

Reflective questions

You are researching women's ability to attend local health promotion activities but in order to take part in the study the women's husbands or fathers have to give permission. This in itself creates something of an ethical dilemma for you the researcher as this seems to contradict the values explicit in the participatory focus of your study. The situation is then made worse by one woman's father insisting that he have access to the recording of his daughter's responses. Using the kinds of techniques outlined in the case study described above, sketch out some of the ways in which you might resolve (or not) this dilemma. What factors might you need to bear in mind?

Reflective questions

If this experiment had been proposed in the current era of ethical responsibility it almost certainly would never be approved or funded. Can you think of other more recent examples where health research has raised ethical issues? Are there any issues of current practice that you feel are, or perhaps one day will become, open to question? Can you suggest why the ethical issues that are debatable in some historical periods come to be seen as clearly unacceptable in another?