Common Keywords and Synonyms in Psychology

In order to search a topic in the databases one must establish keywords which cover the topic in question. Below are some example keywords and synonyms that can be searched in the psychology databases.

Age Groups
Research often focuses on a particular age group, below are example keywords for various age groups across the lifespan. Pair these with topical keywords to find relevant articles.

- Infants or infancy
- Child
- Children
- Childhood
- Adolescence
- Youth
- “Young adults”
- Teen or teens
- “College students”
- Adults
- Middle-age or “middle age”
- Elderly or “senior citizen”

Topical
Choose a topic and think of how to narrow or focus it. Searching synonyms will produce similar/related results. Trying different combinations of keywords will also produce related results.

- Abuse
  - “child abuse”
  - “domestic abuse”
  - “sexual abuse”
- Behavior
  - Personality
  - Cognition and reasoning
- Development
  - “cognitive development”
  - “cognitive achievement”
  - “socio-cognitive development”
  - “emotional development”
  - “developmental psychology”
  - “psychosocial development”
  - “social skills” or “interpersonal skills”
- Education
  - “academic achievement”
- Parent or parents
  - Mother or mothers
  - Father or fathers
- Poverty
  - “socioeconomic status”
  - low-income
- Trauma
  - “emotional trauma”
  - “psychological trauma”
  - “Post-traumatic stress disorder”