

Welcome to this ECU Library video clip on **How to do a keyword search**.

In this video clip you will learn how to do a keyword search in the *CINAHL* database – how to analyse your topic, how to decide on what terms to use, how to combine terms to either narrow or broaden your search and how to find additional terms that can be added to your search.

The first step is to **analyse** your topic and break it down into concepts. In this example, obesity in children, the first concept is **obesity** and the second concept is **children**. Next think of what other terms could be used to describe each concept, for example, as well as using **obesity** we could add the term **overweight**. It is sometimes useful to **truncate** a word so that *CINAHL* will search for all forms of the word. The truncation symbol is the (*) asterisk. Truncating *child** will retrieve *child, children, childhood* etc.

Keywords can be combined to either broaden or narrow the search results. If we combine the keywords with **AND** we restrict the search to only those references that mention both terms. In this instance we will retrieve only those articles that mention **both** obesity and children

Combining keywords with **OR** means that we will retrieve articles that mention either of the terms so the search is broaden. In this instance we will retrieve any articles that mention **either** obesity or overweight.

Using **NOT** is useful in eliminating unwanted material but it needs to be used with caution. In this example, children not teenagers, we will lose all references that mention teenagers and that may include some material that might have been relevant to the topic.

To begin the search, enter the terms or phrase of the first concept into the first textbox, in this case we are searching for **obesity or overweight**. Now enter the terms or phrase for the second concept in the second text box, in this instance we only have the one term **child*** that we have truncated with an asterisk so as to search for all forms of the word.

CINAHL automatically combines these two concepts with an **AND** so we will only retrieve those articles that mention both concepts.

Once the terms are entered, click on **SEARCH**

The search has retrieved 5,310 references. However at this stage the search can be further refined.

By choosing from the options on the left you can restrict to only journal (or periodical) articles or you can restrict to a particular age or gender.

You can also limit to articles that have been indexed under the term Obesity as this will restrict the search to articles where obesity is an important concept not just a keyword mentioned briefly. You can also introduce additional terms or phrases that will narrow the search further.

By choosing these options, we have reduced the number of references retrieved from 21,228 down to 149.

Every article is indexed with subject terms and these can be useful in suggesting additional terms to add to your search. When you come across a particularly good article, click on the **title of the article** and check the subject terms that are listed. These terms can be added to your search to either narrow or broaden the result or you can click on the link to search directly on that topic. For example, clicking on the link **Obesity - in infancy and childhood - Australia** will retrieve all the articles that have that as the main concept and will eliminate those articles that only mention the keywords as a minor aspect of the topic.

Thank you for watching this ECU video clip. To learn about how to access the databases or for more detailed information on how to do a search in *CINAHL*, have a look at these video clips:

Library databases: An Introduction
CINAHL: Features & Functions

A full list of our video clips can be viewed at www.ecu.edu.au/library