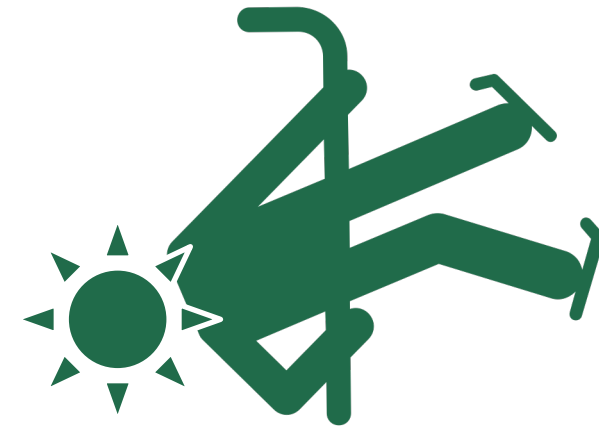


## Background

### Concussion

- Concussion is a common pediatric injury in Canada.<sup>1</sup>
- Following a concussion, youth may experience emotional sequelae that impede the recovery process and prolong concussion-related morbidity.<sup>2,3</sup>

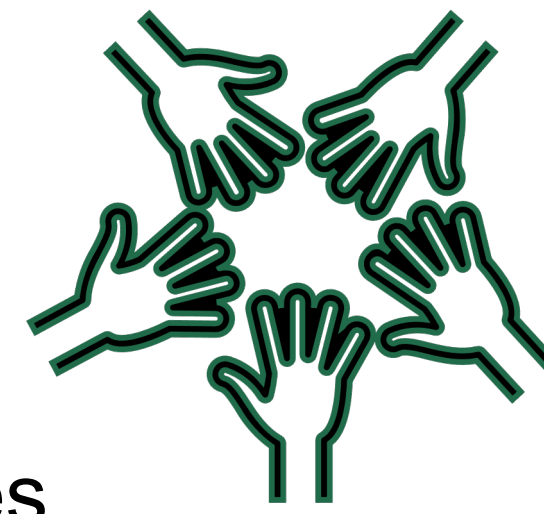


### Social Support

- Social support is a process whereby an individual exchanges resources with another to improve their personal wellbeing and bolster resilience to negative events.<sup>4</sup>
- Perceived social support refers to the recipient's perception and appraisal of support received, and when positive, is linked with health benefits.<sup>5</sup>
- However, the appraisal of social support is often dictated by the recipient's demographic, socio-economic status and geographical factors.<sup>6</sup>

### Social Support & Concussion

- Social support has been identified to help mitigate the negative psychological, emotional and psychosocial outcomes following a concussion in youth.<sup>7</sup>
- Recently, it was identified in a group of adolescent females recovering from concussion that a mix of both informational and emotional social support from peers who have previously sustained a concussion provided the most meaningful social support during recovery.<sup>2</sup>
- Despite this, a more fulsome exploration of social support amongst youth with concussion that are underserved and underrepresented is needed.



## Methods: Data Collection & Analysis

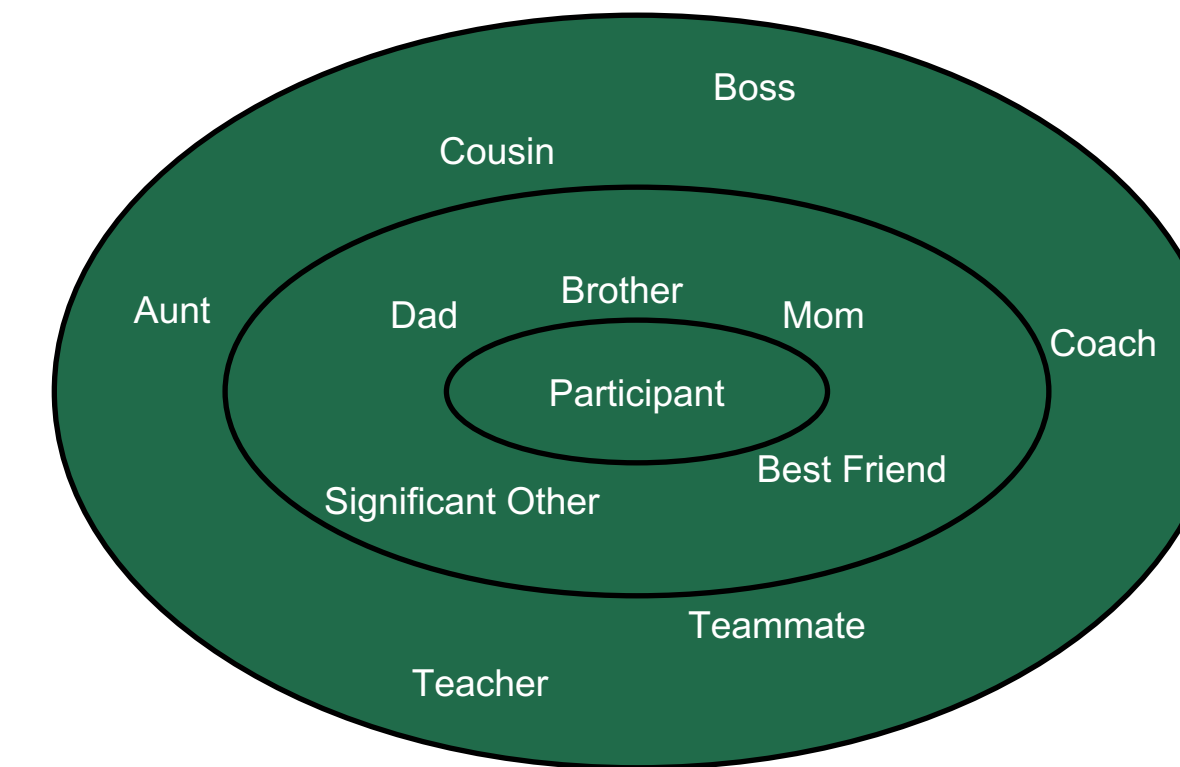
### Data Collection

#### 1 Rapport Building

- Engaged in relaxed conversation with participants about their interests and lives to ease into the interview process.
- This process allowed for participants to feel more comfortable which subsequently facilitated deeper and richer conversation.

#### 2 Concentric Circles Activity

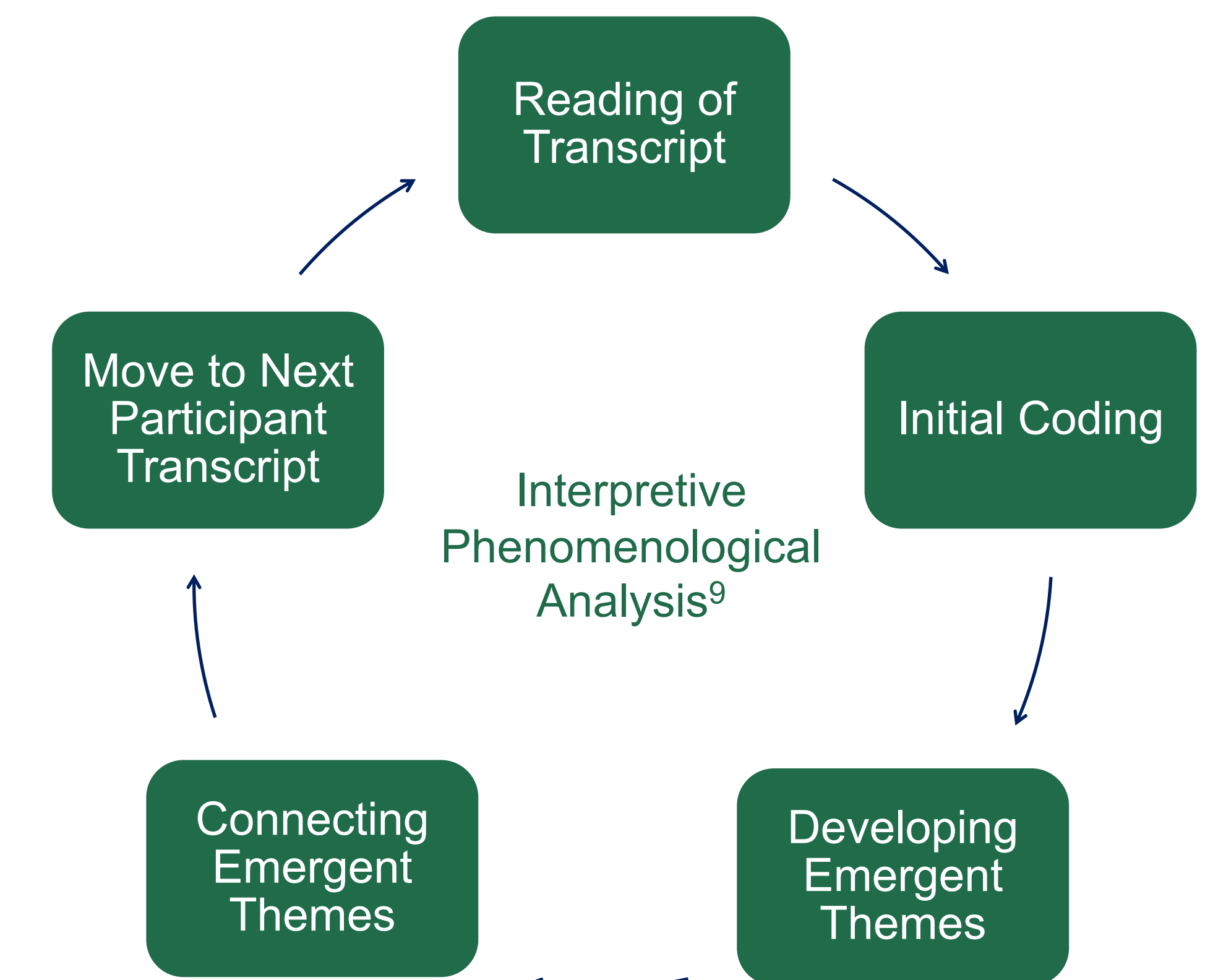
- Used to identify key social connections of participants and co-construct a clear visual social network to help guide conversation regarding their experiences of receiving social support.



#### 3 Semi Structured Interview

- Interview questions examined the lived experience of participants:
  - "How did your peers treat you after they learned of your injury?"
  - "What did your peers do that was helpful during your recovery?"
  - "Was there a time where you felt like your peers weren't helpful?"

### Data Analysis



- Following the completion of this cycle for each participant, super-ordinate themes will be compared and elected for study findings.<sup>9</sup>

## Research Objectives

This study explores the experiences of youth facing barriers to positive development with a history of concussion to **develop a detailed and rich understanding of what constitutes meaningful social support during concussion recovery.**

## Methods: Participants and Paradigm

### Participants

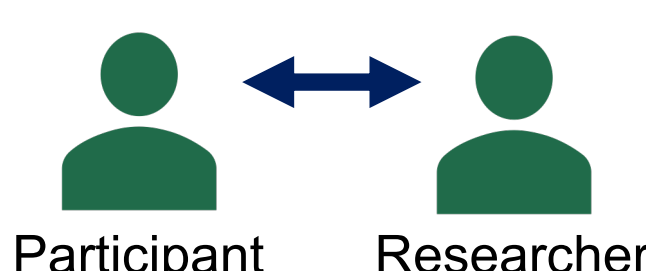
- 8 youth aged 13-18 years who have experienced a concussion in high school, and self identify as a youth facing barriers to positive development.
- This includes youth who are<sup>8</sup>:
  - Racialized, low-income, newcomer, homeless or underhoused, in foster care or leaving care, or in conflict with the law.

### Paradigm - Constructivism

Ontology: Relativist



Epistemology: Subjectivist/Transactional



## Results

- Data collection is currently underway, and results are forthcoming. We can not anticipate results or responses from prospective participants.

## Discussion

- The literature to date regarding the emotional effects of concussion and social support post injury has been limited to athletes and those easily accessible to research recruitment and participation.
- Youth facing barriers to positive development represent individuals that are disproportionately constrained by systemic racism, asymmetry in educational and economic resources and reside in neighborhoods that face large scale social challenges.<sup>8</sup>
- Through the investigation of participants' experience of receiving social support during recovery, aspects related to how and by whom social support is or is not provided and why participants of this population value it or not will be better understood.

## Implications for Concussion Recovery

- This study will allow for a detailed exploration of social support and concussion amongst an at-risk population underrepresented across all concussion research.
- Findings will inform the development of a population-specific social support intervention that promotes positive health outcomes for underserved populations by addressing the negative emotional and psychosocial outcomes following a concussion injury.
- Through qualitative investigation, progress can be made towards more individualized care through identifying the needs of a population that is often overlooked but in need of additional support.

## References

1. Langer L, Levy C, Bayley M. Increasing Incidence of Concussion: True Epidemic or Better Recognition? *Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation*. 2020;35(1):E60-E66. doi:10.1097/HTR.0000000000000503
2. Kita H, Mallory KD, Hickling A, Wilson KE, Kroshus E, Reed N. Social support during youth concussion recovery. *Brain Injury*. 2020;34(6):784-792. doi:10.1080/02699052.2020.1753243
3. André-Morin D, Caron JG, Bloom GA. Exploring the unique challenges faced by female university athletes experiencing prolonged concussion symptoms. *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology*. 2017;6(3):289-303. doi:10.1037/spy0000106
4. Shumaker SA, Brownell A. Toward a Theory of Social Support: Closing Conceptual Gaps. *Journal of Social Issues*. 1984;40(4):11-36. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4560.1984.tb01105.x
5. Haber MG, Cohen JL, Lucas T, Baltes BB. The relationship between self-reported received and perceived social support: A meta-analytic review. *American Journal of Community Psychology*. 2007;39(1-2):133-144. doi:10.1007/s10464-007-9100-9
6. Vaux A. Variations in Social Support Associated with Gender, Ethnicity, and Age. *Journal of Social Issues*. 1985;41(1):89-110. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4560.1985.tb01118.x
7. Clement D, Shannon VR. Injured Athletes' Perceptions About Social Support. *Journal of Sport Rehabilitation*. 2011;20(4):457-470. doi:10.1123/jsr.20.4.457
8. Warner M, Robinson J, Heal B, Lloyd J, O'Connell P, Rose L. A comprehensive sport for development strategy using collaborative partnerships to facilitate employment among youth facing barriers. *Journal of Sport for Development*. Published online 2020:15.
9. Smith JA, Flowers P, Larkin M. Analysis. In: *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*. SAGE; 2009:80-106.

## Acknowledgements

This research was funded by the Government of Ontario (Ontario Graduate Scholarship) and undertaken, in part, thanks to funding from the Canada Research Chairs Program.