



Parenting Arrangements After Separation Study (PASS)

Thank you for your interest in this study. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

Information Sheet (A) for
Parents/Caregivers

What is the Aim of the Study?

The Faculty of Law and the Children's Issues Centre at the University of Otago are doing a study about how separated parents or caregivers make or change parenting arrangements. This includes deciding who children live with (day-to-day care or shared care) and when parents and others have contact with children (contact). Day-to-day care used to be called custody, and contact used to be called access. Separated parents may have had to deal with other issues like relationship property or child support, but this study is only about **parenting arrangements**.

We are interested in the different ways that parents and caregivers make these parenting arrangements, and their experiences of, and satisfaction with, any family justice services they use. We also want to better understand how parents make parenting arrangements themselves without using any (or many) of these services. We will be asking professionals about their views on, and experiences of, the New Zealand family justice system as well. We want to find out, from both parents and professionals, what is working well and whether any improvements are needed in order to better help separated families.

What Type of Participants are being sought?

This study is for separated parents or caregivers who have had to make or change arrangements for children's care in New Zealand since **1 April 2014**, either by themselves or with the assistance of family justice professionals and services. These could be parenting arrangements that have been made for the first time or when significant changes to existing arrangements have been needed. Caregivers, such as grandparents or other family members, may have had to make or change parenting arrangements for children in their care or whom they have contact with too. They are also most welcome to participate in the study.

We want as many separated parents and caregivers as possible to take part, so if you meet the following criteria we welcome your participation:

- You have had to make or change parenting arrangements for children since 1 April 2014;
- You made these arrangements either by yourselves or with the assistance of professionals (e.g., mediators or lawyers) or the Family Court;
- The parenting arrangements were made in New Zealand or relate to children living in New Zealand at the time.

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What will Participants be Asked to Do?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to complete an **online survey** about the process of making or changing parenting arrangements for children. This survey should take about 30 minutes to complete. You are able to skip any questions you do not wish to answer. We do not anticipate any risk associated with completing the survey. However, if you need some support with your family and/or personal situation there is a list of services and agencies available on our study website (passnz.co.nz).

At the end of the survey you can indicate if you would also like to participate in an **individual interview** and, if so, the researchers will contact you by phone or email. You will also be invited to complete brief follow-up online surveys and interviews in 6 and 12 months time.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the study without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

The survey will ask about how you made or changed your parenting arrangements, your views on, and experiences of, making these arrangements, and your satisfaction with any family justice services you might have used. The follow-up surveys will ask about whether there have been any changes in your parenting arrangements and if you have used any family justice services since you answered the first survey.

The survey will not ask you for any personal information that could identify you, unless you choose to provide your contact details (which will be stored separately from your survey responses). Only members of the research team (or those employed by the research team) will have access to the data that will be stored securely.

The study findings will not identify individual participants and the responses from all those who complete the survey will be combined and analysed as a group. Quotes from open-ended responses may be used in reports in an unidentifiable way. The findings of the research will be written in a report that will be made publicly available and distributed to key stakeholders, family justice professionals and other interested parties to help them better assist families to make parenting arrangements in the future. Articles will also be published in journals or presented at conferences. Every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

A summary of the study findings and the final report will be made available on our study website (passnz.co.nz), and participants may also contact the research team directly to obtain a copy.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only the research team can access it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for **at least 5 years** in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants (such as contact details if provided) may be destroyed at the completion of the research even though the data derived from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Study?

You may withdraw from participation in the study at any time before the data are analysed without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our study, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact the Project Manager:-

Dr Megan Gollop
Children's Issues Centre
University of Otago
Tel: (03) 479 4918; 0800-472 776
Email: megan.gollop@otago.ac.nz; passnz@otago.ac.nz

To contact a member of the research team:
Ring: 0800-4-PASSNZ [0800-472 776]
Email: passnz@otago.ac.nz

To complete the survey go to:
passnz.co.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee (Reference Number: 16/164). If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.