

INFORMATION SHEET – CENTRES

“Sound Effects” ***Investigating speech impairment in early childhood***

This project will be conducted by the following Research Team:

Assoc Prof Sharynne McLeod

Assoc Prof Linda Harrison

School of Teacher Education, Charles Sturt University

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School of Community Health, Charles Sturt University

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Project Officer, Speech Pathologist, PhD student

School of Teacher Education, Charles Sturt University

Information about the study

This study is investigating the occurrence and impact of speech impairment in early childhood, and families' access to intervention for these children. Findings from this study will be used to provide information to policy makers, speech pathologists, families, educators and the general public in order to improve services for children with speech impairments and their families. Information gathered from this study may be published and may be used in future research. This letter outlines what consent to participate will mean for you.

Procedure

If you consent to participate in this study, teachers will be asked to do the following:

- Display information posters regarding the project for parents and distribute Parent Information Forms and Parent Screening Questionnaires. These Questionnaires enable the parents of children in the class to identify any concerns they have regarding their child's communication development.
- Complete a Screening Questionnaire about all children in their class to identify the proportion of children who may experience difficulties with communication. The Questionnaire should take approximately 2 minutes per child, and should only be completed for 4-5 year old children.
- Return the Screening Questionnaires (from parents and teachers) in a reply paid envelope to the university.
- Complete a Questionnaire listing strengths and difficulties for children who participate in assessments (anticipated 5-6 children per centre) if parents have consented to this information being reported. This should take about 5 minutes per child and will be collected by the Project Officer.
- If possible, set aside a room for the Project Officer, a speech pathologist, to conduct assessments with children identified by parents and/or teachers as having a speech

impairment (if parents have consented to this assessment). Parents will be invited to attend the assessments with their child. The assessments are expected to take 1 – 1½ hours per child. Following the assessment, we will provide the parents and teachers with a report of these children's communication skills.

These face-to-face assessments will be used to evaluate the severity and impact of children's difficulty. During the assessments, parents will also be asked to complete a more detailed questionnaire to provide information about their child's development and any previous speech therapy services they may have received. A sample of these children and significant others may also be invited to participate in interviews to discuss this information further.

Please note that all members of the Research Team have Working with Children Checks. If any other documentation is required at your centre, please notify the Project Officer before consenting to participate.

Ethical Considerations

Number codes will be used to provide children with anonymity during the process of analysing the data provided by teachers, parents and the speech pathologist. No data that could identify you, other individuals, any centre or specific location will be released, and strict confidentiality is assured. Please understand that you are not obliged to participate in this study and are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequences.

Further Information

If there are any questions you may still have in relation to the research, please contact Jane McCormack, Project Officer, Speech Pathologist and PhD student (02 60516835, jmccormack@csu.edu.au).



A/Prof Sharynne McLeod
A/Prof Linda Harrison
A/Prof Lindy McAllister
Jane McCormack

NOTE: I understand that if I have any complaints about this research I can contact:

Executive Officer
Ethics in Human Research Committee
Charles Sturt University
Private Bag 99
BATHURST NSW 2795
Telephone 02 6338462

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.