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**Information for Study 1 participants (Intending Parents Study) for the project
*Feeling, wanting, having: The meaning of children to Australian heterosexual couples***

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your interest in being involved in the project *Feeling, wanting, having: The meaning of children to Australian heterosexual couples* which is being conducted by myself, Dr Damien Riggs, a senior lecturer in the School of Social and Policy Studies at Flinders University, South Australia, and my colleagues Dr Clare Bartholomaeus and Ms Mia Mandara. This project aims to explore how Australian heterosexual couples discuss the feelings associated with wanting to have children, the experience of becoming pregnant and having a child, and the ways in which feelings about becoming and being a parent change over time.

Am I eligible to participate?

We are looking to interview heterosexual couples (married or de facto) who are planning for their first child. Participants will be Australian citizens living in Adelaide with no history of infertility or pregnancy loss.

What will I be asked to do?

As a participant, you are invited to be voluntarily involved in four face-to-face interviews: 1) during the time in which you and your partner are attempting to become pregnant, 2) during the pregnancy (at approximately 20-24 weeks), 3) 6 months after the child is born, and 4) 18 months after the child is born. It is anticipated that the first interview will take approximately 90 minutes, and subsequent interviews will take approximately 30 minutes each. Each interview will be digitally audio recorded for later transcription. We will conduct separate interviews with your partner at each stage of the research, focusing on their experiences. The interviews will focus upon your desires and motivations for having children and your experiences of parenting once your child is born, and thus should be an enjoyable experience. During the first interview you will also be asked to complete a one page demographic sheet to provide a contextual background to your responses. Once you have arranged an interview time, we will provide you with the demographic sheet in case you would like to complete it prior to the interview and the interview question guide for the first interview in order to help you to start thinking about the topic.

Will I be identifiable by being involved in this study?

Interviews will be transcribed, and any identifying information will be removed prior to publication. Only the researchers involved in the study will have access to the names of participants, and the transcription of audio recordings will be undertaken by a trained professional bound by the same ethics as the researchers. Importantly, no identifying information will be made publically available, and reports or publications produced from the findings will only include de-identified information about participants. As such, your confidentiality will be guaranteed in the context of the general public. It is possible, however, that particular aspects of the experiences you share – if reported in subsequent publications – may be identifiable by any family members or close friends who read them.

What possible benefits will I gain from being involved in the study?

The sharing of motivations, desires and expectations related to having children is intended to be an enjoyable experience for participants. However, participants may experience no direct benefit from their involvement. The research will help to enhance understandings of the reproductive intentions and experiences of Australian heterosexual couples.

Are there any risks or discomforts if I am involved?

If any part of the research causes you distress or you encounter a negative experience in the process of planning to become parents please let us know. While it is statistically unlikely to occur, we have included a sheet listing support services and information in the case of infertility, pregnancy loss, child loss, or antenatal and postnatal depression. If you need further information about support services, please contact me via the email address below.

How do I agree to participate?

Involvement in the project requires completion of a consent form, however consent may be withdrawn at any stage without question should you decide you no longer wish to participate. This consent form indicates your consent to participate in the four interviews involved in this study. You will not be required to sign a consent form prior to each interview after the first one.

How will I receive information about the findings from the project?

Findings and updates on the study will progressively be made available on the research website: www.australianparentingstudy.com

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and we hope that you will accept our invitation to be involved. If you have any questions prior to your involvement in the research or any queries concerning the project, please contact me by email (preferred): contact@australianparentingstudy.com or phone: (08) 8201 2786. More information can be found on the research website: www.australianparentingstudy.com

Sincerely,



Dr Damien Riggs

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project Number 6694). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on (08) 8201 3116, by fax on (08) 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au.