

# CEHS DATABASE SEARCHING TIPS

- Keep it simple! The more phrases you add to a search the more complicated the search becomes and the less likely it is going to give you the results you need.
- Try coming up with a list of synonyms for your search terms. Sometimes a search may look like it has no information because the term you used is not the most popular in that research field.

## ***Truncation***

Adding an asterisk (\*) to the end of a word will give you results for multiple forms of that word

Example:

Searching for Librar\* will give results for Librarian, Library, Libraries and other variations of the word

## ***Quotation Marks:***

“ ”

Putting quotation marks around your search terms forces the database to search the words you use as a phrase and not at individual words.

Example:

“human trafficking” will only search for these words when they are linked together

## ***Boolean Searching (AND/OR/NOT)***

**Boolean** Searching uses the words listed above (called operators in a Boolean search) to connect your search terms to give you the most efficient search results.

### ***OR***

Using the Boolean search operator **OR** between your search terms allows you to pull up results which have at least one of the terms you used. This is typically used to search for similar concepts or different names for the same idea.

Example:

“Blood Diamond” **OR** “Conflict Diamonds” will bring up results for both searches

### ***AND***

The Boolean operator **AND** is used to join terms which make up the different parts of a search

Example:

“Nuclear waste disposal” **AND** “United States” would give results which have both of these terms

## **NOT**

Using the Boolean operator **NOT** will force the database to ignore any documents which contain the word after it. This operator is often used once you have started searching and have found that many of your results are about something you are not researching

### Example:

“Child labor” **NOT** China would give results that contained the phrase “child labor” but not the word China.