

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

King's College London Research Ethics Committee
Ref: HR-20/21-21451



Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee Ref: R73153/RE001

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Supporting Parents & Kids Through Lockdown Experiences (SPARKLE): A parallel randomised controlled trial of a digital parenting support app implemented in the general population during the COVID-19 pandemic

We would like to invite you to take part in the SPARKLE study, which has been set up by researchers from King's College London (KCL) and the University of Oxford. Please read the following information carefully and ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether to take part or not. It is important for you to fully understand why the research is being done and what it will involve.

Why are we doing this study?

During the COVID-19 pandemic many parents have experienced increased stress within their families and noticed a rise in children's behaviour problems. As nearly 80% of adults own a smartphone – a parenting support app could provide quick and easy access to help and ultimately increase parents' wellbeing and reduce children's difficult behaviour.

In SPARKLE, we will test whether an app called *Parent Positive*, that delivers information and parenting support, can improve behaviour and wellbeing within families. We expect that 616 parents will take part in this study. Half the families will get access to the app straight away and half will get access in about 2 months' time. We will then test whether the app has a positive effect on children's behaviour compared to not using the app.

What is *Parent Positive*?

Parent Positive is a parenting support intervention delivered as an app. It can be accessed via a smartphone at any time and any place. The app is built around a series of 45-second animations presenting eight messages about frequent parenting challenges (e.g., Why won't my child listen to me?), which have been carefully selected by parents and parenting experts. They are light-hearted, humorous and non-judgmental and are delivered by eight of our best known and well-loved celebrities who are also parents, including Olivia Colman, Sharon Horgan, Danny Dyer, Rob Brydon, Jessica Ennis-Hill, Holly Willoughby, Romesh Ranganathan and Shappi Khorsandi. *Parent Positive* also contains a video on how and when to use the animations, expert advice, practical skills, tips and examples shared by other parents, links to useful sources of help and downloadable resources, as well as the opportunity to post questions for experts and find support from other parents as part of a parenting forum.

Why have I been invited to take part and am I eligible?

We are inviting all parents of children aged 4-10, like you, who have already enrolled in the Co-SPACE study.

You **are** eligible to take part if:

- Your child is aged 4-10.
- You have access to a smartphone (with operating system OS 8-9 or higher for Android or iOS 12-13 or higher for Apple).

What will taking part in the study involve?

To find out if *Parent Positive* is helpful to parents, we will put them into two equal groups: parents in the intervention group will receive the app straight away and will be asked to use it for 2 months, parents in the control group will receive the app after about 2 months. Each participant is put into a group by chance (i.e., randomly).

Taking part in the study would involve you:

- Completing an electronic consent form (this is separate from consenting to the Co-SPACE study).
- Continuing to complete a monthly online survey about you and your child, as you do in Co-SPACE. If you have more than one child aged 4-10, we would like you to answer all of the questions about **one child only**. If this is the case, you might want to make a note of which child you have decided to answer the questions about, so that you can remember when you complete the follow-up surveys.
- Answering additional questions about your child's health and health service use, including any prescribed medication and reporting any medical or psychological events or symptoms that occurred since you enrolled in SPARKLE. These questions will be asked during both monthly follow-up surveys you do after you have entered the SPARKLE study. We will also ask you to complete a questionnaire about your experience with *Parent Positive* at each follow-up survey.
- Permitting the study team to link the data from SPARKLE with the existing information that you provided in Co-SPACE about yourself and your child.
- Agreeing to long-term storage and sharing of your anonymised data with other researchers (e.g., online databases). Any personal information that could identify you will be removed or changed before files are shared or results are made public.
- Giving the study team permission to access your Parent Positive app usage data (e.g., how much time you use the app, what time of the day you use the app, how the app is used, the content of any questions submitted to the experts or posts in the parenting forum etc.).

If you are assigned to the **intervention group**, we will also ask you to:

- Download *Parent Positive* app immediately after you enrol in the study and use it for at least 2 months.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is completely up to you to decide whether you want to do this or not. You can also change your mind after you agreed to take part.

Incentives

As a thank you for taking part, you will receive two £5 online shopping vouchers. A voucher will be emailed to you after you have completed each of the monthly follow-up surveys.

What should I do if I want to take part?

If you would like to join the study, then all you need to do is complete the Co-SPACE survey. At the end of the survey, you will be able to access the SPARKLE online consent form.

What will happen after I joined the study?

After you have completed the consent form, you will find out if you are in the group that will have access to *Parent Positive* immediately (intervention group), or whether you have to wait for your turn to use the app (control group). If you are in the intervention group, you will receive information about how to download *Parent Positive* immediately. If you are in the control group, you will receive access to the app about 2 months after you enrolled in the study. You will also receive an email/text with a reminder to complete the online survey one and two months after you started in the study. For both study groups, access to *Parent Positive* will expire on 30 November 2021. Until this time, we will email you each month with a short reminder about other organisations that support families. Please note that we will collect your app usage data for as long as you continue using *Parent Positive*.

Will I benefit from taking part?

We expect that *Parent Positive* will help parents to address some of the most common parenting challenges. The app is designed to be particularly helpful for all parents, including those who have been struggling through the lockdown and the pandemic-related restrictions. *Parent Positive* content has been selected specifically to provide parents with practical tips and advice to navigate these difficult times and help promote positive and cooperative behaviour within their families. Please note that if you are allocated to the control group, you will get access to *Parent Positive* about 2 months after you enrolled in the study.

What are the possible risks of taking part?

There is a small possibility that using *Parent Positive* may result in you having new concerns about your child's behaviour, your relationship with your child or even how you manage as a parent. This is why we will ask you to report any medical or psychological events/symptoms during the study. If you feel you are struggling, please contact your GP. You will also receive contact details for support organisations, should you need to contact them.

Who has checked the study?

Before any research goes ahead it must be checked by a Research Ethics Committee. This is a group of people who make sure that the research is fair. This study has been reviewed and approved by the King's College London PNM Research Ethics Subcommittee, reference number HR-20/21-21451 and the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee, reference numbers R73153/RE001.

Data handling and confidentiality

We will take the following steps to protect your privacy and ensure confidentiality:

- Your consent to take part in the study will be recorded on an electronic form that will contain identifiers including your name, email address and/or mobile phone number. Your email address, telephone number and name will be removed from the rest of the answers before any analysis takes place.
- Your data will be stored using a unique code number. Researchers, who do not need to know who you are, will not be able to see your name or contact details.
- A single table linking your code number to your email address will be stored in a separate password-protected file within the restricted-access folder on the University of Oxford server, which may be accessed only by authorised researchers. Usually, these are people, who are responsible for contacting you regarding participation. The research team will retain your personal information for 36 months after the study has ended. After this time, it will be securely destroyed.
- Usage data from the app will be downloaded and linked using your code number. No personal information will be downloaded from the app and all posts for experts or on the parenting forum will be de-identified.
- The results from this study may be presented at conferences and in journals that other researchers read or may be used in teaching. However, we will present information in a way that no-one can work out that you took part.

Data Protection Statement

Your data will be processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). KCL and the University of Oxford will act as joint data controllers of your SPARKLE data. KCL is the sponsor for the SPARKLE study and will act as data controller of your SPARKLE data. The University of Oxford will act as data controller of the information you provided in Co-SPACE. We vet all third parties and require them to respect the security of your personal data and to treat it in accordance with the law. We do not allow our third-party service providers to use your personal data for their own purposes – they are only allowed to process your personal data for specified purposes in accordance with our instructions as outlined above.

If you would like more information about how your data will be processed under GDPR please visit the link below:

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

For more information about the University of Oxford data protection policy, please go to: <https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/data-protection-policy>

If you would like to request your data, you can email us at SPARKLE@kcl.ac.uk until 30 September 2021.

What if I change my mind about taking part?

You are free to withdraw, without having to give a reason, during the questionnaire before submitting your answers by pressing the 'Exit' button or by closing the browser. You can also opt out of taking part in follow-up surveys at any point by ignoring the reminders or unsubscribing from follow-up emails. You can also stop using *Parent Positive* and delete

the app from your phone at any time. If you would like to withdraw your research data, you can email us at SPARKLE@kcl.ac.uk until 30 September 2021.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about this project, please contact us using the following contact details:

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What if there is a problem or something goes wrong?

If this project has harmed you in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the project you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information: 'The Chair of the Psychiatry, Nursing and Midwifery Research Ethics Subcommittee (RESC), email: rec@kcl.ac.uk

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research.