OVID and Other Library Search Tools
What is a database?

- An organized collection of records of published literature
- Primarily includes records for articles, conference papers, reports, etc.
- Contains descriptions including subject terms, classifications, keywords, abstracts, etc.
- Often focused to a specific field/discipline
Which database is right for you?

Multidisciplinary
Academic Search Premier, Scopus, Web of Science

Medicine
Embase, Ovid Medline, PubMed
Search & [Re]search

(1) Plan
   (a) Start with research question or topic
   (b) Select database(s)
   (c) Brainstorm search terms, including keywords, subject terms, and synonyms

(2) Search
   (a) Modify search terms as needed
   (b) Experiment with filters
   (c) Trial and error

(3) [Re]search
   (a) Repeat successful searches in other databases
   (b) Hunt down citations and full text from relevant finds
Plan: Research Topic

PICO

Patient/population/problem  (What are the characteristics of the population?)

Intervention  (What do you want to do to address the problem?)

Comparison  (What is an alternative way to address the problem?)

Outcomes  (What are the relevant outcomes?)
Is exercise or mindfulness a more effective way to reduce stress?
Plan: Research Topic

Our PICO

Patient/population/problem: Stressed people
Intervention: Exercise
Comparison: Mindfulness
Outcomes: Reduced stress
Plan: Brainstorm Search Terms

MeSH stands for Medical Subject Headings, the list of standard terms added by indexers to PubMed article records to help improve search results. MeSH terms help assure that search results will include articles about a topic, even when different words may be used to describe the topic in the title and abstract.

Many other databases also use their own versions of subject headings to help searchers find relevant results.
Search Tips

- child* = any variation of a word, so child, children, childhood, etc.
- "social learning theory" = searches for a specific phrase

Image from Indiana University Bloomington https://blogs.libraries.indiana.edu/iucatbeta/2012/12/iucat-beta-how-to-searching-with-boolean-operators/
Questions?