
INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS

*Expanding the reach and delivery of Media Smart Online:
An intervention found to both reduce eating disorder onset and increase eating disorder remission*

Your child has volunteered to participate in this research project and your parental consent is required before they can participate. You are welcome to read the following information which explains the study in detail including how to proceed to register your child to take part. Our contact details are provided below in case you have any questions.

Researchers:

Dr Simon Wilksch, Dr Anne O'Shea & Professor Tracey Wade
School of Psychology
Flinders University
Ph: 8201 7996
Simon.wilksch@flinders.edu.au

Purpose of the study:

Media Smart has previously been taught face to face in schools, and delivered online to young adult women and has been found to

- improve body image and other eating disorder risk factors (e.g. depressive symptoms, weight based teasing);
- reduce the onset of eating disorders; and
- increase eating disorder remission.

This project aims to find out if an online Media Smart program targeted at specific age groups can be as effective across young people aged 13 – 25 of all genders.

This project is supported by Flinders University (College of Education, Psychology and Social Work) and Australian Rotary Health.

What is Media Smart?

Media Smart is an 8-module program which is targeted to specific age groups, making it suitable for adolescents and young adults. Topics covered include techniques used by the media to manipulate images, ideas for how to analyse and challenge media messages, tips for handling pressure placed on young people including social media, and planning for how to move through adolescence and beyond as a skilful and confident person. Media Smart targets media internalization which refers to when people believe they must look like the ideal images presented in social and traditional media.

The program was created because body image has been found to be the number one concern of Australian girls and boys aged 11-24, affecting approximately 75% girls and 50% of boys. Poor body image can have negative flow-on effects across a young person's life. *Media Smart* is designed to address and prevent this.

What will your child be asked to do?

First they will complete a brief online screening survey (taking about 5 minutes), and a longer survey (taking about 25 minutes). They will then be randomly allocated (as in a lucky dip) to one of the 3 programs: *Media Smart* released weekly; *Media Smart* at your own pace; or tips on promoting positive body image. After the program, they will complete the survey on 3 more occasions: 8 weeks later, 6 months later, and 12 months later.

The survey questions relate to body image, eating habits and mood. Some questions refer to personal matters (e.g., "How often is social support available to you if you need it?", "How dissatisfied have you felt about your shape?", "Has your weight affected how you judge yourself as a person?", "Has your shape affected how you judge yourself as a person?" "I compare my body to the bodies of TV and movie stars" or level of agreement with "I feel alone in the world"), but all questions are from standardised, international questionnaires.

We are seeking your consent to use the results from the questionnaires in our research so we can determine if the program helps young people. The results from the questionnaires will be kept confidential, and at the end of data collection, any information identifying individuals will be destroyed.

Who is eligible to participate?

To participate in the study your child must be aged 13 – 25, have access to the internet, and wish to improve their body image but not be severely underweight.

What benefit will my child gain from being involved in this study?

Your child will get to participate in programs that are designed to improve the way young people feel about themselves. If results from the questionnaires show the program/s are valuable, they may become more widely available. Please note that your child may not directly benefit from taking part in this research.

Will my child be identifiable by being involved in this study?

Researcher's will be aware of the email addresses of those who participate. This information will be stored separately from survey responses so anonymity can still be assured. All information and results obtained in this study will be stored in a secure way, with access restricted to relevant researchers. Your child's questionnaire answers and program participation will remain confidential, and no information that could lead to their identification will be published or shared.

Are there any risks or discomforts if my child is involved?

Due to the sensitive nature of the questions asked in the survey, it is possible that some participants may experience emotional discomfort and/or distress. Should answering any of the questions in the survey raise any concerns for your child, a list of free support options will be provided to them each time that they complete the questionnaire should they wish to talk to someone (e.g., a trusted adult such as a parent, teacher, *KidsHelpline ph 1800 55 1800 (AUS); Kidsline 0800 54 37 54 (NZ)*).

Voluntary participation – please complete the linked consent form

It is important that you understand that your child's participation in completing the questionnaires and the *Media Smart* program is voluntary. Your child will be provided with the same information. When your child provides their consent to participate in the study, you will be sent an email to obtain your parental consent for their participation. If you agree for your child to participate, you can click "I Agree" in the email. If you or your child do not wish for them to take part they are under no obligation to do so. Your child may withdraw at any time from the programme and is free to decline particular questions.

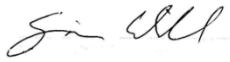
Recognition of Time

Your child will be given a \$20 voucher (iTunes, Netflix or Stan) if they complete 3 of the assessments, or a \$30 voucher (iTunes, Netflix or Stan) if they complete all 4 assessments, as compensation for their time.

How can I find out more about the results of the study?

At the conclusion of the study, outcomes from the project will be summarised and emailed to you if you would like to see them.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet, and we hope that you will accept our invitation to be involved.



Dr Simon Wilksch

*B. Psych (Hons), PhD (Clin. Psych).
Flinders University*

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee in South Australia (Project number 8287). For queries regarding the ethics approval of this project, or to discuss any concerns or complaints, please contact the Executive Officer of the committee via telephone on +61 8 8201 3116 or email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au