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Participant Information Statement

COOL LITTLE KIDS ONLINE: A PARENTING PROGRAM TO INCREASE YOUNG CHILDREN'S CONFIDENCE AND PREVENT ANXIETY PROBLEMS

What is the purpose of the *Cool Little Kids Online* study?

We are testing a new online version of the 'Cool Little Kids' parenting program. The program gives practical ways of responding to young children's shyness, fears and anxiety. As a group parenting program, 'Cool Little Kids' has been safely and effectively used in Australia for over 10 years. We have now created an online version of the same program so that more parents are able to benefit.

We want to find out if the online program helps parents build their young child's confidence and reduce their fears and worries. We hope to prevent anxiety problems and help shy/sensitive children have an easier start at school.

The study is being run by researchers from La Trobe University (Melbourne) and Macquarie University (Sydney). The program has received funding from the National Health and Medical Research Council and the auDA Foundation.

Who is being asked to participate?

We are inviting parents of young children aged 3 to 6 years who have high levels of shyness/sensitivity to take part.

What does the study involve?

The Cool Little Kids Online program has 8 'modules' with information and interactive activities, videos, audio, and stories from other parents. A new module will become available each week, and each takes about 30-60 minutes to complete. Each module gives parents new skills to practise with their child in-between modules.

To see how well the program works, we need to compare families who receive it with those who don't. However, we would still like to offer some form of help to all parents. Therefore, eligible parents will be randomly assigned to receive either *immediate* access to Cool Little Kids Online, or *delayed* access after a waiting period of 24 weeks. Whether parents receive immediate or delayed access to the online program is determined at random, like drawing names out of a hat. Only parents in the immediate access group will be able to request telephone support from a clinician during the 24-week study period. We will compare the groups to see if the online program is of benefit to Australian families. To do this, we ask all parents to complete three questionnaires at various stages of the study.

The first questionnaire is at the start of the study and will take about 20 minutes. The 2nd questionnaire will be 12 weeks later and will take about 10-15 minutes. The third questionnaire will be 24 weeks after the study began, and will take about 45 minutes to complete. After completing this final questionnaire, parents in the delayed access group will be offered the Cool Little Kids Online program.

If you decide to take part, you need to:

1. Be willing to be randomly assigned to either the 'start now' group (immediate access), or the 'start later' group (access after a delay of 24 weeks).

2. Provide us with your name and contact details so we can be in touch with you during the study.
3. Complete 3 online questionnaires about your child's feelings and behaviour, parenting your child, your own wellbeing, and some general questions about your family (see above).
4. If you are in the 'start now' group, you will need to set aside some time to log in to www.coollittlekids.org.au to complete each module during the 24-week study period.

Total time commitment for this study is approximately 7.5 hours for parents in the 'start now' group and 1.5 hours for parents in the 'start later' group. All parts of the study can be completed at times that you prefer and anywhere you have access to the internet.

What are the benefits of *Cool Little Kids Online*?

As mentioned above, we know the 'Cool Little Kids' group parenting program is helpful for many Australian parents with shy/sensitive young children. If the online program works as well, your shy/sensitive young child may become more confident, have fewer anxiety problems and find it easier to start school. You may have improved parenting skills and wellbeing.

Are there any risks?

There is a small risk that you may become distressed as a result of some of the Cool Little Kids Online program or questionnaires. If this happens, please contact Dr Morgan (below) who can help you find a source of professional help. Alternatively, you can call Lifeline (24/7 crisis support) on 13 11 14, or you may want to discuss your feelings with supportive friends, family, or a health professional.

What about confidentiality?

All the information you give us online will stay private. We can disclose the information only with your permission, except as required by law. We will remove your name from the information you give us and we will use a code number instead. Your information will be stored in a secure electronic database at La Trobe University. Only the Cool Little Kids Online study team will have access to this information. You may request a copy of your personal data collected during the study, by contacting Dr Morgan (below). Data from the study will be destroyed after a minimum of 15 years.

What happens with the results?

Results from this study may appear in publications and reports or be presented at conferences. These results will not identify you in any way. We will provide you with a summary of the study results if you request it, by contacting Dr Morgan (below).

What if I change my mind?

You do not have to take part in this study if you do not want to. If you take part and later change your mind, you can withdraw from the study. There is no connection between your preschool service and the study. As a result, there are no disadvantages, penalties or harmful consequences for not taking part or for withdrawing early from the study. You have the right to request that your data not be used in the research study. You can make this request up to four weeks after you have completed your participation in the study. Please notify us by email or telephone if you wish to withdraw your consent for your data to be used in the study.

Who do I contact for more information?

If you have any questions about the study please contact the lead investigator, Dr Amy Morgan on clko-study@latrobe.edu.au or 03 9479 5193.

If you have any complaints or concerns about your participation in the study that the researcher has

not been able to answer to your satisfaction, you may contact the Senior Human Ethics Officer, Ethics and Integrity, Research Office, La Trobe University, Victoria, 3086 (P: 03 9479 1443, E: humanethics@latrobe.edu.au). Please quote the application reference number 15-010.

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