

Parent/Guardian Information Statement

Research Study: Taking evidence-based health and wellbeing programs to scale



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

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1. What is this study about?

We are conducting a research study about programs designed to prevent adolescent substance use and mental ill-health. *OurFutures* is a well-established, evidence-based program that has been shown to have positive impacts on adolescents' substance use and mental health. Specifically, *OurFutures* has been shown to reduce alcohol consumption, binge drinking, cannabis use, ecstasy use, harms from substance use, and intentions to use substances in the future. It has additionally been shown to slow the progression of anxiety symptoms, reduce psychological distress, and improve knowledge about mental health.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the scale-up of these programs, as part of the Movember Foundation's Scaling What Works (SWW) Evaluation. The evaluation aims to understand what works for delivering and scaling wellbeing programs, and how the programs can be improved. Scaling, in this case, refers to expanding successful programs to reach and benefit more people.

Your child has been invited to take part. Taking part in this study is voluntary.

Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

2. Who is running the study?

The study is being carried out by the following researchers: Professor Nicola Newton, Dr Lauren Gardner, Professor Maree Teesson, Dr Katrina Champion, Dr Erin Kelly, Dr Lucinda Grummitt, Associate Professor Emma Barrett, Dr Louise Birrell and Dr Amy-Leigh Rowe from the University of Sydney, Dr Mark Deady from the University of New South Wales, and Dr Anna Williamson, Mr Tom Steele, and Ms Chloe Ang from the Centre for Evidence and Implementation.

This study is being funded by the Movember Foundation.

3. Who can take part in the study?

We are seeking high school students attending participating schools in 2024 to take part in this study. Your child has been invited to participate in this study because their school has agreed to participate.

4. What will the study involve?

If you decide your child can take part in this study, they will be asked to complete a confidential online questionnaire which will ask about their knowledge related to substance use and/or mental health, health behaviours, beliefs, attitudes and mental health and wellbeing. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes and will be completed during a Health and Physical Education lesson, or another time as determined by the school, in between Terms 1 and 3 2024 (depending on when your child's school chooses to run the program).

Following this, students at your child's school will complete either an *OurFutures module*.

OurFutures is a suite of universal prevention programs that utilise interactive cartoon storyboards to empower secondary students to improve their health and wellbeing. The currently available *OurFutures* modules are:

- Alcohol – 6 Lessons – Year 8
- Alcohol & Cannabis – 6 Lessons – Year 8/9
- Cannabis & Psychostimulants – 6 Lessons – Year 9/10
- MDMA & Emerging Drugs – 4 Lessons – Year 10
- Mental Health – 6 Lessons – Year 8/9/10

Each of the *OurFutures* Modules are aligned with the Health and Physical Education curriculum, and therefore serve as a replacement for education as usual. Through 8 large trials involving 240 schools and >21,000 students, the *OurFutures* Modules have been shown to be more effective than health education as usual in preventing substance use, mental health problems and related harms among adolescents, with lasting effects into early adulthood (7 years after program delivery).

After completing the program/s, your child will again be asked to complete a survey of about their knowledge related to substance use and/or mental health, health behaviours, beliefs, attitudes and mental health and wellbeing to assess any changes over time. Your child's surveys will be linked together over time using a unique code, which will ensure that all the information they provide is confidential.

If you do not permit your child to take part in the research, they will not complete the research surveys and will be provided with alternative activities while the other students are completing the surveys, as directed by their teacher. However, they may still complete *OurFutures* if this program is chosen to replace usual health education as they address learning outcomes from the curriculum. If you do not want them to participate in the programs, you may contact your child's school to discuss.

5. Can we withdraw once started?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and your child does not have to take part. They will also be asked if they agree to take part if you decide they can.

Any decision will not affect current or future relationships with the researchers or anyone else at The University of Sydney, The University of New South Wales or the Centre for Evidence and Implementation.

If you and your child decide to take part in the study and either of you change your mind, you can withdraw by contacting the research team and telling them you no longer want your child to participate.

If you or your child chooses to withdraw, we will not collect any more information. Please let us know at the time of withdrawal what you would like us to do with information we have collected about your child up to that point. Your child's questionnaire responses can be withdrawn after submission and will not be included in publications, up to the point that we have analysed and published the results.

6. Are there any risks or costs?

Aside from giving up time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study for your child. We don't expect the research to cause any harm or discomfort, but if your child experiences feelings of distress because of participation, they can let their teacher know or they can contact a member of the research team (their details are listed below). Alternatively, contact details for services are provided on the study website and at the end of each survey.

7. Are there any benefits?

We cannot guarantee that your child will receive any direct benefits from being in the research study, however, in previous research trials, *OurFutures* has been shown to have a positive impact on adolescents' substance use and mental health. Additionally, each time your child completes a questionnaire for this study, they will be entered into a random draw (among students at their school) to win one of two \$100 gift vouchers.

8. What will happen to information that is collected?

By agreeing for your child to participate in this study, you are agreeing to us collecting information about your child.

Any information provided to us will be stored securely and we will only disclose identifiable information with your permission, unless we are required by law to release information. We are planning for the study findings to be published. Your child will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

We will keep the information we collect for this study for a minimum of 20 years, after which time it will be securely disposed. We may use data collected in this study in future projects or for longer term follow-ups of the study cohort. By providing your consent you are allowing us to use your child's information in future projects. We don't know at this stage what these other projects will involve. We will seek ethical approval before using the information in these future projects.

We intend to give the information from this project to other researchers so that they can use it in their projects. Before we do so, we will take out all the identifying information so that the people we give it to won't know whose information it is. The other researchers won't know that your child participated in the project and they won't be able to link your child to any of their personal information.

9. Will I be told the results of the study?

You and your child have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study. All participating schools will also receive a summary of the study findings and will be asked to share the results with parents and students. This feedback will be in the form of a one or two-page summary document and will be provided after the study is finished.

10. What if I would like further information?

When you have read this information, the following researcher will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you or your child would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact:

- Prof Nicola Newton, Professor & Director of Prevention Research, The University of Sydney, +61 2 8627 9030, nicola.newton@sydney.edu.au

11. What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of The University of Sydney **2023/729** according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*.

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the University:

Human Ethics Manager
human.ethics@sydney.edu.au
+61 2 8627 8176

This information sheet is for you to keep

Parent/Guardian Consent Form



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After reading the information sheet, if you **DO wish** for your child to take part in this research study then you do not need to do anything further.

In giving my consent, I confirm that that:

- The details of any involvement have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written Participant Information Statement to keep.
- I understand the purpose of the study is to evaluate the scale-up of the OurFutures and Preventure programs which have been shown to prevent substance use and mental-ill health among high school students.
- I acknowledge that the risks and benefits of participating in this study have been explained to me to my satisfaction.
- I understand that in this study my child will be asked to complete 2 confidential surveys assessing their knowledge related to relevant substances (dependant on the chosen program/modules) and/or mental health, behaviours, beliefs, attitudes and mental health and wellbeing.
- I understand that information may be used in future research. It is not known at this stage what this research will involve, but it will require ethical approval and all identifying information will have been removed.
- I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary.
- I am assured that my decision to let my child participate will not have an impact on any relationship with the research team or the University of Sydney.
- I understand that we (myself and/or my child) are free to withdraw from this study at any time and can choose to withdraw any information already provided (unless the data has already been de-identified, analysed or published).
- I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information provided by my child will be protected and will only be used for purposes that has been agreed to. I understand that information identifying me or my child will only be told to others with my permission, except as required by law.

- I understand that the results of this study may be published, and that publications will not contain any identifiable information about myself or my child.

If you would like feedback on the overall results of the study, please provide your preferred contact details (email/telephone/postal address):

However, if you **DO NOT** wish for your child to participate in the study then please sign and complete this form and return it to your son's Head of House by **Monday 29th July**.

Please tick

I **DO NOT** give consent for my child to participate in the above study.

Parent/Guardian Name

Child's Name

School

Date
