Doc 6 – v6 – T4 – S1C19 – Information Sheet for Young People



Thanks so much for all your help with REACH so far. We are very grateful!

We are writing to invite you to take part in the **next phase of REACH**, which is has just started and will all be done online!

Please read the following information carefully. It will tell you why the research is being done and what you will be asked to do if you choose to take part.

**INFORMATION SHEET FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**



**WHAT IS THE AIM OF THE RESEARCH?**

The aim of REACH is to understand what things lead to better mental health and what things lead to worse mental health in young people.

The next phase of REACH will focus on understanding the impacts of the COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) pandemic, including school closures and other social distancing and isolation measures, on young people’s mental health.

**WHO ARE WE?**

We are a group of researchers from a university called **King’s College London**. We do research to try to understand and improve people’s mental health.

Mental health includes the thoughts and feelings that we have, for example how we feel about ourselves and our lives, and our thoughts about other people. It also affects our behaviour, such as the ways we cope with stress, make choices, and deal with others.

**WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?**

**WHAT ARE WE DOING?**

For the last 4 years, we have been doing a study in schools in south London to see what things affect young people’s mental health. The study is focussing on what leads to better mental health. Over 4,000 young people are taking part. The study is called **REACH**, which stands for **R**esilience, **E**thnicity, and **A**doles**C**ent Mental **H**ealth. Resilience is about the ability to deal with life’s ups and downs. Your school and your year group have been taking part in REACH for the past few years.

For this next phase of REACH, we will be inviting young people who have been taking part in REACH to provide information about their mental health and experiences during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

**WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?**

The COVID-19 pandemic, and related school closures and other social distancing measures, are impacting the lives of young people in many ways, from uncertainty around exams to worries about the health of their family and friends.

The next phase of REACH will focus on understanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic – including school closures and restrictions on social activities – on young people’s mental health and wellbeing. Specifically, we will try to understand what things help young people to maintain good mental health during these difficult times. Doing this study could help many young people, now and in the future.

**HOW CAN YOU HELP US?**

We need your help so that we can understand whether and how the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing measures affect young people’s mental health and, importantly, how best to help young people now and in the future.

There are 2 parts to this:

1. If you decide to take part, we will ask you to complete a short (30 minute) **online** **questionnaire**, about how you feel and about your experiences during the pandemic. The questionnaire will include questions on difficult experiences such as self-harm.

We will also invite you to complete the questionnaire again around 6 months from now (and, after that, around 1 year later and 2 years later). This is so we can understand the impacts on young people over time. If you say yes, we will ask for a way to contact you (e.g., an email address) so we can get in touch when it’s time to do the next questionnaire. Taking part is entirely voluntary and you can change your mind and stop at any time.

2) At the end of the first questionnaire, we will ask if you are interested in doing the second part of the study. This part will involve making a 5-10-minute video diary once every two weeks, for two months, during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is so that we can understand, in more detail, the day-to-day experiences of young people during the pandemic. We will include around 40 young people in this part of the study. If you are chosen, we will contact you and give you more information.

If you complete the questionnaire, you will receive a **£15 Love2Shop e-voucher** for your time. If you take part in the video diary study, you will receive a **£40 Love2Shop e-voucher** for your time.

If you have understood what we are asking and you do not have any more questions, please have a think about whether you want to take part in our study. This is entirely up to you. It’s ok if you don’t want to take part and you will not have to explain your reasons**. You are also able to change your mind and stop taking part at any time and pull out of the study if you would like to.** If you change your mind before 31st August 2023, which is the end of the study, we will destroy all information we have from you.

**If you are under 16**, please make sure your parents/carers, or whoever looks after you, have read the Information Sheet for Parents/Carers. You’ll be asked to confirm this before starting the questionnaire.

**WHAT DO I NEED TO DO NOW?**

We may contact you in the future about other REACH activities that you might like to take part in. We may share anonymised research data with other researchers, for research purposes only.

Your answers to the questionnaire will be **completely confidential (private)** to the research team. Your classmates, parents, and teachers will not be able to see your answers and your name will not be on the questionnaire.

There is one **exception** to this. If, while taking part, you tell us something that makes us concerned for your welfare, we may inform your school’s safeguarding lead. If you have left school (e.g., are now 16+ and at college), and you tell us something that makes us concerned for your welfare, one of our trained researchers will call you to discuss options for getting you the help that you need. We may also contact the safeguarding lead at your college/sixth form or the relevant child protection service.



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If there is anything you don’t understand or if you have any questions you would like to ask, then please get in touch! You can contact us at:

**WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?**



This research study has been approved by an independent group of people called the Psychiatry, Nursing and Midwifery (PNM) Research Ethics Subcommittee (RESC) (reference: HR15/162320). If this study harms you in any way, please contact the Chair of the PNM RESC at [rec@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:rec@kcl.ac.uk).