

Dear Parent/Carer,

You are invited to participate in a free parenting program called *Tuning in to Kids (TIK)*. The program has already been delivered to over 120,000 parents in Australia, and previous research studies have provided a strong evidence-base that the program improves various child, parent and family outcomes. The current study is to compare three different delivery methods of the program and to see what works best for which families.

Participation in the study is for any parent or carer who has one or more children, between 4 and 10 years of age, who is exhibiting behaviours that are challenging or of concern to you. Participation is free, and voluntary. The study is open to one parent per family either the mother, father or guardian. We can also offer partners a free version of the online program after the study is completed. The study is being run by the University of Melbourne in conjunction with Swinburne University of Technology. It is independent of your school, kindergarten or childcare centre.

What is the program about?

Tuning in to Kids is a parenting program that aims to teach parents about children's emotional development. Program content and strategies assist parents to help their child to develop the skills of 'emotional intelligence'. Emotional intelligence (sometimes called EQ) is known to help children in their social development and is a better predictor of future life outcomes than intelligence (IQ). EQ skills include understanding, communicating and managing emotions, including difficult emotions such as anger, sadness and fear. Previous studies of TIK have shown the program has helped to reduce aggressive behaviour in children, promote social and friendship skills, and help build better emotional connections between parents and children.

What will participation involve?

Parents will be randomly allocated into one of four separate arms of the study.

1. Group TIK: Attending the program as part of eight two-hour group sessions;
2. One-to-one TIK: Attending the program delivered in eight one-to-one sessions;
3. TIK Online: Attending the program online plus receiving two follow-up phone calls;
4. Wait list control: Receiving TIK Online after a 9-month delay.

Random allocation is conducted through a computer-generated program and the process is like tossing a coin – you will have an equal chance of being in any of the four arms of the study.

We will also ask parents to complete a questionnaire, before and after completion of the program. The questionnaires will ask about the child's behaviour and parents' ability to manage emotions, parenting style and parents' own wellbeing. Each parent and their child will also be asked to participate in two video-recorded assessment sessions nine months apart. The child does not participate in the parenting program but they are required to attend the two assessment sessions with their parent.

What to do now?

If you are interested in the study, and would like to find out more, please contact Ross Couper-Johnston either by sending in the expression of interest slip below to ross.couper@unimelb.edu.au or by phoning on 9371-0218. Ross will be able to answer any of your questions, and then send some more information to you.

Yours sincerely,



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TUNING IN TO KIDS

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Your Name:

Nominated child's name(D.O.B.)

Your relationship to the child:

Names of other children in your family and their ages:

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Contact Phone Numbers (h).....

(mobile).....

Address:

.....

School/Kindergarten/Childcare Centre

**Please return this form by email (ross.couper@unimelb.edu.au), or to
Ross Couper-Johnston, Mindful, 50 Flemington St, Travancore, 3032.**

Thank you