DESIGN RESEARCH 101

PDG B-5
User Experience Needs Assessment
THE RESEARCH TEAM

Tracee
Systems Designer & Project Lead

George
Communications Designer

Nadia
Design Researcher

Sarah
Portfolio Director
OUR DESIGN BEGINS WITH PEOPLE
WHAT IS DESIGN RESEARCH?

Activities that build empathy and uncover insights into human behavior that inform, inspire, and fuel design throughout a project. Our approach is to go deeper than words, relating explicit to implicit.

Ultimately, we’re looking more for inspiration than information.
DESIGN RESEARCH IS NOT MARKET RESEARCH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Market Research</th>
<th>Design Research</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve existing things</td>
<td>Inspires new possibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explicit needs reported</td>
<td>Latent needs revealed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market segments</td>
<td>Individuals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artificial settings</td>
<td>Natural context</td>
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<td>Static interviews</td>
<td>Dynamic conversations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inform maintenance</td>
<td>Inform creation</td>
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WE ARE INCLUSIVE

To get the most from our research, everyone participates—from parents to early learning providers to policy makers—to create shared experiences. When we seek out who to learn from, we look not only through the lens of experts, but those on the ground.
WE IMMERSE TO BUILD EMPATHY

We embrace a deep, anthropological approach to develop a connection with the cultures, attitudes, and behaviors of people. The best way to understand the people you’re designing for is to put yourself in their shoes.
WE PRACTICE
ACTIVE LISTENING &
PASSIVE
OBSERVATION

Rarely do we use one-way mirrors. Instead we visit people in natural contexts to engage in sincere conversations and look for evidence that helps us understand people’s needs. We observe to understand the “say/do” gap and derive insight into what people can’t articulate.
WE SEEK OUT EXTREMES

We look to the edges to spark new ideas

We look at what we call “extremes” — people and organizations outside the mainstream. This enables us to gather insights quickly because people who are at the edges often have exaggerated desires and behaviors; they magnify needs that also exist in the mainstream that aren’t as visible.
WE BUILD TO THINK

All ideas have tangible components. We build early and often to bring our ideas and hunches to life, as to put them in front of people in real contexts for valuable feedback. We use this feedback not to validate, but to refine and iterate.
WHAT WE’LL DO IN THE FIELD

IMMERSE & OBSERVE
We will visit families and early learning settings to understand the needs and challenges of those on the ground.

PROMPTS & STIMULI
We will use tools, such as card sorts or journey maps, to help people communicate their attitudes.

SACRIFICIAL CONCEPTS + CO-DESIGN
We will show early concepts and encourage ongoing engagement with people to build ideas together.

EXTREME + ANALOGOUS
We will look in unexpected places to find people pushing the mainstream or getting creative in tangential areas.
OUR PROCESS

Weeks 1-5
Weeks 6-9
Weeks 10-13

IMMERSE & INSPIRE
DESIGN & ITERATE
CAPTURE & COMMUNICATE

Design Research
Deep Dive
Synthesis
Ideate
Communicate and build
Deliver

CONVERGE
DIVERGE
WHAT IT FEELS LIKE
## PROJECT CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Design &amp; Iterate</th>
<th>Capture &amp; Communicate</th>
<th>Creation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>**1</td>
<td>Week of July 9th**</td>
<td><strong>Project Kickoff</strong>&lt;br&gt;+ Research planning and recruiting</td>
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<tr>
<td>**2</td>
<td>Week of July 15**</td>
<td><strong>Looking Out interviews with experts</strong>&lt;br&gt;+ Create sacrificial concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>**3</td>
<td>Week of July 22**</td>
<td><strong>Field research with families &amp; professionals</strong>&lt;br&gt;+ Looking-In interviews with stakeholders&lt;br&gt;+ Expert interviews&lt;br&gt;+ Set up remote or survey research&lt;br&gt;+ Research Snapshot Meeting</td>
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<td>**4</td>
<td>Week of July 29**</td>
<td><strong>Begin to synthesize insights</strong></td>
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<td>**5</td>
<td>Week of August 5**</td>
<td><strong>Identify opportunity areas</strong>&lt;br&gt;+ Create journey map/moments that matter&lt;br&gt;+ Translate ideas into early concepts&lt;br&gt;+ Plan insights + opportunities meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>**6</td>
<td>Week of August 12**</td>
<td><strong>Insights + Opportunities Meeting</strong></td>
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<td>**7</td>
<td>Week of August 19**</td>
<td><strong>Synthesis</strong>&lt;br&gt;+ Refine design&lt;br&gt;+ Refine storytelling narrative&lt;br&gt;+ Develop final deliverable</td>
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<td>**8</td>
<td>Week of August 26**</td>
<td><strong>Story gathering in the field</strong></td>
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<td>**9</td>
<td>Week of September 2</td>
<td><strong>Story gathering in the field</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>**10</td>
<td>Week of September 9</td>
<td><strong>Story gathering in the field</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>**11</td>
<td>Week of September 16</td>
<td><strong>Synthesis</strong>&lt;br&gt;+ Refine design&lt;br&gt;+ Refine storytelling narrative&lt;br&gt;+ Develop final deliverable</td>
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<tr>
<td>**12</td>
<td>Week of September 23</td>
<td><strong>Synthesis</strong>&lt;br&gt;+ Refine design&lt;br&gt;+ Refine storytelling narrative&lt;br&gt;+ Develop final deliverable</td>
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<td>**13</td>
<td>Week of September 30</td>
<td><strong>Synthesis</strong>&lt;br&gt;+ Refine design&lt;br&gt;+ Refine storytelling narrative&lt;br&gt;+ Develop final deliverable</td>
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