

## Participant Information Sheet



### *Understanding Children's Behaviour; the Role of Parental Mental Health*

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether you would like to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information and discuss it with others if you wish. You may also want to ask the researcher questions about the study before you decide whether you wish to take part.

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

We know that many people with Borderline, Narcissistic, Antisocial and Histrionic Personality Disorders, can find it very difficult to trust other people and to feel secure in their relationships with other people. People with these personality disorders often have to cope with troublesome emotions and feelings about themselves and other people. This can make relationships difficult. However, very little is known about the relationships that parents with these personality disorders have with their children.

Many people with Borderline, Narcissistic, Antisocial and Histrionic personality disorders have had difficult experiences in their own childhood. This may make it more difficult for them as a parent. However, research has also found that parents can see the relationship with their child differently from other relationships in their lives and this can often be a particularly positive relationship: "She is a chance to make things right; "She is the most important person in my life"<sup>1</sup>. In this study, we would like to learn more about the way parents with personality disorders see their children and understand children's behaviour.

#### **Why have I been chosen?**

You have been asked if you would like to take part because we understand that you have been given a diagnosis of Cluster B personality disorder and are a parent or carer of a child under 17 years old. Cluster B personality disorders include Borderline, Narcissistic, Antisocial and Histrionic Personality Disorders. We hope to learn more about the experiences of parents with these personality disorders by comparing your results with those of parents who do not have this condition.

#### **Do I have to take part?**

No. It is entirely up to you whether you would like to take part in this study. If you decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form. You will be free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

#### **What would be involved if I choose to take part?**

If you choose to take part in this study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire will describe examples of children's behaviour and will ask you about how you would feel or respond to these and what you would see as the reasons for the behaviour. The questionnaire will also ask you about your own child's behaviour and about your general mental health. It will take approximately 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Once you have completed the consent form and the questionnaire, you will be asked to return them to the researcher.

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<sup>1</sup> Newman, L. & Stevenson, C. (2005). *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 10, 385 -394.

Because this is a scientific study, the researcher will be required to confirm your diagnosis of a personality disorder with someone involved in your health care. This could be your GP or another professional involved in supporting your mental health. You will be able to choose who you would like us to contact to request this information from. The researcher will also write to this individual to let them know that you will be taking part in the study. We will not request or share any other information with this individual. Only the researcher will have access to the information provided by this individual. You can indicate who you would like this individual to be on the consent form.

## **Will the information I give you be confidential?**

All the information collected in the study will be kept in the strictest of confidence by the researcher, who is bound by the same duty of confidentiality as your mental health clinician. The information will not be shared with anyone else involved with you or your children. If you have any questions about this aspect of the study, please feel free to contact the researcher.

## **What are the possible disadvantages or risks of taking part?**

The questionnaire will ask you questions about children's behaviour and your child's well-being. It is possible that, as a result of your own childhood experiences or your relationship with your children, you may find these questions distressing or upsetting. The questionnaire will also ask you about your own well-being and any suicidal thoughts. If you find any of these questions distressing or feel suicidal, we would like you to try to find support from someone you feel comfortable with as soon as possible. This might be your GP or someone else involved in supporting your mental health. You may prefer to speak to someone who is not involved in your care, and possible sources of support are listed below:

Breathing Space	0800 83 85 87	
Samaritans	08457 90 90 90	<a href="mailto:jo@samaritans.org">jo@samaritans.org</a>
Edinburgh Crisis Centre	0808 801 0414	<a href="mailto:crisis@edinburghcrisiscentre.org.uk">crisis@edinburghcrisiscentre.org.uk</a>

It is possible that the study may also raise concerns for you about your children's behaviour or well-being. If you have any such concerns, you could discuss these with your GP or someone else involved in supporting your mental health. The research staff would also be very happy to help you with any concerns you have, or you may prefer to speak to child or family services for support. For your information, we have listed some of these services overleaf.

## **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

The aim of the study is to get information that may help us better to understand the way parents with Cluster B personality disorders understand their children's behaviour. This may not have an immediate benefit for you but may benefit others in the future. The information will help us find out if more research needs to be done in this area, and to see if new or different services need to be set up to help parents with these personality disorders get the support they need for themselves and their families.

## **Can I get feedback about the study findings?**

Once the research study is finished, we would like to give you the chance to find out what we have learned. If you would like to receive feedback about the study or feedback about your individual responses, please contact us and we will send you a copy of the study's findings and/or the nature of your individual responses.

## **What will happen to the results of the study?**

The researcher will write up the results of the study as part of her doctoral degree in psychology. We also hope to publish the results of the study in a specialist mental health journal. The findings of the research will also be shared with services who support parents with Cluster B personality disorders so that they may better understand how to support parents with these personality disorders. No one participating in the study would be able to be identified in the results or publications arising from this research.

## **Who can I speak to about the study?**

You should feel free to think about taking part for as long as you want. If you would like more information on the study or would like to discuss any concerns you have about it, please contact the researcher who will be happy to answer any questions you may have and to help you with any concerns that the study has raised: Claire Norfolk, 0131 536 8188; [Claire.Norfolk@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Claire.Norfolk@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk) .

If you would prefer to speak to someone who is independent of the study you may also contact Dr Louise Duffy, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, NHS Lothian Health Trust, 0131 537 6364; [Louise.Duffy@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Louise.Duffy@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk) .

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for considering whether you would like to take part.

**Yours sincerely,**

**Claire Norfolk**  
**Specialist Psychological Practitioner**  
**Tel: 0131 536 8188**  
**Email: [Claire.Norfolk@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Claire.Norfolk@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk)**

# Services supporting Children, Parents and Families

## Parents

Young Minds Parents Helpline

A helpline for parents concerned about the mental health and emotional well-being of their children.

Tel: 0808 802 5544 Email: <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/contact-us>

Online information & advice on the emotional and behaviour difficulties experienced by children

<http://www.youngminds.org.uk/parents>

Parentline Plus Helpline

Offers emotional and practical support to parents. Tel: 0808 800 2222

Online parenting support and advice

<http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk>

## Children & Young People

Young Carers

Offers children who care for parents with mental or physical health difficulties opportunities to engage in activities, groups or one-to-one support. Website: <http://www.youngcarer.com>

Also online advice and support for young carers: <http://www.youngcarers.net/>

Online advice for children and young people coping with difficult feelings or mental health difficulties: <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/children>

<http://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-people>

Online advice & support for teenagers experiencing low mood/depression and stress/anxiety

[www.depressioninteenagers.co.uk](http://www.depressioninteenagers.co.uk) <http://www.stressandanxietyinteenagers.co.uk/>

Online advice and support for children after a bereavement: <http://www.rd4u.org.uk/>

Online advice and support for children being bullied: <http://www.bullying.co.uk/>

## Supports for Families

Gingerbread

Offers a parents' helpline and other local supports for single parent families. Self-referral.

Tel: 0808 802 0925 Website: [www.gingerbread.org.uk](http://www.gingerbread.org.uk)

Home Start

Offers support to families with at least one child under 5 who are feeling isolated or struggling to cope because of their own or their child's illness or the loss of a loved one. Self-referral.

Tel: 0800 068 63 68 Email: [support@home-start.org.uk](mailto:support@home-start.org.uk) Website: <http://www.home-start.org.uk>

Sure Start Centres

Offer support to parents with children under 3 years. Self-referral.

Tel: 08002 346 346 Website: [www.direct.gov.uk/SureStart](http://www.direct.gov.uk/SureStart)