



RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS EVALUATION

PARENT INFORMATION SHEET FOR STUDENT SURVEYS

Introduction

Your child has been invited to take part in a survey as part of the statewide evaluation of Respectful Relationships. This is because your school is participating in the Respectful Relationships initiative.

Victoria's Respectful Relationships initiative supports school leaders, teachers and our school communities to promote and model respect and gender equality – and to teach our children how to build healthy relationships, and develop resilience and confidence. As part of the Respectful Relationships initiative schools are supported to take a whole school approach to embedding a culture of respect and equality across our entire school community.

There is strong evidence showing that this approach leads to positive impacts on a student's academic outcomes, their mental health, classroom behaviour and relationships between students and teachers. The evaluation aims to measure these changes and provide data for schools to help them implement Respectful Relationships.

This **information sheet** tells you about the evaluation. It explains the purpose of the evaluation, and the activities and risks that may be involved. It also describes information that will be collected about your child, how that information will be used and with whom it will be shared. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want your child to take part in the evaluation.

Please read this information carefully. You can speak with one of the researchers to go through the information with you if needed. Please ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about. Before deciding whether or not you would like your child to take part, you might want to talk to the researchers at ACIL Allen Consulting (ACIL Allen). Contact details are available on page 3.

Does my child have to participate in the research? Can I change my mind?

Participation in this evaluation is voluntary and there is no obligation for your child to be involved. It is your decision whether your child participates or not. Your child can stop participating at any point during the survey, and they don't have to answer any of the questions if they don't want to.

If you decide your child can participate in the research and they later feel that they no longer wish to be part of it, they may withdraw from the research at any time. Your child will not be penalised for non-participation.

If you decide you would prefer your child does not take part in a survey for the evaluation, you are asked to sign the attached **opt-out consent form**.

By signing the opt-out consent form, you are telling us that:

- You **do not** wish for your child to take part in the survey and confirm that you **do not** give permission to ACIL Allen to collect data from your child for the evaluation.

What is Respectful Relationships?

The Royal Commission into Family Violence identified the role that schools have in creating a culture of respect to change the story of family violence for future generations. In 2016, respectful relationships education became a core component of the Victorian Curriculum from prep to Year 12, and is being taught in all government and Catholic schools and many independent schools. From 2017, schools will be provided with strategies and tools to implement a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships.

What is the purpose of the evaluation?

The Respectful Relationships evaluation is for the Victorian Department of Education and Training ('the Department'). The Department has contracted ACIL Allen, a public policy consulting firm, to look at the implementation of the Respectful Relationships initiative in Victorian schools. Further information about ACIL Allen can be found at www.acilallen.com.au/about.

What does the evaluation involve?

As part of the evaluation, ACIL Allen researchers are inviting students who have participated in respectful relationships education to complete a short survey. The researchers would like to hear students' views on what they are learning in class, what a healthy, respectful relationship looks like, how gender equality is modelled and how confident they feel to identify unhealthy relationships and behaviours.

The surveys have been set up by the researchers on an online platform, which will provide the data directly back to ACIL Allen. The surveys will be completed in class on schools computers and will take about 20 minutes to complete. The questions cover students' understanding of respectful relationships education and attitudes towards gender equality.

What are the benefits if my child participates?

Your child's participation in this evaluation will help to inform the Victorian Government's continuing work in delivering respectful relationships education. There is no payment for participation.

Are there any risks for my child if they participate?

The approach has been purposefully designed to avoid risks to your child.

Prior to, and upon completion of the survey, students will be reminded about where they can go in their school to get help, such as school wellbeing staff, counsellors or teachers and a parent/guardian, in case any of the questions causes them distress.

Your child is able to stop participating in the survey **at any time** if they don't feel comfortable. Your child will not be penalised for deciding not to participate.

How will my child's information be stored?

In collecting your child's personal information within this research, ACIL Allen must comply with the Australian Government's *Privacy Act 1988*.

ACIL Allen staff participating in the project will have access to your child's survey responses. The responses will be kept strictly confidential, in a locked computer. This information will be deleted after seven (7) years.

If your child participates and you later decide you would prefer that your child's responses are not included in the evaluation, you can contact the researchers and all of your child's information and responses will be removed and destroyed. This will need to be done before 1 June 2018, as after that date it may be too late to remove your information from the evaluation.

Will it be confidential?

Any information that your child does provide will be kept confidential and student data will be de-identified in any reports resulting from this project.

Each of the ACIL Allen staff members involved in the project has signed a confidentiality agreement with the Department.

If your child provides information to the researcher that describes suffering or harm that has been caused, or is likely to be caused, to children, or other offences, the researcher may be obliged to follow Victoria's laws and guidelines, including the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (as amended 2014). This may include reporting to the Victorian Government's child protection services.

Who can I contact for more information?

If you have any questions or would like any further information about the evaluation you can contact your school principal.

You can also speak to the project manager at ACIL Allen, Amy Mehrton, a.mehrton@acilallen.com.au or 03 8650 6056.

Who can I contact if I have any complaints?

The Bellberry Human Research Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved this study in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) – incorporating all updates. This Statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

If you would like to discuss the project or view a copy of the Complaint procedure with someone not directly involved, particularly in relation to matters concerning policies, information or complaints about the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, please contact the Committee Chair, Bellberry Human Research Ethics Committee on 08 8361 3222.

If you think there has been a breach of your privacy you can contact the Commissioner for Privacy and Data Protection by telephone on 1300 666 444 or in writing via:

Commissioner for Privacy and Data Protection
PO Box 24014
Melbourne VIC 3001

Who can I contact if I need support?

If you or your child needs to talk to someone after the survey, they can speak to their school wellbeing staff, counsellors or teachers and a parent/guardian. You can also call 1800Respect on 1800 737 732. 1800Respect provides free national counselling, information and support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.