

## Youth Mental Health Screening in Schools – Parent Participation Information and Consent Form

**What is this study about?** We are conducting clinical interviews with students who completed our youth mental health screening tool and their parents. The purpose of these interviews is to compare the results from the screening tool with the “gold standard” measure of youth mental health – a clinical interview. By comparing results from the screening tool and interviews, we can see whether our screening tool is accurately able to detect students with mental health challenges.

**What does it involve?** You and your child will each participate in a clinical interview. Each interview will take between 30-90 minutes and can be done via Zoom or by telephone, depending on your preference. The interviewer will ask questions about your child’s thoughts, emotions and behaviours. You will also be asked to complete an online survey on your child’s mental health and your thoughts on youth mental health screening in schools. Finally, we will also ask your permission to access data from your child’s school on their attendance and grades. To thank your family for your time, you will be reimbursed \$40 for participating.

**Why have we been invited to participate?** You and your child have been invited to participate because we are interested in the experiences of young people and their families. We are interviewing students and their parents so that we can get as much information about all young people and their mental health as possible. Please note: we want to talk to all youth and parents – your child does not have to have mental health problems to participate.

**I would like my child and I to participate in this additional research**

To participate, please complete the Consent Form for you and your child on page 3 and return it to your child's teacher or by replying directly to this email.

**I do not want my child to participate in this additional research**

No need to do anything further.

**I want to know more**

Please read on for more detail about this study. If you have any questions or would like more information, you can always contact the Research Coordinator, Dr Rebecca Kuhnert, at [rebecca.kuhnert@mq.edu.au](mailto:rebecca.kuhnert@mq.edu.au)

**You or your child can choose to withdraw from the study at any time.** Just notify our Research Coordinator, Dr Rebecca Kuhnert, at [rebecca.kuhnert@mq.edu.au](mailto:rebecca.kuhnert@mq.edu.au), or the interviewer if you change your mind at the time of the interview.

The Centre for Emotional Health at Macquarie University is developing a youth mental health screening tool that will be delivered to students in Year 4 to 11 in schools across NSW. The screening tool will determine whether any young people are going through current difficulties, and a variety of referral options and services will be available to those young people. This project is being conducted in partnership with the NSW Department of Education, Catholic Schools NSW and the Association of Independent Schools NSW, and is funded by the Bupa Health Foundation.

In order to test our screening tool, we are going to compare results from the screening tool with clinical interviews. We are therefore asking you and your child to agree to a brief interview about your child's mental health. The interviews will be conducted by a psychology researcher who will separately ask you and your child a series of questions about your child's thoughts, emotions and behaviours. The interviews will each take about 30-90 minutes in total and will be done via Zoom video conferencing or by telephone, depending on your preference. The interviewer will provide you and your child with feedback on the results of the interviews. As another way of testing our screening tool, we will also send an online survey for parents to complete, asking about your child's mental health, including their quality of life and any previous access to mental health support services. It will also ask you about your thoughts on youth mental health screening in schools. The survey will take about 30 minutes to complete. To thank your family for your time, you will be reimbursed \$40 for participating. We are also seeking permission from you to access the data that your child's school has on their school attendance and academic performance (grades). These measures will help us to test our screening tool, in addition to the interviews and online survey.

During the interviews and in the online survey, you and your child will be asked to reflect on your child's mental health, which you/your child may find distressing. Please let the interviewer know if you or your child feel distressed at any point during the interview. You and your child do not have to answer any questions you/they do not want to, and you are both free to withdraw at any time and will be reminded of this prior to commencing the interview and the survey. If you or your child choose to withdraw, there will be no adverse consequences and it will not affect any existing or future relationship with Macquarie University or your school. We encourage you to talk with your child about this study and to remind them that they can withdraw at any time without penalty.

To ensure confidentiality, the interviewer you will not know any personal information about you or your child prior to the interviews, other than your first names and your child's Student Record Number. Audio data from the interviews will be recorded for the purpose of coding by a second clinical psychologist in order to establish reliability. Audio recordings from interviews will not be used for any other purpose. The results of the interviews and the online survey will be saved to a secure server at Macquarie University and will only be accessible to the Macquarie University Research Team (consisting of the Research Coordinator and myself). Your child's school will not be informed of the interviews or online survey and will not have access to these data. Data on your child's school attendance and academic performance will only be used for this research and will only be accessible to the Research Team. This data will not be shared with any other organisation or individuals. De-identified data may be used, at a group level, to report outcomes from this project and may be published in scientific papers. No individual will ever be identified for research purposes.

Your child's and your participation are highly encouraged and voluntary. **If you wish for you and your child to participate in this project, please complete the consent form below.** You will be asked to provide consent to two separate components – active participation for you and your child (through interviews and online survey), and passive participation (permission to access school data for your child). You can choose to consent to both, one, or neither of these components. You can return the form to your child's teacher or respond directly to this email. More information about this project is available by contacting Dr Rebecca Kuhnert, who is the Research Coordinator for this study, at [rebecca.kuhnert@mq.edu.au](mailto:rebecca.kuhnert@mq.edu.au).

Kind regards,

Professor Ron Rapee (Chief Investigator)  
Distinguished Professor and ARC Laureate Fellow  
Centre for Emotional Health, Macquarie University

## Parent Consent Form

I have read (or, where appropriate, have had read to me) and understand the information above. Any questions I have asked were answered to my satisfaction. I consent to (please tick all that apply):

- Participation in clinical interviews (for myself and my child) and an online survey
- The Macquarie University Research Team accessing school data on my child's school attendance and academic performance

Student's name:

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(Block letters)

Your name:

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(Block letters)

Your Signature:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to do the interviews via (please select one of the following):

- Zoom video conferencing
- Telephone
- No preference

This study has been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee – Reference Number 52021918824322. If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics & Integrity (telephone (02) 9850 7854; email [ethics@mq.edu.au](mailto:ethics@mq.edu.au)). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.