



*(school board logo and local sponsoring agency logo, if appropriate, to be inserted)*

## PARENT INFORMATION SHEET

**Title of Study:** Community-Level Measurement of School Readiness-to-Learn for 4-5 Year Old Children

**Locally Responsible Community Coordinator:** (to be completed locally)

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Magdalena Janus, Offord Centre for Child Studies, McMaster University

**Sponsoring Agency:** (to be completed locally)

*This research is funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services/Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Ontario.*

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As a part of an ongoing commitment to improve the well-being of children across our province and Canada, school boards/divisions are participating in the collection of data on kindergarten-age children. This year, all senior kindergarten classes in your child's school and the {insert school board name} are scheduled to be part of the study. It is your choice whether your child is included in this study and if you chose not to have him/her included, just contact their school.

The Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University and (name locally responsible coordinator and title) are under contract with the Sponsor of this study and will receive money to cover the costs of doing the study. There will be no other benefit to the investigator other than professionally through academic achievement or presentation of the results.

### **Why is this research being done?**

Children vary a great deal in how ready they are to start school and begin learning. Children who are ready for school from their first day have a greater chance of doing well in their school careers. This research is being done to better understand and measure readiness to learn at school as an outcome of early development.

### **What is the purpose of the study?**

The information that we gather on children as they enter kindergarten in your area will be examined to see if there are factors that may affect a child's development between the ages of 0 to 5.

### **What will take place?**

A questionnaire, called the Early Development Instrument (EDI) which measures children's readiness to learn at school, has been developed at McMaster University in co-operation with principals and kindergarten teachers. The questionnaire asks questions about five areas of child development: 1) physical health and well-being; 2) social knowledge and competence; 3) emotional health and maturity; 4) language and cognitive development; and 5) general knowledge and communication skills. The school will also give us your child's date of birth, gender, and postal code only. We will NOT at any time receive the name of your child. This questionnaire will be completed by kindergarten teachers for all children in senior kindergarten classes during February/March 2010. This will provide information on children in our community, and help us to work towards ensuring that they are ready to learn when they enter grade one.

The Offord Centre for Child Studies is the site where all data collected with the EDI in Canada and internationally is kept. Results of the study will be shared with the sponsoring agency and the local community coordinator. De-identified scored data will also be shared with the school boards and the Ontario Government only if guidelines are met which meet provincial privacy legislation. School boards may use these data for future planning in order to be prepared to handle the needs of children entering grade one. Data may be linked at group levels (ie., school board, neighbourhood, province, country) with other data about things that may have an effect on how well children are doing to see if there are any trends. For example, the availability of programs and services for young families, the number of children under 5 in your neighbourhood, or the income level in your neighbourhood. This cannot and will not be done for individual children, but only groups of children (the smallest group would be a school or neighbourhood so that no individual child can be identified).

### **Confidentiality**

Results of this study will not be linked to your child. An anonymous ID number will be assigned to your child. The investigator will not have access to the names of children in the study. Data on gender, date of birth and postal code will be attached to the ID number. Results will be examined at neighbourhood or school levels but not on an individual basis. There will be no record of your child's results in their academic records. All questionnaires will be locked in confidential storage until the end of the study, when they will be destroyed. Data will be stored on a password protected computer both of which only the members of the project team will have access to. Any publications that may result from this research will not identify participants in any way. Your child's score will not be available to you, but study results can be available upon request.

### **Are there any risks or benefits to you or your child?**

There are no risks involved with this study. Although there will be no direct benefit to your child, we feel that this research may answer questions about why children in some areas are doing better or worse than others in terms of their early development which in turn determines their success at school and beyond. We hope that the results of the study will bring about changes in communities where there is a need to improve conditions for families with young children.

Data will not be examined at an aggregated level where there are less than 10 children in a group in order to make it impossible to identify children. If you chose not to have your child included in the study it will have no affect on your child's standing in their classroom or school.

**Who do I contact if I have questions or concerns about this study?**

If you have questions or concerns you may contact any of the following: the local coordinator (insert name and contact info. of coordinator); your school principal; Ashley Gaskin, the coordinator at the Offord Centre for Child Studies (905)521-2100 ext. 74352; or the office of the Chair of the Research Ethics Board, Faculty of Health Sciences, McMaster University (905)521-2100 ext. 42013.

Sincerely,

(signature of school principal or school board official)

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