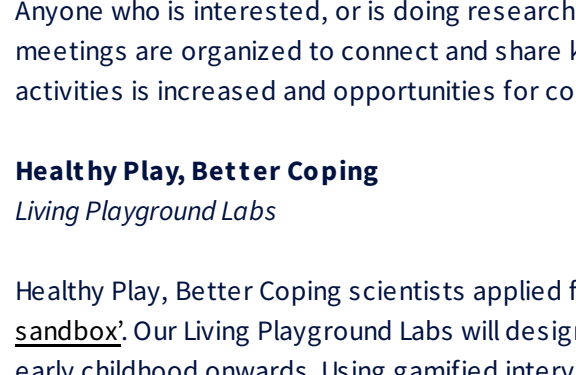
Community meetings

Over eighty Utrecht University scholars and practitioners are connected to the hub 'Change your perspective!'. Anyone who is interested, or is doing research related to one of the topics can join. For this group, two monthly meetings are organized to connect and share knowledge. In this way the sustainability and scalability of our activities is increased and opportunities for connection and innovation are created.

Healthy Play, Better Coping

Living Playground Labs

Healthy Play, Better Coping scientists applied for a Lego Foundation grant 'Building an inclusive society from the sandbox'. Our Living Playground Labs will design building blocks for inclusive playgrounds, nourishing inclusivity from early childhood onwards. Using gamified interventions, we will create more awareness about inclusive play among parents to break down existing barriers. Check the videopitch of this application here:



YOUth Got Talent

Co-creation

YOUth Got Talent has a close and longstanding collaboration with four Vocational and Educational Training schools in Utrecht and with Utrecht municipality. Often co-creation takes place. On request of the schools and the municipality, for example, questions on school drop-out were added to the questionnaires.

Developmental labels: the good, the bad and the contested

Strengthening and expanding network

Our social partners, and a number of new partners, were included in an active role in our BA course on developmental labels. Our students went to the location, conducted several interviews, and presented a report with recommendations. This has significantly strengthened and expanded our network.

YOUth cohort

Data request module

The YOUth study implemented an online module that allows researchers to request YOUth data more easily. The new data request system is an expansion of the Yoda data management system that was previously developed for and by YOUth and which is also being used elsewhere within UU and at other universities. The module is open source and therefore also within easy reach for other faculties that wish to share data securely. Want to know more? Click [here!](#)

DoY communities

We can now build on the wonderful foundation as shown on the previous page. By standing on the shoulders of giants, we move on towards four DoY communities, that allow us to span the entire development from conception to emerging adulthood.

Early Childhood community

The time from conception to toddlerhood is critical to brain development, language acquisition, motor skills, and the social, emotional, and cognitive skills that children need to interact and play with others. Early childhood marks the occurrence of many milestones and offers myriad opportunities to increase the odds of favorable development through prevention and intervention efforts in different social contexts, including the family, childcare, pre-school education, and neighborhoods. Scientific evidence, including the groundbreaking work of DoY researchers and hubs, have generated a much deeper appreciation of the importance of (very) early life experiences and the interaction between genes, individuals, and environments on child development and the unfolding of human behaviour over the life course.

Meet the DoY chairs!



Aaju Chen

I am Professor in language development at the Faculty of Humanities. My research is concerned with both fundamental questions on prosody (i.e. melody and rhythm in speech), such as its role in communication and prosodic learning, and the societal issue of how acquisition of linguistic abilities interacts with children's development in social and inter-personal domains.

Currently, I lead a VICI project on early prosodic development. My team and I investigate mechanisms underlying prenatal learning and development in the first three years of life and their implications for prenatal care, care for preterm infants, and children affected by language deficits.

As a DoY chair, I hope to play an active role in connecting researchers interested in youth research with DoY and helping them develop new interdisciplinary collaborations in the Early Childhood community. I'd also like to serve as a bridge between researchers with FAIR data and researchers who can use it.

Pauline Slot

I am an assistant professor at the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences at the Development and Education of youth in Diverse Societies Department. My research focusses on different quality aspects of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) provisions, the provided curriculum activities and opportunities for play and exploration, and their relations with children's development and well-being.

Currently, I lead the national Childcare Quality Study (LKK) funded by the Ministry of Social Affairs. I am interested in the nature, causes and impact of early emerging social and educational inequalities in the context of diversity and study these issues in the (pre- and after-)school classroom and how quality in these provisions can be improved.

I am passionate about the potential of Early Childhood within DoY and hope to contribute to community building within and across disciplines. I would like to help researchers in increasing their societal impact.



Jeroen Dudink

I am a neonatologist and Associate professor working at the Department of Neonatology in the Wilhelmina Children's Hospital, UMCU. Last year I was selected as a clinical scientist. My research is focused on neonatal neurobehavior with a special interest in the role of sleep on early brain development.

Together with researchers from the Technical Universities of Delft and Eindhoven and with researchers from the University of Utrecht, we are currently developing new unobtrusive ways to monitor sleep in babies and we are linking sleep, to brain connectivity. We are using several techniques, including automated video analysis of baby behavior. I would like to increase awareness of the importance of sleep on child health and development.

Because I am also chair of the theme Developmental Disorders in the UMCU, my aim is to connect researchers from both communities and contribute to interdisciplinary research and education. Furthermore, I would like to support our community to increase impact and societal relevance.





Becoming Adults in a Changing World community

Although much research is focused on early childhood development, scientific evidence spanning different disciplines and sectors shows that the years between childhood and adulthood offer an amazing opportunity to lay the foundation for optimal development in adolescents and for the world they will someday lead and participate in. During these years, young people build their identity, complete their education, transition to employment, and pursue other endeavours that help set them on the path to a healthy and productive adult life. As future citizens, professionals, and policymakers, they shape social progress and the world of tomorrow. Shifting the focus from risk and vulnerability in adolescence to learning, resilience, and adaptation, the innovative research by DoY researchers and hubs calls for novel approaches to effective legislation and policies. It also underlines the importance of effective and scalable interventions that help adolescents to successfully navigate the transition to adulthood in a changing world imbued with challenges, such as climate change and globalization.

Meet the DoY chairs!



Marije van Braak

I am Marije van Braak, co-chair of the 'Becoming Adults in a Changing World' community and assistant professor at the department of Language and Education, faculty of Humanities. I'm passionate about two things: education (whether it is teaching, researching education, chatting about teaching, or musing about educational improvements) and language (how we use language in interaction to achieve things). In my research, that translates into a focus on analysis of interaction in any type of educational setting. In my teaching, I love to consider creative ways of engaging students in all kinds of disciplinary and interdisciplinary thinking – as well as in general questions about finding their way through life. I hope for the community to become a vibrant community of researchers, youth, and all types of non-academic partners who collaborate purposefully to contribute to youth's transition into adult life, with all the contemporary challenges that come with it.

Jaap Denissen

My name is Jaap Denissen, I am also a co-chair of this community. I work as full professor of developmental psychology at the Faculty of Social Science. My research has explored predictors of how adolescents and young adults establish satisfying peer and romantic relationships, create a mature identity, and achieve other developmental tasks. One cluster of variables that I particularly focus on is personality, i.e. characteristic individual differences in affect, behavior, and cognition. My research already connects different sub-disciplines within psychology (developmental psychology, social psychology, and personality psychology).

Therefore, I am very eager to connect with additional disciplines that are represented at Utrecht University, such as economics, geoscience, and life science. In close connection with other researchers, but also with societal stakeholders and youth themselves, we can really make a difference in uncovering and facilitating how young people become adults in a changing world.





Thriving and Healthy Youth community

Advances in medical treatment and technologies for childhood disease and disabilities have resulted in dramatically increased survival rates and a growing population of children with chronic disease. Similarly, advances in mental health treatment have resulted in creating opportunities for healing and recovery. Nevertheless, variability in developmental outcomes is immense. Until recently, research focused primarily on the negative psychosocial sequelae and stigma of childhood mental and physical adversity. Emerging theory and empirical evidence, including the cutting-edge studies of DoY researchers and hubs, propose that the focus on (long-term) cognitive, social, academic, emotional, and physical deficits might obscure an understanding of the full range of developmental outcomes in all domains of functioning. To create equal opportunity, we need to move beyond recovery from adversity by promoting thriving and growth through effective prevention and interventions.

Meet the DoY chairs!



Heidi Lesscher

I am associate professor in Behavioural Neuroscience, with a long-standing interest in the individual variation in susceptibility to mental health problems, that often arise at young age. In my lab we for example study the relation between social play at early age and the development of addictive behavior later in life. As one of the coordinators of the chairs of the hub Healthy Play Better Coping, I am involved in multiple interdisciplinary projects, all centered around play research in animals and humans. For the Thriving and Healthy Youth community, my ambition is to foster interdisciplinary collaborations across faculties, with societal partners and involving early-career scientists. We need to gain more knowledge about the development of the social, emotional, communication and cognitive skills that children need to prosper and develop opportunities for vulnerable groups of children (impacted by poverty, disease, neglect, divorce, trauma, migration or loss) to thrive.

Odilia Laceulle

Is personality shaped by environmental factors such as stress and trauma? Or do young people create their own environment based on who they are? And what is the influence of person-characteristics and environmental factors on the mental health of young people? These questions reflect the core of the research I work on as an associate professor at the department of Developmental Psychology. In doing so, I hardly ever work alone. Collaboration and making connections is the driving force behind everything I do. For example, for my clinical research I am affiliated at specialized youth mental health care institutes, also closely collaborate with GGD and schools, and aim to connect with the broader audience and youth specifically.

For the Thriving and Healthy Youth community, I aim to build on these connections to promote multidisciplinary research and teaching aimed at identifying youth at risk, understand development and promote youth (psychological) adjustment.



Sanne Nijhof

I am a pediatrician specialized in Social Pediatrics and associate professor in Child Health, with a special interest in concepts of health and resilience. As a clinician-scientist, I am firmly embedded in both academia and hospital. With the appointment as DoY chair, there will be a better opportunity to promote and facilitate interdisciplinary research to better understand individual differences in psychosocial/mental health outcomes, identify the persistent stressors and protective variables associated with these (individual or group) outcomes, compare parameters between children with chronic conditions and their healthy peers, raise awareness of what it means to live with a disease or other vulnerabilities and what the long-term consequences are, and develop (preventive) interventions to promote and sustain healthy development. For the Thriving and Healthy Youth community, my ambition is to foster interdisciplinary collaborations across faculties, with societal partners and with early-career scientists. We want to encourage the use of FAIR data and Open Science, for example by collaborating with various initiatives that already exist across faculties and by giving (young) researchers more access to these initiatives.

Youth Education & Life skills community

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that globalisation and digitalisation have connected people, cities, and countries in ways that vastly increase our individual and collective potential. It has also made it clear that the same forces have made the world more complex and more uncertain. In this changing more diverse world, education is no longer just about teaching youth academic skills but also about helping them develop the tools and skills they need to confidently navigate through this world. To promote equal opportunities, scientific research points to education and digital technology, as preventative tools to raise awareness and build future global citizens. The impactful research of DoY researchers and hubs is a call for action to increase inclusion in light of the growing diversity of youth. It underlines the role of education to mitigate the effects of risks and uncertainty, by equipping teachers, students, and parents with the facilities, knowledge, and skills necessary to cope with crises as they emerge, building their resilience in the process.



Meet the DoY chairs!



Janneke van de Pol

I am Janneke van de Pol and I am associate professor at the Department of Education and Pedagogy, Section Education, Faculty of Social Science. I study teachers' instructional support to children in reaching their full potential; the role of children's socio-economic and ethnic background and gender in the (un)equal educational opportunities; and self-regulation as a crucial life skill. I am an experienced, open-minded, and flexible networker in and outside academia.

Veronique Schutjens

I am Veronique Schutjens, professor Experiential Education in Geography in the group Geography & Education, department of Human Geography and Spatial Planning, Faculty of Geosciences. With a background in economic geography and migrant entrepreneurship, I research life course developments; mechanisms of critical reflection on experiences; and its effects on learning processes and life skills in higher education. I am a team player, fascinated by learning processes in new and unfamiliar environments.

Our complex, changing, and thus uncertain world increases the inequality in young peoples' opportunities. We believe that education is the vehicle to counter this, particularly when it focuses on empowering youth by emphasizing crucial life skills - such as cognitive skills, interpersonal skills, and self-regulation skills.

The YELS community builds on the many active DoY researchers in the past 8 years, which reflects in our aims to:

1. Acknowledge and strengthen existing research collaborations related to YELS, both within and outside UU;
2. Diversify existing research projects by building new relationships with researchers and external partners;
3. Explore and stimulate new research projects by empowering both UU researchers and external partners, to jointly develop and perform research;
4. Reach out globally to include education and life skill research in the global south.

The activities in the YELS Community are characterized by co-creation; empowerment and ownership; and playful creativity.

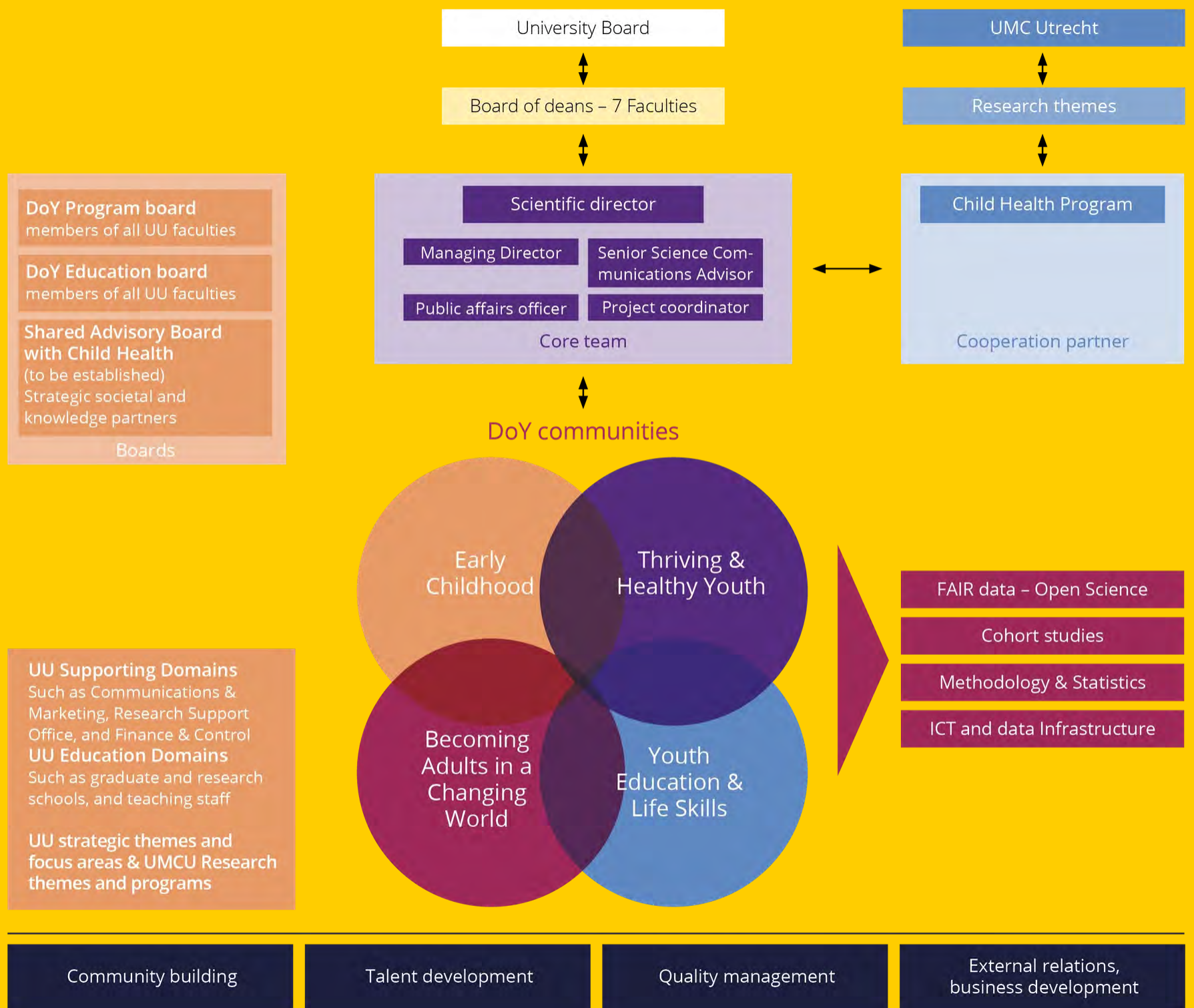


Liesbeth Kester

Liesbeth Kester temporarily replaces Janneke van de Pol as DoY chair of the Youth Education & Life Skills community. Liesbeth Kester is professor Educational Sciences and chair of the department Education.



Dynamics of Youth organizational units and names



Board of Deans

Janneke Plantenga (FLEG)
 Isabel Arends (SCI)
 Debbie Jaarsma (VET)
 Wilco Hazeleger (GEO)
 Marcel van Aken (FSBS)
 Thomas Vaessens (HUM)
 Arno Hoes (MED)

DoY Program Board

Catrin Finkenauer (FSBS)
 Marian Jongmans (FSBS)
 Tamara van Gog (FSBS)
 Jan Willem Gorter (MED)
 Kors van der Ent (MED)
 Tine Beneker (GEO)
 Wim Kremer (VET)
 Wendy Schrama (FLEG)
 Remco Veltkamp (SCI)
 Els Stronks (HUM)
 Thomas van Huizen (FLEG)

DoY Core team

Catrin Finkenauer – Scientific director
 Jacobine Buizer-Voskamp – Managing director
 Diederik van Iwaarden – International partnership developer
 Saskia van Reenen-de Lange – Senior science communications advisor
 Danique Daalmeijer – Project coordinator
 Neha Moopen – FAIR specialist

DoY Education Board

Marian Jongmans (chairman; FSBS)
 Gery Nijenhuis (GEO)
 Jorg Huijding (FSBS)
 Elaine Mak (FLEG)
 Wim Kremer (VET)
 Paul Drijvers (SCI)
 Geert Ramakers (MED)
 Frans Adriaans (HUM)
 Jan van Tartwijk (FSBS)
 Judith Droste (FSBS)

DoY chairs

Youth Education and Life Skills:
 Veronique Schutjens (GEO) & Janneke van de Pol (FSBS)
 Becoming Adults in a Changing World:
 Jaap Denissen (FSBS) & Marije van Braak (HUM)
 Thriving & Healthy Youth:
 Heidi Lesscher (VET), Sanne Nijhof (MED) & Odilia Laceulle (FSBS)
 Early Childhood:
 Jeroen Dudink (MED), Pauline Slot (FSBS) & Aojun Chen (HUM)
 Shared Advisory Board with Child Health (to be established)

Financial overview 2022-2025

Total budget 2022-2025



(€ in thousands)



DoY core team personnel



DoY Communities – personnel



DoY ICT and data infrastructure



DoY funding opportunities



DoY core team materials



Early Childhood – budget



Becoming Adults in a Changing World – budget



Thriving and Healthy Youth – budget



Youth Education and Life Skills – budget

Colophon

This annual report was written by Catrin Finkenauer (scientific director), Jacobine Buizer-Voskamp (managing director), Diederik van Iwaarden (international partnership developer), Saskia van Reenen – de Lange (senior science communications officer), and Danique Daalmeijer (project coordinator), with input from the hubs and DoY chairs. This annual report covers the period from 1 March 2021 until 31 July 2022.

We are grateful to our colleagues at CID for their input on the format of this annual report.

If you want to join our Dynamics of Youth Teams, please send an email to DoY-Secr@uu.nl

The podcast can be found on Spotify, SoundCloud and Apple Podcasts.

