

**Participant Information Sheet**

HREC Project Number:	RDHS-33-15
Project Title:	Adolescent well-being and family functioning
Principal Investigator:	Associate Professor Penelope Hasking
Co-Investigators:	Dr Glenn Melvin Mr Henry Booth
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Parents, school staff and mental health professionals are increasingly concerned about self-injury in young people. Self-injury usually begins in adolescence and is quite common, with approximately 20% of young people reporting a history of self-injury. Prevention and early intervention among community-based adolescents is vital, but to do this effectively we need to understand how self-injury impacts the whole family.

We are conducting a study to better understand adolescent mental health, why some adolescents deliberately harm themselves and the impact that this has on the family, in particular, parental wellbeing.

We will assess family environments from the parent perspective with the aim of understanding the cyclical relationship between adolescent self-injury and parental wellbeing. We are also interested in the impact of self-injury on family functioning.

You are invited to take part in this study. Please read this Information Sheet in full before making a decision.

**Why were you chosen for this research?**

We are seeking parents across Western Australia to participate in this study. We are keen to hear from parents of young people who self-injure and those who do not so that we can better understand how parents view the mental health of young people. Your school has kindly agreed to advertise this study on our behalf. Your school's advertising of this project is not an indication of greater mental health concerns in your school.

**Possible benefits**

Results from the research will be used to help parents cope when their adolescent has mental health problems or is deliberately injuring themselves. Importantly, results may inform prevention and treatment of mental health concerns. Parents who have participated in our previous studies find they derive benefit from reflection on the items. Here is an example of what they have told us:

*I found reflecting on my daughter's self-injury very emotional but worthy to me. I was glad to participate in the questionnaire and it has benefitted me greatly.*

*The questions alone really have made me think even more about changes that could happen and discuss with my family. Thanks heaps.*

*Whilst doing the questionnaire it has made me reflect on my own parenting so I consider it very useful from my own point of view. A reminder of what's important. Thank you for working on this important topic and helping to de-mystify a growing area of concern.*

### What does the research involve?

You are invited to complete a questionnaire online that can be completed whenever you like. If you agree to participate, you will be asked questions of a sensitive nature. These questions will ask whether your adolescent has ever deliberately injured themselves, whether you have ever deliberately injured yourself, you and your child's history of mental illness, and whether you experienced abuse during your childhood. You are under no obligation to complete these questions. If you experience distress while completing these questions, please stop the questionnaire immediately.

### How much time will the research take?

The questionnaire will take approximately 30-40 minutes. The survey does not need to be completed in one sitting. You are free to start the survey and then come back to it, as long as you complete the survey within two weeks. After 2 weeks you will not be able to complete a survey you have already started. Please note, however that you should use the same computer to continue the survey.

### Inconvenience/discomfort

Participation in the research may be distressing for some individuals as it involves the discussion of mental health problems and self-injurious behaviours. Although consideration of your own and your child's mental health might raise some upsetting issues for you, parents who have previously participated in our studies have found them worthwhile. If you find yourself becoming upset at any stage we recommend you take a break or stop doing the questionnaire altogether. To stop the questionnaire simply close your browser. At the end of this information sheet, and again at the end of the questionnaire, we have also included a list of resources you might find helpful.

### You can withdraw from the research

Being in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participate. If you do consent to participate but later change your mind, you may withdraw from further participation at any stage before submitting your responses. However please note that any data you submit prior to exiting the questionnaire or closing your browser may be used in our analysis. Your decision to participate or not will have no bearing on your relationship with your child's school.

### Confidentiality

Your responses will remain anonymous and no information that could identify you will ever be made public. *We can mail you an information booklet about adolescent self-injury. If you wish to receive this booklet, you will be asked to provide your name and address at the end of the questionnaire. These details will not be linked to your questionnaire responses and all recorded names and addresses will be destroyed once the booklet has been mailed to you.*

### Storage of data

Data collected will be stored in accordance with Curtin University regulations, kept on University premises, in a password protected file for 7 years. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, and data may be used for student research (eg Honours theses) but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report or thesis.

### Results

If you would like to be informed of the aggregate research finding, please contact lauren.kelada@monash.edu in December 2016.

Thank you for participating in our research!. if you have any questions please feel free to contact one of the researchers below:

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## Useful resources

[www.self-injury.org.au](http://www.self-injury.org.au)

[Seeking solutions to self-injury parents and families second edition v2](#)

[Self injury fact sheet](#)

[Useful resources](#)

All research in Australia involving humans is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this research project have been approved by the Curtin University HREC. This project will be carried out according to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). If you have any concerns and/or complaints about the project, the way it is being conducted or your rights as a research participant, and would like to speak to someone independent of the project, please contact: The Curtin University Ethics Committee by telephoning 9266 2784 or by emailing [hrec@curtin.edu.au](mailto:hrec@curtin.edu.au)