PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LETTER

PROJECT TITLE: Parenting Children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Dr. David Hamilton and Assoc. Professor Cecelia Winkelman
STUDENT RESEARCHER: Rachel Bush, Jemma Dinning, and Mandy Robinson
STUDENT’S DEGREE: Master of Psychology

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in the research project described below.

What is the project about?

The research project investigates the relationship between child problem behaviour, various parental characteristics, including wellbeing, in parents of children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This research may help us better understand the relationship between factors such as coping style and parent wellbeing. It is hoped that the findings can contribute to developing intervention and prevention programs aimed at improving the health and well-being of parents of children with a disability.

Who is undertaking the project?

This project is being conducted by Rachel Bush, Jemma Dinning, and Mandy Robinson under the supervision of Dr. David Hamilton and Assoc. Professor Cecelia Winkelman.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?

It is not anticipated that you will experience any discomfort while completing the questionnaire. However, should you feel any distress, you have the right to cease completing the questionnaire altogether. You are also able to speak to Dr. Gill Terrett, phone +61 (03)
What will I be asked to do?

You are asked to complete a questionnaire about yourself, your child with ASD, and your spouse. Examples of questions include demographic information (such as age, sex, and occupation), your child’s behaviour (for example, the degree to which your child is easily distracted), as well as, questions relating to your wellbeing (such as how hard you find it to wind down) and relationships.

How much time will the project take?

The time taken to complete these questions should be about 30 minutes.

What are the benefits of the research project?

You may benefit from this project by having the opportunity to contribute to research that may influence the support provided to parents and families with children who have who have a disability. In addition, following participation in the study, and as a token of appreciation for your time and effort, we will provide you with the opportunity to enter a raffle. If you choose to enter the raffle, your details for the raffle prize will be stored separately and cannot be used to identify your responses in the study. Should you choose to enter the raffle your name and contact details will be kept confidential.

Can I withdraw from the study?

If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences. However, as identifying information will not be collected, it will not be possible to withdraw your responses once they have been submitted. It is emphasized that your participation in this study is for research purposes only and thus we will not attempt to provide you with any feedback on your responses.

If at any stage during the completion of the survey you feel distressed or upset, you should withdraw immediately by simply closing the survey.

9953-3121, Email: Gill.Terrett@acu.edu.au, should you wish to discuss your experience of completing the questionnaire. If you are located in Australia and experience distress from completing this questionnaire, the phone number for Lifeline is 13 11 14. If you are completing this questionnaire overseas, please contact a counsellor in your local area.
Will anyone else know the results of the project?

The results will be used for student researchers’ thesis projects and may be submitted to an academic journal for publication or presented at an academic conference. Group data only will be used and no individual participants or their results will be identified in any publication or presentation.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?

If you wish to receive a summary of the findings, please email Dr. David Hamilton on david.hamilton@acu.edu.au

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project or experience distress as a result of participating?

If you would like to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, or seek counselling due to experiencing distress as a result of participating in the study, please contact Dr. Gill Terrett, phone +61 (03) 9953-3121, Email: Gill.Terrett@acu.edu.au.

What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University (approval number). If you have any complaints or concerns about the conduct of the project, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research).

Chair, HREC, c/o Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research), Australian Catholic University, Locked Bag 4115, FITZROY, VIC, 3065
Ph: 03 9953 3150, Fax: 03 9953 3315, Email: res.ethics@acu.edu.au

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.
I want to participate! How do I sign up?

If you are willing to participate in the study then please press “I agree to take part” at the bottom of screen or alternatively press “I’m not interested right now”.

Alternatively, you can complete and return a pen-and-paper copy using the attached pre-paid reply envelope. You may have been invited to participate in this survey while attending a community centre or health centre. Please note that whether you choose to complete the survey will not influence the level of services available to you at centres promoting participation in this research project.

Your support for this study will be most appreciated.