

## **A child's lens**

### Semi-finalist

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Image location: A playground in a large, urban  
center



## Image Description

Due to inaccessible methods and ableist assumptions about their abilities, disabled\* children have often been excluded from research. Researchers have questioned the credibility of disabled children's perspectives. This begs the question: What constitutes a credible perspective...and who decides?

Over the summer of 2022, I collaborated with disabled children and their families to learn about their experiences of inclusion at a playground. The person behind the camera, Freya, reflected here in her mother's sunglasses, is one of six disabled children who took part in the project. Action cameras were used to facilitate inclusive research and provide a unique entry point into children's life worlds. Some kids wanted to be in front of the camera; others wanted to record their siblings and parents. Some simply wanted to wear the camera while playing. They all had something to 'say'. The child-generated audio-visual footage supported the co-construction of key findings about their experiences of inclusion.

Regardless of adult beliefs about their credibility, disabled children have valuable stories to share, and should be involved in decisions about how to share them.

A quick note about the language used in this submission description:

\* 'Disabled children' is used to call into question the idea that disability resides within an individual person. Instead, it is through the "various interactions between bodies and world that materialize disability from the stuff of human variation and precariousness" (Garland-Thomson, 2002, p. 6). This language is used to emphasize the ways in which disabled children and their experiences are shaped by social interactions, encounters with inaccessible architecture, discriminatory policies, and ableist systems (Curran & Runswick-Cole, 2014; Spencer et al., 2020).

## Image Creation

This photo was taken by one of the participants during a research visit to the playground. When first getting familiar with the action camera, she decided to take a few pictures and videos to test it out. I encouraged her to focus on things at the playground that were important to her. She snapped this photograph of her mother, before deciding she would like to wear the camera (using a chest-mount harness) and head out to play on the equipment and record some audio-visual footage.