

**Promoting Physical Activity in Skoolzout Centres**

Information Sheet for Participants

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Full details about the project, it's purpose, the researchers involved and should you agree to be involved what is requested of you, is provided in this information sheet.

**What is the purpose of this study?**

After-school care is formal care provided by non-school staff between 3pm and 6pm. In Australia around 10% of children aged 5-12 attend some form of after-school care. Limited Australian data exist for these settings, but internationally they are characterised by high levels of physical inactivity, sedentary behaviour and unhealthy snacking, and little opportunity for academic enrichment

The aim of this research is to evaluate the effect of the ‘*Wollongong SPORT*’ program when implemented in Big Fat Smile after-school centres.*Wollongong SPORT* is a physical activity and academic enrichment program for 5-10 year-old children. This program will be implemented in your child’s after school centre. The research that we are seeking your consent for is to collect data from your child on the effect of the program on your child’s physical activity and cognitive development.

**What we are inviting you to do?**

The centre that your child attends for after school programs has agreed to be involved in this study. Given that your child is enrolled in this after-school care service and is between five and 10 years of age, and attends at least twice a week they have the opportunity to participate. Two centres will participate in the program between May and September and two will participate in the program between September and December this year.

The program focuses on a fun physical activity program, with an optional tutoring program with UOW students. The Physical activity games will take around 75 minutes. BFS Centre staff and UOW education students will be trained to deliver the program over a six-month period. Over these 6 months children will participate in team sports such as soccer, netball, Oztag, basketball and activity sessions based on popular TV shows such as *The Amazing Race* and *Survivor*. All activities have been designed to be fun whilst at the same time challenging.

The optional academic enrichment activities involve children completing their prescribed homework under the tutelage of UOW students. Children will also receive positive role modelling, mentoring and friendship from the UOW students, enhancing their motivation to participate.

Physical activity and cognitive development data will be collected at the start of the program and again at 6-month follow-up, by trained research assistants. Physical activity will be measured during centre hours using the Actigraph accelerometer (a small monitor worn on child’s hip using an elastic belt).

To assess cognitive development we will use four executive function tasks, presented as 'games'. *They assess working memory, inhibition, shifting*. These assessments will be presented as a pattern recognition game, a memory game about a cartoon ant on an Ipad, a fish catching game on an Ipad to assess inhibition and a card sort task to assess the ability to shift between different sets of rules. These tasks will take approximately 30 minutes to complete, and will be performed at baseline and 6 months later.

While your child is in after-school care a trained research assistant will take a measurement of your child’s height and weight. This will be done in a private area and results will be kept confidential.l

The regular program will be implemented three afternoons per week in the centres.

Parents/Guardians will be asked to fill out a short demographic survey.

**What are the benefits and risks involved in this study?**

There are no risks associated with this study. The activity monitor is small and lightweight and worn on an elastic belt. It is not painful to wear nor intrusive. This monitor may be removed easily by the child at any time if they no longer wish to wear it.

**Participation in the study**

You are free to discontinue participation at any time. Discontinuation of your involvement will not jeopardise your current or future relationship with your after school service or with the University of Wollongong.

**What will happen to the information that you provide?**

All information collected during this study will be kept strictly confidential and be stored in a locked office. Information provided during the study may be used in publications such as papers, conference presentations and grant applications, however your identity and that of your childcare service will be kept strictly confidential.

This project will provide evidence for the feasibility and potential effectiveness of our interdisciplinary after-school Program in existing after-school centres.

**Who is conducting the study?**

* Professor Tony Okely, Professorial Fellow, Interdisciplinary Educational Research Institute, University of Wollongong
* Dr Dylan Cliff, Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Interdisciplinary Educational Research Institute, University of Wollongong
* Dr Rachel Jones, Research Fellow, Interdisciplinary Educational Research Institute, University of Wollongong.
* Dr Stewart Vella, Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Interdisciplinary Educational Research Institute, University of Wollongong
* Dr Anne-Maree Parrish, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Wollongong
* Dr. Steven Howard, Lecturer, Interdisciplinary Educational Research Institute, University of Wollongong
* Chris Tulloch, Manager Skoolzout, Big Fat Smile.
* Cinzia Immuni, Director Research and Development, Big Fat Smile
* Tamara Raso, Project Manager, University of Wollongong.

This study has been co-funded by Big Fat Smile and the University of Wollongong.

**If you are happy for your child to participate in this study, please complete the attached consent form and return it to the Director of your childcare service on your child’s next day of attendance.**

Kind Regards, Okely signature 2011

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If you have any questions regarding the study, please contact Prof Tony Okely on (02) 4221 4641. If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted, you can contact the University of Wollongong Ethics Officer on (02) 4221 3386 or email rso- [ethics@uow.edu.au](mailto:ethics@uow.edu.au).

Your co-operation in this project will be greatly appreciated.