

In conjunction with a Consent form, Participants should receive an Invitation letter (below) or Participant Information Sheet (next page) describing the purpose of the project and the person responsible for the project.

SDN staff must use corporate font, StoneSansITC TT, 11 or 12 point font; external applicants must not use this font and may use any other font

Dear [insert family's name]

My name's Jane Doe. I'm the Director of SDN's Happy Families, Happy Children Program. We offer a range of support and resources for children and families. To help us decide which families might benefit most from our program, we use some assessment forms. We're trying out a new type of assessment form and would like to ask for your help.

We're inviting you to take part in our trial of the new form. During the assessment process an SDN worker will be using the form to gather information from you. Some of the information we ask about may be sensitive, for example, whether there are problems in the family relating to alcohol, drugs or violence. But these details are important for us to better understand your family's circumstances and needs, and how we might help. As part of this trial, our worker will be sharing the information we collect with our research team which includes a small number of SDN staff and independent researchers, who are all bound by SDN's policy of confidentiality. The information will be used to see how useful the new form is in helping us decide which families should receive our services.

It's also important that we know how families feel about the assessment process. So at a later date, we may contact you and invite you to talk about your experience with the new form.

We hope that you will be part of this important trial. Your contribution will enable us to improve our work with families. However, you don't have to help us with the trial if you don't want to. It won't affect the decision about whether we accept your family into our program or not. You can also change your mind about being part of the trial at any time.

If you've got any other questions about this trial please phone me on 9222 0000 or email me at j.doe@sdn.org.au.¹

Many thanks

JANE DOE

Director Happy Families, Happy Children Program
SDN Child and Family Services Pty Ltd

The paragraph below must be included in the participant invitation letter or information sheet, with the relevant REC approval number (replacing XXXX).

¹ This project has been approved by SDN Children's Services Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Research Ethics Committee at SDN Children's Services (Tel. 02 9213 2400) quoting approval number XXXX. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully. You will be informed of the outcome.

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PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

SDN's Happy Families, Happy Children Program offers a range of support and resources for children and families. To help us decide which families might benefit most from our program, we use some assessment forms. We're trying out a new assessment form and would like to ask for your help.

We'd like to invite you to take part in our trial of the new form. During the assessment process an SDN worker will be using the form to gather information from you. Some of the information we ask about may be sensitive, for example, whether there are problems in the family relating to alcohol, drugs or violence. But these details are important for us to better understand your family's circumstances and needs, and how we might help. As part of this trial, our worker will be sharing the information we collect with our research team which includes a small number of SDN staff and independent researchers, who are all bound by SDN's policy of confidentiality. The information will be used to see how useful the new form is in helping us decide which families should receive our services.

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If you've got any other questions about this trial please phone Jane Doe, Director of SDN's Happy Families, Happy Children Program, who is also the leader of this project, on 9222 0000 or email Jane at j.doe@sdn.org.au.²

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This document should include the name and address of the organisation sponsoring the project, and the corporate logo.

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The consent form must clearly outline what the participant is consenting to. The format below requires a separate tick for several items; this provides an opportunity for consenting to some or all items. If it is necessary that a person consent to all items, then provide one tick box only and use a format like:

- I consent to participate in this study and understand that I:
 - Agree to take part in the Family Assessment Tool
 - Know that the purpose of the trial is to see how useful the tool is for SDN's Happy Families, Happy Children Program ... etc

Please tick the boxes as appropriate:

- I agree to take part in the trial of a new family assessment form.
- I know that the purpose of the trial is to see how useful the form is for SDN's Happy Families, Happy Children Program.
- I know that all information gathered will be treated confidentially.
- I know that I can withdraw from the trial at any time and this will not affect decisions about the SDN services I may receive.
- I am willing to be asked to participate in an interview later on. I can say yes or no at that time.
OR
- I do not want to participate in an interview later on.

Name (please print):

Signed:

Date:

Participants should be asked to sign two (2) copies of the consent form; one should be returned to the participant and one should be retained by the project leader.