Research Project: Young and 'care-full': The support needs of young kinship carers and young people in their care

Information about interviews for young kinship carers (age 30 or under)

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Hi, I'm Meredith Kiraly, and I'm a researcher at Melbourne University. I work with Professor Cathy Humphreys in the Department of Social Work. We are conducting a nationwide study of young kinship carers, that is, young people age 30 or under who are caring full-time (24/7) for young family members or other children known to them through their friends, work or community, that is, 'young friends'.

What is the research about?

We want to know what it is like for young people like you with experience of caring for young family members such as younger sisters or brothers, nieces or nephews, etc, or 'young friends'. The information we collect will be provided to policymakers and services to help develop support programs for young kinship carers. You can read more about this project at http://young kinship carers research project Even if the children or young people have left your care in the last year or two, we would still like to talk to you.

What will it be like?

I would either meet with you somewhere you are comfortable to talk, or telephone you. The interview would take about an hour. After the interview I would give you a gift voucher for $50 to say thankyou.

I would like to make a recording of the interview to remember what you said. When it is typed up, I would change anything that could identify you - like your name, where you live, etc. So your contribution would become anonymous. I would destroy the recording after it was typed up. The written record would be kept locked away for five years and then destroyed.

It would all be private and confidential, unless you told me that a child was in danger. If that happened, I might need to talk with you about how to take up your concerns, and I might need to talk to a support service to work out how to ensure that the child could be safe.

Participation is voluntary

You can choose whether to take part or not, and you can change your mind at any stage. You could always withdraw your contribution, providing it hadn't already been processed and made anonymous. If you agree, I will ask you to sign a form to say so.

What if I find the interview upsetting?

I think this is unlikely. But if you did feel distressed, you could stop the interview. I could arrange for an independent counsellor to see you at no cost to you, if you wanted that. You could always ring me later on 0400 913659 to talk about anything related to the research.

What will you do with the information you collect?

I will take all the ideas from the interviews and pull them together so as to understand more about young kinship care families. I will write a report that will go on a website where you can read it, and maybe a journal article, and talk to people who run support programs about the information. I would still keep your personal information private.

Who makes sure your research is done properly?

We have permission to do research from the University of Melbourne Ethics Committee. If you weren't happy with the way we did the research, I would encourage you to tell me and we would try to work it out so you felt comfortable about participating. You could also phone the University of Melbourne Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics, 8344 2073. You would need to tell them you participated in Project HREC number 1341257.1.

What do I do to be in it?

You can contact me directly on 0400 913659 or mkiraly@unimelb.edu.au   Or you can give your phone number and email address to the person who gave you this information sheet, and they will pass your message on. I will contact you as soon as possible.

What if I have questions about this project?

Ring me on 0400 913659. Leave your phone number if I am not there, and I will ring you back.

Thank you for considering this. I hope to be able to speak to you.

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