

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

15 OBSERVATION AND RESEARCH POLICY

AIM

To ensure that research conducted within the University of Melbourne Children's Services seeks to benefit and extend the development of the children and their community.

To support the development of Early Childhood Education nationally and internationally.

To enhance the professional development of children's services staff

To ensure that research conducted within Children's Services is consistent with each services philosophy and values about the care and education of children.

The Queensberry Children's Centre is equipped with observation facilities. There is an observation area located directly above each of the children's playrooms with the exception of the nursery.

Playroom activities are able to be viewed through one way glass in the observation areas so children will not be disturbed or distracted by the presence of observers.

The observation facilities may be used by University of Melbourne students and staff, early childhood students, and staff of other institutions, and by child care professionals from outside the University as part of a professional training program.

This may involve the participation of children in planned individual or group learning experiences implemented by students under the supervision of professional staff, which are observed from the observation facilities.

These facilities are also useful to staff of the Centre in their work with the children. Staff are able to observe and record information about children for use in planning programs and setting aims and objectives for individuals and the group.

With permission from the Director, parents may also use the observation areas to see how their child is settling down and to watch how the children play and interact with each other.

The activities indicated above are considered to be part of the normal operation of the Centre.

Specific consent will be sought from parents for the participation of individual children in research projects, photographs, video or motion film. The research projects may involve interviews, completion of questionnaires, or systematic observational record-taking of individual children. In such cases parents will receive a request for permission for their children's participation via individual consent forms as well as information about the project.

PROCEDURE

1. All applicants must complete a Children's Services Research Application form (APPENDIX A)
2. The full application to the appropriate Ethics Committee with Ethics committee approval must be attached to this application. The application must be submitted to the centre Director for where the research is to be conducted. Applications will not be considered without this documentation.

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3. Applications must be submitted 7 working days prior to a Children's Services Management Team (CSMT) meeting. The CSMT meets on a monthly basis. (Please contact the Administrative Officer on 8344 9621 for meeting dates)
4. Children's Services Management Team will discuss the application and will then consult with all Early Childhood staff who will be involved in the research.
5. Staff and parents have the right not to participate in the research. If all staff and parents do not wish to participate in the research the applicant will be notified as soon as possible.
6. If staff and parents agree to the research proposal and are satisfied that all their questions have been addressed by the applicant, CSMT will forward the application with a recommendation to the Child Care Management Advisory Committee (CCMAC). This committee usually meets in the fourth week of each month.
7. The applicant will be contacted within 2 weeks of the CCMAC meeting with a written response to the application.
8. Where a research project involves staff participation through
 - administration tasks,
 - interviews,
 - research meetings with staff, or
 - accompanying a child,the researcher will need to reimburse the centre for relief staff costs.

The current rate for the cost of relief staff will be charged to the researcher.

9. Children will not be permitted to be taken out of their room without the presence of a staff member from their room. That staff member will remain with the child/ children and will accompany them back to their room when the research is complete.
10. Children will not be permitted to be involved in the research without signed informed consent from their parent/s or a legal guardian 5 days prior to conducting research. It is the responsibility of the researcher to collect consent forms and hand them to the director prior to conducting research.
11. Applicants will be required to provide their own equipment and resources. If the applicant wishes to use the centre resources permission must be granted from the Director prior to conducting the research.

The applicant will provide at regular intervals during the research written feedback to the centre about the research conducted. On completion of the research the centre will be provided with a written report of the outcome of the research. The researcher will also provide any articles pertaining to the research to the centre.

12. Where a person converts their research from Masters to PHD during their data collection, or time at the centre the researcher will submit the conversion report to CSMT for approval.
13. In the event where the researcher needs to collect extra data a written agreement must be obtained from the Directors.

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Appendix A



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Application for Research

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1.3 NAME OF CHILDREN'S CENTRE THE RESEARCH WILL BE CONDUCTED:

1.4 NUMBER, TYPE AND AGE RANGE OF SUBJECTS

1.5 MEANS BY WHICH SUBJECTS ARE TO BE RECRUITED

1.6 ARE ANY OF THE SUBJECTS IN A DEPENDENT RELATIONSHIP WITH ANY OF THE INVESTIGATORS, (PARTICULARLY THOSE INVOLVED IN RECRUITING FOR OR CONDUCTING THE PROJECT?)

YES NO *(If YES, has this been identified through the ethics committee, and please explain the relationship and the steps to be taken by the investigators to ensure that the subject's participation is purely voluntary.)*

1.7 INVESTIGATORS' EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

1.8 ARE THERE LIKELY TO BE ANY DIRECT BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS FROM THIS RESEARCH?

YES NO *(If YES, please describe.)*

1.9 WILL CHILDREN'S SERVICE'S STAFF BE PARTICIPATING IN THE RESEARCH:

YES NO *(If YES, will this be outside normal duties, please supply detail of how this will be funded)*

1.10 WHAT REQUIREMENTS ARE NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THE RESEARCH (SPACE, EQUIPMENT, CENTRE STAFF ETC.)

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1.11 JUSTIFICATION FOR RESEARCH AND EXPECTED LONG TERM OUTCOMES:

Please provide the following:

a) a brief description of the current research being undertaken in this field;

b) a justification as to why this project should proceed given current research in the field.;

c) an explanation of any expected/potential benefits to the community which are likely to result from this particular research project? How are these significant?

1.12 HOW AND WHEN WILL YOU REPORT BACK TO THE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SERVICES STAFF AND FAMILIES ON THE PROGRESS OF THIS RESEARCH?

2. CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

2.1 DOES THE RESEARCH SUPPORT THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SERVICE? :

YES NO *(If YES, how?)*

2.2 WILL THE RESEARCH EXTEND STAFFS THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL KNOWLEGE?

YES NO *(If YES, please supply details.)*

2.3 HAVE STAFF AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH?

YES NO *(If NO , please supply details.)*

3. CHILD CARE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S COMMENTS

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