

## Childlight Quality Assurance Statement Searchlight 2025

Research quality and integrity are fundamental to producing trustworthy evidence and driving positive change for children worldwide. As part of Childlight's commitment to upholding these values, we have implemented a comprehensive quality assurance process for the publication of Searchlight 2025, ensuring that our research is ethical, rigorous and accessible to all. The suite of outputs includes an online dashboard covering eight reports, a PDF companion report and standalone technical notes in PDF format.

This document outlines the quality checks and assurance mechanisms implemented to ensure accuracy, transparency and alignment with Childlight's five core principles of research quality and integrity. These processes reinforce the integrity of our research outputs and foster trust among stakeholders and the global research community. This document is not intended to replace the Study-specific information in the Technical Notes but is rather intended to provide an overview of the standard checks and balances Childlight has in place to assure research quality and integrity for the Searchlight 2025.

### Engage with Autonomy

#### Ethics Review & Compliance

All Searchlight 2025 studies underwent ethics committee review by either the Childlight Research Ethics Sub-Committee through the University of Edinburgh, or the University of New South Wales. For authors affiliated with other institutions, independent ethics reviews were also conducted by their respective universities. In line with Childlight's Ethics Policy, Study A was exempted from ethics review by the Childlight Research Ethics Sub-Committee as a result of its low-risk study methodology as a literature review.

For studies employing primary research methods, informed consent was obtained from all participants following a transparent and validated process.

Data handling and privacy measures adhere to the relevant regulatory frameworks (e.g., GDPR), as bespoke to each Study, based on the location of the research, the data classification, and the type of research conducted.

#### Statistical & Methodological Review

Where relevant, confidence intervals have been shown on graphs as error bars, to indicate the range of numbers where the true result is expected to fall 95% of the time if the study was repeated.

## Author and Contributor Acknowledgement

Written confirmation was obtained from study authors that all named researchers/contributors were aware of and agreed to the publication.

## **Grow through Reflection**

### Review

All research findings underwent both internal and external peer review. Internal reviews, including Principal Investigators and Childlight researchers, assessed accuracy and relevance of reports. A structured feedback process enabled incorporation of reviewer suggestions and collaborative refinement.

### Advisory Groups

Each study was supported by a dedicated advisory group comprised of individuals external to Childlight, including frontline practitioners, data owners, researchers and other stakeholders. These groups played a critical role in shaping the research by reviewing the rationale, data sources and methodology at early stages, providing ongoing feedback at key milestones and reviewing draft outputs and dissemination strategies. Their insights helped ensure that the studies remained methodologically sound, ethically grounded and relevant to both policy and practice.

### Copyediting & Proofreading

All reports were reviewed for grammatical precision, clarity and readability, both by an external copyeditor, and by an internal quality assurance panel. This panel consisted of Childlight's Chief Operating Officer, Global Director of Data, Web and Application Specialist, Head of Communications and Public Relations, and Quality and Compliance Manager. Checks included standardised formatting, style guide compliance and consistency checks in terminology, citations and references.

## **Focus on the Goal**

### Accessibility & Usability Testing

All materials were evaluated for compliance with the [University of Edinburgh accessibility guidelines](#) and the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1](#).

Checks were conducted to ensure compatibility with mobile and cross-platform use. Usability testing confirmed that navigation and user experience were intuitive and inclusive.

## Be Transparent

### Data Integrity & Validation

Where relevant, datasets underwent systematic cleaning and pre-processing to identify and resolve inconsistencies, standardise formats and prepare the data for accurate analysis.

Final documents and datasets were managed using structured version control and are in the process of being archived in secure repositories to ensure traceability, reproducibility and long-term accessibility.

### Open-Source Documentation

Every study has a protocol that has been published externally via OSF, each with an individual DOI link for public access.

Technical Notes clearly outline the research design, analysis steps and decision-making processes to ensure methodological transparency and reproducibility of research. These documents include details around any limitations in the data and analysis.

### Consent for Attribution

Explicit consent was obtained from data owners, study authors and advisory group members before naming them in any published materials. This ensured ethical attribution and respected individual and institutional privacy preferences.

## Leave a Trace

### Technical Accuracy Checks

Data visualisations were reviewed for both accuracy and clarity. Interactive features within the dashboard (e.g., pop-up numerical data points in graphs) were tested for correct functionality and localisation (e.g., time zone adaptation to the ticking counter in Study H).

### Data Archive

All study data and documentation are stored according to the grade of the data being handled. The most secure data storage location, Safe Haven - the Childlight Trusted Research Environment, is reserved for Grade 3 data.

### Final Approval & Sign-Off

Searchlight 2025 was reviewed for legal and compliance verification and publication readiness using Childlight's Publication Checklist.