
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Title: Understanding vicarious trauma in Australian foster care

Lead Investigator

Professor Damien Riggs
College of Education, Psychology and Social Work
Flinders University
Tel: (08) 8201 2786
damien.riggs@flinders.edu.au

Researchers

Dr Ben Lohmeyer
College of Education, Psychology and Social Work
Flinders University
Tel: (8) 8201 7956

Associate Professor Yvonne Clark
Department of Psychology
University of South Australia
Tel: (08) 830 25015
Yvonne.L.Clark@unisa.edu.au

Associate Professor Clemence Due
School of Psychology
University of Adelaide
Tel: (08) 8313 6096
clemence.due@adelaide.edu.au

Shoshana Rosenberg
College of Education, Psychology and Social Work
Flinders University
shoshana.rosenberg@flinders.edu.au

Description of the study

Many children who spend time in the foster care system report experiencing violence, distress, or other forms of traumatic psychological issues as a result of their foster experience. In addition to this immediate trauma, research indicates that in many instances

people involved in the foster care system (i.e. foster children, foster parents, birth children of foster carers) also experience secondary or vicarious trauma through exposure to others' hardships. This study aims to gain a better understanding of these secondary traumatic experiences and their impact on all individuals involved in the fostering process.

This project is led by Professor Damien Riggs, alongside Dr Ben Lohmeyer and Associate Professors Yvonne Clark and Clemence Due. The interviews will be conducted by Shoshana Rosenberg, and all data will be analysed by the research team.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to better understand the impacts of primary experiences of trauma and distress within foster care on others within the care environment. This includes how foster care-related trauma affects foster carers, other children living in the home, as well as foster children themselves. By gaining deeper insight into the 'aftershocks' of foster care trauma we aim to develop support mechanisms for foster families which directly address the lingering and at times far-reaching effects of primary as well as secondary trauma.

What will I be asked to do?

You are invited to take part in this study as you are someone who is either a current or previous foster carer, a person who has gone through the foster care system, or someone who lived in a foster care environment as a non-fostered child. The study will involve an audio-recorded 90-minute interview which will be conducted over Zoom or Microsoft Teams at a time that is convenient for you. Participation in the interview is voluntary and you may withdraw any time before or during the interview. You will also be given a month-long period following the interview to withdraw.

Benefits of Study

Participants are not expected to directly benefit from the study, however each participant will receive a \$45 voucher as recognition of their time.

Confidentiality and Privacy

If you choose to participate, your participation will be anonymous to everyone other than yourself and the research team, and all information provided will be treated as strictly confidential. Only the investigators listed on this form will have access to the individual information you provide. An external transcription service will transcribe the audio recorded interviews, but will not have access to any personal information about you recorded in the demographic form. Publications arising from this study will protect your anonymity, including by removing any identifying or personal information.

Data Storage

Information collected will be stored securely on a password protected computer at Flinders University and on the Flinders University computer server during and after the study. On project completion, all data will be securely stored on the Flinders University computer server for at least five years after publication of the results. Only members of the research team will have access to the transcribed interview data. Following the required data storage

period, all data will be securely destroyed according to university protocols. The only exception to this anonymity is in the case that information is disclosed which indicates a potential risk of harm to a person, in which case the research team is bound by the state's mandatory reporting laws.

Are there any risks or discomforts if I am involved?

As this study is aimed at gaining an understanding of trauma (both primary and vicarious), there will be topics of discussion which are difficult or potentially triggering, including questions about experiences of violence, abuse, and/or distress. You are not obligated to divulge any information or discuss any topics which you find difficult, and can request to skip a question at any time during the interview. As such, we do ask that you consider whether there is any chance that the study focus might be significantly upsetting for you personally, and if there is any chance that participating may cause excessive or unnecessary distress, to determine whether participation is appropriate for you and your mental wellbeing. If you do choose to participate and subsequently experience feelings of emotional discomfort or distress as a result of participation, the following phone services are available should you wish to speak to someone other than the research team:

Helplines

Lifeline – 13 11 14, www.lifeline.org.au

Beyond Blue – 1300 22 4636, www.beyondblue.org.au

QLife – 1800 184 527, www.qlife.org.au

MensLine – 1300 789 978, www.mensline.org.au

Foster Care Support

Connecting Foster & Kinship Carers (SA) - 1800 732 272, www.cfc-sa.org.au

Agreeing to participation

If you consent to participating, please indicate your consent on the final page of this document. By participating in an interview, you are consenting to your interview responses being used in this study. You may, at any time, terminate the interview without providing any reason, and if after participating in an interview you decide to revoke consent, any audio recordings will be destroyed. You can withdraw by emailing the project email at contact@fostercarestudy.com and will be given four weeks to withdraw from the study. You will be remunerated for your time regardless of whether your data will ultimately be used for the project.

How will I receive feedback?

The consent form below contains tick boxes to indicate whether you would like to approve your interview transcript prior to being included in the study, as well as whether you would like to be kept up to date on any publications which will come out of this study. You are not obligated to tick either box.

Ethics Committee Approval

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Human Research Ethics Committee (Project ID 6306). For more information regarding ethics approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on (08) 8201 2543,

or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au

Queries and Concerns

Queries or concerns regarding the research can be directed to the research team via the contact details listed at the top of this information sheet. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this study (project 4865), please contact the Flinders University Human Research Ethics Committee via telephone (08) 8201 2543 or email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au

Thank you for your time. We hope you will accept our invitation to participate.

CONSENT FORM

Consent Statement

- I have read and understood the information about the research, and I understand I am being asked to provide informed consent to participate in this research study. I understand that I can contact the research team if I have further questions about this research study.
- I am not aware of any condition that would prevent my participation, and I agree to participate in this project.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time during the study.
- I understand that I can contact Flinders University's Research Ethics & Compliance Office if I have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this study.
- I understand that my involvement is confidential, and that the information collected may be published. I understand that I will not be identified in any research products.

I further consent to:

- participating in an interview
- having my information audio recorded
- my data and information being used in this project

I would like to:

- receive a copy of my transcript to approve prior to being included in the study
- receive updates on the study, including any works published from the research

Signed:

Name:

Email:

Date:

Demographic Details Sheet

Date of Birth:	
Country of Birth:	
Home postcode:	
How many foster children do you have/have you had?	
Do you have any other children?	
Gender:	
Sexuality:	
Race/ethnicity:	
Marital status:	
Occupation:	
What kind of foster care have you provided?	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency <input type="checkbox"/> Respite <input type="checkbox"/> Short-Term <input type="checkbox"/> Long-Term <input type="checkbox"/> Kinship <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Work Status (please tick):	<input type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time <input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker <input type="checkbox"/> Retired <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Highest level of education completed (please tick):	<input type="checkbox"/> Year 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship <input type="checkbox"/> TAFE (please specify which level): <input type="checkbox"/> University (bachelor level) <input type="checkbox"/> University (honours level) <input type="checkbox"/> University (masters level) <input type="checkbox"/> University (doctoral level) <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Are you currently studying? (if yes, please provide details):	
Your <i>household's</i> net (after-tax) income per year (please tick):	<input type="checkbox"/> \$0-39,150 <input type="checkbox"/> \$39,151-51,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$51,001-64,650 <input type="checkbox"/> \$64,651-79,950 <input type="checkbox"/> \$79,951-95,850 <input type="checkbox"/> \$95,851-141,900 <input type="checkbox"/> \$141,901+
How did you find out about the study?:	<input type="checkbox"/> Instagram <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook advertisement <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter <input type="checkbox"/> Online support group <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Partner/spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Family member <input type="checkbox"/> Other: