

Publication

Body matters : Rethinking the ethical acceptability of non-beneficial clinical research with children

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The involvement of children in non-beneficial clinical research is extremely important for improving pediatric care, but its ethical acceptability is still disputed. Therefore, various pro-research justifications have been proposed throughout the years. The present essay aims at contributing to the on-going discussion surrounding children's participation in non-beneficial clinical research. Building on Wendler's 'contribution to a valuable project' justification, but going beyond a risk/benefit analysis, it articulates a pro-research argument which appeals to a phenomenological view on the body and vulnerability. It is claimed that children's bodies are not mere physical objects, but body-subjects due to which children, as persons, can contribute to research that may hold no direct clinical benefit to them even before they can give informed consent.

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