**Participant Information Sheet (Study 2)**

**The Mindful Pregnancy and Mother-Baby Relationship Project Ethics Reference: AS03534**

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| Principal Investigator | Chief Investigator | Chief Investigator |
| Antonella Sansone-Southwood  PhD Student  Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences  Bond University Gold Coast  Email:  antonella.sansone-southwood@student.bond.edu.au | Ass Professor Peta Stapleton  Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences  Bond University  Email: pstaplet@bond.edu.au | Professor Alan Patching  Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences  Bond University  Email:apatchin@bond.edu.au |

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

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether maternal mindfulness can support mental health and mother-baby relationship during pregnancy and after birth. Your participation in the survey is highly valued and will provide valuable information to better support the psychological wellbeing of mothers during pregnancy and after birth, particularly in preventing postnatal depression, anxiety and stress, and improving the mother-baby relationship during pregnancy and post-birth, with potential benefits on your baby.

This study is being conducted as part of a PhD at Bond University.

**2. Who can participate?**

Women who are aged 18 years or over, in the second trimester of pregnancy (20 weeks +), can understand English and complete the survey, are from Australia, are not receiving specialistic care and can participate in the online Prenatal Mindfulness Relationship-Based (PMRB) program are invited to participate in this study. The online questionnaires will ask questions about your pregnancy, mindfulness, body awareness, mental health, and relationship with your baby during pregnancy and after birth.

**3. Do I have to take part in this study?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you do not have to. You may withdraw from the survey at any time without prejudice or penalty. If you decide to take part in the survey you are free to stop completing the survey and your personal information will be destroyed. Data collected will remain in a coded format. If you wish to participate after reading the Participant Information Sheet, you will be asked to indicate your consent to participate in the survey before the online survey questions are presented. You will not be asked to provide your name or any other identifying information but only an identification **CODE** (for example first two letters of your mother’s maiden name plus last two digit of your year of birth) and your **EMAIL ADDRESS** so we can contact you by email to inform you about the starting date of the program and complete your second survey at approx. 36-week gestation and follow-up survey at 10-12 weeks post birth.

**4. What does participation of this study involve?**

Participation in this study involves:

* completing an online survey at three time points:

1. 20 weeks + gestation (now, before intervention/baseline)
2. Around 36-week gestation (after intervention) and,
3. 10-12 weeks after birth.

You are now only invited to complete the first survey. Each survey will take approximately 40 minutes.

* Participation in the online Prenatal Mindfulness Relationship-Based (PMRB) program. Participation is voluntary and involves attending 2-hour weekly sessions for 9 weeks, practising meditation at home possibly daily for 10-20 minutes using free (YouTube) guided meditation

throughout the program and engaging in interactions with the baby. In addition, there is a 3-hour reunion session 2-3 weeks after you have given birth. The course will be led by the Principal Investigator, who is a certified mindfulness teacher. The teaching of mindfulness is integrated with knowledge of breathing technique and meditation, stress coping strategies for childbirth and daily life, prenatal and perinatal education, including the baby as a sentient being, basic information about pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum adjustment, breastfeeding/feeding, mother-baby sensorimotor interactions using touch, vocalisation, breathing, and baby’s movements.

**5. What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Participants of the online PMRB program will receive nine free 2-hour mindfulness-based training sessions and a free guided pregnancy meditation session on YouTube. You will also receive a $25 reward at the end of the study. Participation in the program aims to support pregnancy and mental health experiences, relationship with your unborn and newborn baby, birth and parenting preparation, long-term self-development tools, and other related positive outcomes. Participation in the survey can be an opportunity to reflect on your developing relationship with your baby. Your answers in the survey may provide valuable information on how we can better support the psychological wellbeing of mothers and their relationship with their babies.

**6. Will participation benefit others?**

If participation in the online PMRB program proves to be helpful, then we will be developing it further and finding ways to reach out to more women and parents who could benefit from this program. This program may also help prevent or minimise the risk of postnatal depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms and their impact on infant development by improving maternal mindfulness and mother-baby relationship during pregnancy. It may be useful in future research regarding prenatal and perinatal mental health and development. There is a potential for future commercial application of the outcomes of the study. You will not be entitled to a share in the profit of any commercial application.

**7. What are the risks of taking part?**

Participation in this study should not involve any physical or mental discomfort. All study questions and measures have been developed to use with pregnant and/or new mothers and infants, and thus considered appropriate for pregnancy and the perinatal period. However, it is possible that some questions may be upsetting for some women. Should you experience emotional discomfort during the survey, please remember you are free to take a break at any time and are under no obligation to continue if you do not wish to. If you participate in the PMRB program, a minimum level of discomfort during 20-minute meditation, in particular during the first sessions, is normal and usually most beneficial. An alternative meditation position can be recommended; alternatively, you are free to stop participating at any time if the discomfort persists. We recognise that pregnancy-related topics can be sensitive for some women. If you experience an emotional response to completing the surveys or participating in the program, support can be sought through your local GP or pregnancy health clinic, or by contacting the following counselling or support service:

Australia PANDA 1300 726 306

**8. Can I access the results of this study?**

At the end of the follow-up at 10-12 weeks after birth you will be given the opportunity to request a summary of the study outcomes. If you are interested in knowing the results of this project, please tick the box at the end of the follow-up survey and we will email you an abstract of the study and findings of the conclusion of the study.

**9. What happens when the research project ends? Confidentiality and security of data**

All information you provide will be treated as confidential. Your email address will be permanently deleted from our records at the end of the study and will not be used for any other purpose. You will not be asked to provide your name or any other identifying information in the survey but only an identification code. Although you name and face will inevitably appear during the online program, your identity will never be revealed out of the sessions. All data collected in this project will be stored confidentially in approved Bond University network storage facilities and will be destroyed after 5 years, in line with *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Rese*arch (2007). Only members of the research team

will have access to identified data. De-identified data will be provided to Bond University and subsequently analysed and reported in such a way that responses will not be able to be linked to any individual. The data you provide will only be used for the specific research purposes of this study. Survey results will be used in an anonymous capacity and reported in conferences, presentations, and/o academic publications.

**10. Who has reviewed the research project?**

This research project has been approved by Bond University HREC. Bond University conducts research in accordance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research Involving Humans* (2007). This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

**11. Further Information and who to contact**

If you want any further information concerning this study, or have any questions that have not been addressed in this information statement, you can contact the Principal Investigator Antonella Sansone-Southwood at: antonella.sansone-southwood@student.bond.edu.au.

**12. Complaints**

Should you have any concerns or questions about this study, which you do not wish to discuss with the researchers listed in this document, then you may contact the Bond Human Research Ethics Committee, c/o Bond University Office of Research Services, Bond University, Gold Coast, 4229,

Tel: +61 7 5595 4194 or Email: buhrec@bond.edu.au

We thank you for taking the time to assist us with this research.

Yours sincerely,

Antonella Sansone-Southwood

Associate Professor Peta Stapleton

Professor Alan Patching

School of Psychology

Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences

Bond University

Gold Coast, QLD 4229