

Participant Information Sheet

What Affects the Experience of Parenting?

You are being invited to take part in a research study looking at how romantic partners support each other after the birth of a child, and how this affects the experience of parenting. This research is being conducted as part of a doctoral degree.

Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

If you have any questions or queries about taking part in the study, please contact the principal investigator, Saul McLeod (saul.mcleod@manchester.ac.uk). You do not have to make the decision straight away, so if you have any doubts or feel unsure please take some time to think it over.

What is the study about?

We are interested in how your attachment style influences awareness of partner support. Attachment styles are lasting patterns in the way people relate to one another. It is well known that attachment styles can bias how people view support from others and the way they give support to other people.

This study will look at how the attachment styles of romantic partners work together to influence perceptions of support after the birth of a child. We have chosen to study parents with young babies as romantic partners are coping with similar challenges which provide many opportunities for social support.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part because you are over the age of 18 and:

- are a parent with a child between 3 - 12 months.
- married or living together with your romantic partner.
- are confident with using the English Language.

Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part. If you decide you don't want to continue with the study after starting it, that's fine; and you will also have the option to withdraw any previous data.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

If you want to take part, then you and your partner will be asked to complete two paper questionnaires measuring romantic attachment and your perceptions of support from others. This should take 10 minutes in total.

You (the mother) will answer several questions using your mobile phone over a period of seven days. The questions should take between 1-2 minutes to complete, and will be sent by text message. When you're carrying the mobile phone, it is important to live your normal life and do the things you would normally do.

You will be sent a text message 6 times a day at random times between 9.00 am and 21.00 pm. You don't have to get up early so you will hear all the beeps, but when you are awake and hear the phone emit a signal, you reply to the question using a numerical rating scale (taking between 30 seconds to 1 ½ minutes). After a message is sent you will have up to 30 minutes to reply. Don't worry if you forget, or are unable to respond to a message, just continue with your normal life and respond to subsequent messages.

You will be asked some questions about how you and your partner support each other. In addition, you will be asked to answer questions regarding your experiences of a being a parent, such as perceived stress. Also, we will ask you questions about your emotional wellbeing and mood.

We expect that completing these questions five times per day, over a seven-day period, should take approximately 60 minutes in total.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

As part of the research, you will be asked to complete measures relating to support experiences and your experiences of being a first-time parent, which includes difficult experiences you may have had. For some individuals completing such measures may be uncomfortable or lead to feelings of distress. Participants have the option to withdraw from the research at any point and do not need to answer any questions they do not wish to.

All participants will be offered information about sources of support should they need it. At the bottom of this page there is a list of contact details of various support services that you may contact if you experience distress as a result of participating. In addition, the contact details of the researcher are provided and you can contact the researcher in working hours.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Taking part in this research is unlikely to help you directly. However, completing the study may provide you with an opportunity to reflect on your feelings and experiences of being a parent. Research findings obtained during the study will also help us to better understand the factors involved in social support and may potentially be used to help people making the adjustment to parenthood.

Reimbursement for my time

Participant will be reimbursed for their time, receiving a £40 payment (per couple) on completion of the study.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

You can withdraw from the study at any time without needing to give any explanation, and you will also have the option to withdraw any previous data.

What happens if my partner decides to leave the study?

If your partner withdraws from the research study, you can continue as your data will still be used.

What will happen to my personal information?

In order to undertake the research project we will need to collect the following personal information/data about you:

- Your mobile number (needed to send messages with an active questionnaire link)
- Your home address (needed to send questionnaires for you and your partners to complete)

[Only] the research team will have access to this information.

We are collecting and storing this personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 which legislate to protect your personal information. The legal basis upon which we are using your personal information is “public interest task” and “for research purposes” if sensitive information is collected. For more information about the way we process your personal information and comply with data protection law please see our [Privacy Notice for Research Participants](#).

The University of Manchester, as Data Controller for this project, takes responsibility for the protection of the personal information that this study is collecting about you. In order to comply with the legal obligations to protect your personal data the University has safeguards in place such as policies and procedures. All researchers are appropriately trained and your data will be looked after in the following way:

The study team at the University of Manchester will have access to your personal identifiable information, that is data which could identify you, but they will anonymise it immediately by giving your data a reference number. However, your consent form, contact details, etc will be retained for 5 years on a password protected file stored on a university computer.

You have a number of rights under data protection law regarding your personal information. For example you can request a copy of the information we hold about you. This is known as

a Subject Access Request. If you would like to know more about your different rights, please consult our [privacy notice for research](#) and if you wish to contact us about your data protection rights, please email dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk or write to The Information Governance Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13 9PL. at the University and we will guide you through the process of exercising your rights.

You also have a right to complain to the [Information Commissioner's Office](#), Tel 0303 123 1113

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the research will be included in a report that will be submitted for examination by the University of Manchester. The results may also be published within an academic journal, and may be presented at conferences. There will be no personal information about any of the people who participate within any of these reports or presentations.

If you would like me to email you a summary of the findings when the study is complete, please could you request this via email.

Who will conduct the research?

The chief investigator of this research is **Saul McLeod**:

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The research supervisor's details are:

Prof Alison Wearden
Email: [removed for privacy](#)
Tel: [removed for privacy](#)
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Where can I obtain further information if I need it?

Should you have any questions regarding this study or wish to participate, please contact Saul McLeod at saul.mcleod@manchester.ac.uk.

What if I have questions or want to complain about this study?

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact the researchers who will do their best to answer your questions. If you wish to make a complaint regarding the study, please contact the University Research Practice and Governance Coordinator on 0161 275 7583 or 0161 275 8093 or send an email to research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk

Source of support

If you experience distress as a result of completing the questionnaires, and you feel that you require some help to deal with that distress, please make use of the following contacts in order of priority:

- 1) If you have a midlife or keyworker who supports you, please contact them directly.
- 2) If you do not have a key worker, please contact your GP.

In addition, for support and advice, you can also contact the following organisations:

Relate Offering relationship counselling support online through their website and by telephone or face to face. https://www.relate.org.uk/	PANDAS Offering specialist mental health support for parents. 01691 664275 http://www.pandasfoundation.org.uk/
Home Start Supporting families, offering services such as helping people access local services in their area. http://www.home-start.org.uk/	nct Offering information and support in pregnancy, birth and early parenthood. https://www.nct.org.uk

This Project Has Been Approved by the University of Manchester's Research Ethics Committee [UREC reference number: 2017-2488-4500].