



Coping with COVID-19: Young people's health and wellbeing in Australia

Participant Information and Consent

Researchers: Dr Megan Lim (Principal Investigator), Ms Caitlin Douglass, Ms Michelle Raggatt, Mr Alexander Thomas, Dr Cassandra Wright, Dr Angela Davis.

1. Introduction

You are invited to take part in this research project because you are aged 15 to 29 years and expressed interest in participating in an interview during a previous online survey. This project aims to understand how COVID-19 pandemic and the related government measures is impacting on young people's lives, wellbeing and health behaviours in Australia.

This Participant Information provides information about the research project. It explains what is involved to help you decide if you want to take part.

Please read this information carefully. Ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about. Before deciding whether or not to take part, you might want to talk about it with a friend, a relative or one of the research staff. Please make note of the details below, which you can contact if you want to know more before going ahead with the interview:

- Project coordinator: Megan Lim
- Phone number: 03 8506 2403
- Email address: megan.lim@burnet.edu.au

Participation in this research is voluntary (if you don't wish to take part, you don't have to).

If you decide you want to take part in the interview, you will be asked to give verbal consent at the beginning of the interview. In doing so you are telling us that you:

- Understand what you have read;
- Consent to take part in the research project;
- Consent to be involved in the procedures described;
- Consent to the use of your personal information as described.

2. What is the purpose of this research project?

This phase of the project is an online interview to understand young people's experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and related government response. We want to understand how COVID-19 and related responses have impacted young people's lives, social connections, health and wellbeing. We also want to know what strategies young people use for coping during this time, and what additional strategies the government, media, organisations or community could implement to better support young people.

We know that young people are experiencing disruptions at their schools, TAFEs and universities. Young people are also facing reduced work hours and job losses. Self-isolation makes it harder to continue doing usual activities and maintain social connections with friends, family and community.

We want to understand what life is like for young people in Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic. We plan to provide information on how young people are impacted to organisations in health, education and government. By sharing your experiences, you are informing strategies and solutions to better support young people through this challenging time.

3. What does participation in this research project involve?

This phase of the study involves participating in an online interview with a researcher. The interview will go for about 45 - 60 minutes. Before the interview, the researcher will arrange a convenient time to conduct the interview and discuss your preferred platform. You can choose to do the interview by Skype, Zoom, Facetime or telephone. You will be encouraged to use your video during the interview (this makes it more like a normal, friendly conversation!) however can opt to use audio-only if you choose. During the interview, we will ask questions about how you're feeling, what changes have happened in your life since the COVID-19 pandemic began, what strategies help you cope, and what you would change about the ways government, media, community or other organisations have responded. The interview discussion will be audio-recorded and the researcher may take written notes. We may also invite you to participate in a workshop after the study, to help design public health solutions for young people related to this topic.

4. What are the possible benefits?

By taking part, your experiences will be shared with organisations responsible for supporting young people through this time. If you choose to participate in the project, you will also receive a \$25 digital gift voucher at the end of the interview to reimburse you for your time.

5. What are the possible risks?

You may feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions; however you are free to not answer any question you don't feel comfortable answering. If you become uncomfortable or upset during the interview you can choose to skip a question, pause the interview or finish the interview early.

At the end of this document there are websites and services that you can access for more information about some of the topics raised in the interview.

6. Do I have to take part in this research project?

Participation in any research project is voluntary (if you do not wish to take part, you do not have to). If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at a later stage.

If you decide to withdraw, please notify a member of the research team as soon as possible. This notice will allow that person or the research supervisor to inform you if there are any special requirements linked to withdrawing. If you decide to withdraw from the research, we are able to delete your interview responses, you must tell the researcher that you would like us to do this when you withdraw.

Your decision whether to take part or not, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with the researchers or the Burnet Institute. You can withdraw by contacting the project coordinator by phone or email.

7. How will I be informed of the final results of this research project?

The results of the interviews will be accessible via the Burnet Institute website at the completion of analysis on our website

[Burnet Institute Young People's Health](#)

You will also be emailed a copy of the results if you provide us with permission to do so. Results will include summary data of all participants only; no individual will be able to be identified.

8. What will happen to information about me?

Your responses during the interview will be audio-recorded. After the interview, the recording will be transcribed by a researcher and your name will be removed so that you cannot be identified. The audio-recording will be transcribed and deleted within 6 months of your interview. Findings from the study may be reported through academic publications, conferences and a summary report. When we report the results we will not use your name.

Any information obtained in connection with this research project that can identify you will remain confidential. Identifying information will only be used for the purpose of this research project and related research projects and will only be disclosed with your permission, or to comply with law (we think it is unlikely, but we must provide confidential information if the courts or police legally require us to do so). It is possible that, in answering some of the questions in the interview you may give us information about your involvement in illegal activities. You need to keep in mind that such information could be used against you in a court of law. As mentioned above, if you feel uncomfortable about a question you do not have to answer it.

Information collected in this project will be stored at the Burnet Institute. Electronic information will remain in a secure password-protected folder that only the authorised researchers can access and consent forms will be stored in a locked drawer. In accordance with relevant Australian privacy and other relevant laws, you have the right to access the information collected and stored by the researchers about you. In accordance with regulatory guidelines, the information collected in this research project (including the transcription with your name removed) will be kept for seven years and then destroyed. Audio-recordings will be deleted within 6 months of your interview.

9. Can I access research information kept about me?

In accordance with relevant Australian privacy and other relevant laws, you have the right to access the information collected and stored by the researchers about you. Please contact one of the researchers named at the end of this page if you would like to access your information.

Furthermore, in accordance with regulatory guidelines, the information collected in this research project will be kept for at least seven years. You must be aware that as we remove your name and other personal details from your information, access to information about you may not be possible.

10. Is this research project approved?

The ethical aspects of this research project have been approved by the Alfred Hospital Ethics Committee.

This project will be carried out according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007) produced by the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia. This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

11. Who can I contact?

The person you may need to contact will depend on the nature of your query. Therefore, please note the following:

For further information:

If you want any further information concerning this project, you can contact

- Project coordinator: Megan Lim
- Phone number: 03 8506 2403
- Email address: megan.lim@burnet.edu.au

For complaints:

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about being a research participant in general, then you may contact:

- HREC Office/Complaints contact person
- Position: Complaints Officer, Office of Ethics & Research Governance, Alfred Health
- Telephone: (03) 9076 3619
- Email: research@alfred.org.au
- Please quote the following Project ID number: 190/20

12. Resources and services

- If you would like to talk with anyone about any concerns or distress:
 - Lifeline: 13 11 14
 - Kids Help Line: 1800 55 1800
- **Mental health**
 - <https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/topics/mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>
 - <https://headspace.org.au/>
 - <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>
 - <https://au.reachout.com/articles/10-ways-to-take-care-of-yourself-during-coronavirus>
- **Everyday issues and tough times for young people, stress, loneliness, bullying**
 - <https://au.reachout.com/>
- **Sexuality and gender**
 - <https://www.minus18.org.au/>
- **Sexual Health (by state):**
 - Vic: Family Planning Victoria <https://www.fpv.org.au>
 - WA: <https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Healthy-living/Sexual-health>
 - QLD: <https://stoptherise.initiatives.qld.gov.au/>
 - SA: www.shinesa.org.au
 - NT: <http://www.fpwnt.com.au/>
 - ACT: <https://www.shfpact.org.au/>
 - TAS: <http://www.fpt.asn.au/>
- **Pornography**
 - <https://www.bishuk.com/porn/>
- **Drugs and alcohol**
 - Youth Drug and Alcohol Advice (YoDAA) <http://www.yodaa.org.au/>
Phone line is available Monday to Friday 9am-8pm to provide free and confidential advice about drugs and alcohol: 1800 458 685
- **Family violence**
 - **24 hour phone: 1800 RESPECT**
 - <http://www.undercurrentvic.com/support-services-and-resources-during-covid19>
- **Working**
 - http://www.youngworkers.org.au/covid_19_your_rights_at_work
- **General information regarding Covid-19**
 - <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-current-situation-and-case-numbers>