



Brock University
Centre for Applied Disability Studies
Niagara Region
500 Glenridge Ave.
St. Catharines, ON
L2S 3A1 Canada
T 905 688 5550 x5395
F 905 378 5719
disabilitystudies@brocku.ca
www.brocku.ca/disabilitystudies

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Dear Parent,

If you have a child between the ages of 2 to 7 years old, we invite you to participate in a research project entitled, "Comparison of child problem behaviours, parenting strategies and self-efficacy in families of children with and without developmental delay". The Principal Investigator is Prof. Maurice Feldman, Centre for Applied Disability Studies at Brock University. The co-investigator is Prof. Andrew McNamara, St. Lawrence College, Kingston, ON; Adjunct faculty, Centre for Applied Disability Studies at Brock University. The purpose is to examine differences among parents of children with developmental delay and autism compared with parents of typically developing children on how they handle child problem behaviours and how confident they may feel.

You would be eligible to participate if your child is between 2 and 7 years old and has a developmental delay (for any reason) or has an Autism Spectrum Disorder (Autistic Disorder, PDD-NOS, High Functioning Autism or Asperger syndrome) or is typically developing.

Your involvement is greatly appreciated and will help to further our understanding of the relationship between parenting strategies and child problem behaviours. The questionnaire is expected to take approximately one hour to complete. Questions will ask you about: (a) Child behaviour, (b) parenting strategies that you use to deal with troublesome child behaviours and (c) parental self-confidence, and (d) some descriptive information about the family. You can fill out the questionnaire with a pen and mail it back to us (self-addressed, stamped envelope will be provided). Alternatively, you can complete the questionnaire by email.

Results from this study will be used to enhance our understanding of the relationship between parenting strategies and child problem behaviour, specifically in families of children with developmental delays and autism. A written summary of the findings will be made available to you. The identities of the participants involved in the study will not be disclosed. Any information elicited from participants will be treated with absolute confidentiality, and access to information that might identify participants will be limited to the principal investigator, students and research assistants involved in this project. The names of individual participants in the study will not be mentioned within project reports or presentations generated from this study. Participation in this study is voluntary and individuals may decline answering any question(s) within the questionnaire that they find invasive, offensive, or inappropriate. Participants may withdraw from the study at any stage in the process without penalty. Of course, any individual may decline to participate for any reason without penalty.

If you are interested in participating or have any questions, please contact Rebecca Knopp rk08lh@brocku.ca or Nicki Biggs nb08uw@brocku.ca. Following the completion of our study, we would be happy to send you a summary of results. Additionally, questions about your involvement in the study may also be directed to the research ethics officer in the Office of Research Services at 905-688-5550, extension 3035. Thank you for your interest and involvement in this study.

Sincerely yours,

Rebecca Knopp and Nicki Biggs