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April 1, 2013

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of an opportunity to participate in a research study whose purpose is to help families of young children with autism who engage in problem behaviour during valued family routines. The study is entitled, "Examining the Implementation of a Family-Centred Positive Behaviour Support Approach Designed to be Sibling-Friendly: A Single-Subject Experimental Investigation." The study will be conducted by the University of British Columbia. The Principal Investigator (PI) of the study is Joseph Lucyshyn, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education of the University of British Columbia. The graduate student researcher is Victoria Sobie. The research study is for the fulfillment of degree requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

The purpose of the study is to examine the acceptability and effectiveness of a family centered approach to behaviour support designed to be sibling-friendly in reducing the challenging behaviour and improving the relationship between a child with autism and his or her sibling. The approach is based on best practice in positive behaviour support with families of children with developmental disabilities. Furthermore, the approach emphasizes the development of a collaborative partnership with family members and the design of positive behaviour supports that are both effective and a good fit with family culture and lifestyle. The study will evaluate the extent to which the approach:

- 1) improves child behaviour during the two target sibling routines
- 2) promotes the child's successful participation in the two target sibling routines;
- 3) helps family members successfully support the child with a disability in interactions with his or her sibling; and
- 4) improves the quality of life of the child with a disability and the family as a whole.

Participation in the study will involve you and your family collaborating with members of the research team in four steps of the family support process, and in five research activities. The steps of the family support process are:

- 1) comprehensive assessment of child problem behaviour and family and sibling ecology;
- 2) collaborative development of a sibling-friendly positive behaviour support plan;
- 3) implementation support to help the family use behaviour supports in the target routines;
- and

- 4) follow-up support.

Research activities will include:

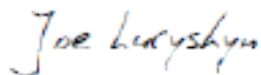
- 1) preliminary assessment to define the target routines and to confirm child problem behaviour;
- 2) videotaped observations in the target routines, under conditions that may produce problem behaviour, to confirm the purpose of problem behaviour;
- 3) videotaped observations in the target routines;
- 4) assessment of sibling relationship quality;
- 5) two additional interviews assessing family members' perspectives and experiences during a process of sibling-friendly positive behaviour support.

Research and family support activities will occur for up to 9 months. During the first 7 months, your child and family will be involved in support and research activities for approximately 2 to 4 hours per week. This will vary based on your family's availability and need. During the final 1-2 months of the study, the child and family's involvement will decrease to approximately 1 to 2 hours per week. Support activities will include conducting assessments, collaboratively designing a behaviour support plan, and helping family members to implement the plan in the target routines. All activities will be scheduled on a day and at a time that is convenient for family members.

Families who choose to participate may experience four benefits. First, the child's problem behaviour may decrease to near zero levels in the target routines. Second, the child may develop new behaviours and skills that help him or her participate in the target routines. Third, the sibling may enhance their skills interacting with and supporting his/her sibling with a disability. A potential fourth benefit is that other families of children with disabilities and their siblings may be helped through the sharing of knowledge gained in this study.

If you are interested in participating in the study, or learning more about the study, please contact Joe Lucyshyn at (604) 822-1904 or by email at [joe.lucyshyn@ubc.ca](mailto:joe.lucyshyn@ubc.ca). You may also contact Victoria Sobie at (604) 992-2285 or by email at [victoriasobie@gmail.com](mailto:victoriasobie@gmail.com). Alternatively, you also may contact the agency representative who gave or sent to you this introductory letter. At that time, if you give the agency representative permission to release your name and phone number, Victoria Sobie will contact you by telephone to answer any questions that you may have. In any event, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Joseph M. Lucyshyn, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
Faculty of Education  
University of British Columbia



Victoria Sobie, B.A.  
Graduate Student Researcher  
Faculty of Education  
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