

## Who can participate?

We are seeking participants for this study who:

- Are children in Years 4-6 at Primary School, and their parents; and
- Live in a rural area; and
- Have lived in a rural area for at least 6 months.

## What will happen to your information?

The information we collect will be securely stored and all personal details will be destroyed at the end of the study. Any raw material on which the results of the project depend will be kept in secure storage for five years (as is University policy), after which it will be destroyed.

Once the study is complete we will provide you and your child with feedback on the findings. The results of the research will be written up in a report that will also be available for you and others to read. Articles will also be published in journals and presented at conferences.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of Save the Children and the Ministry of Social Development SPEaR Linkages Programme.



## What now?

If, after reading the information, you and your child would like to participate in this study or to find out more information you can:

- Sign the enclosed parent's consent form and **post** it in the envelope provided to Mary Ann Powell, who will then contact you. (Your child will be asked to sign their consent form at the first meeting)
- **Email** Mary Ann at [mapowell@clear.net.nz](mailto:mapowell@clear.net.nz)
- **Phone** Mary Ann on (09) 4229747 or the Children's Issues Centre on freephone 0800 0800 88, and leave your details for Mary Ann to contact you.

If you and your child decide not to be involved you do not need to do anything.

If you or your child have any questions about this project, either now or in the future, you are welcome to contact Mary Ann.

Supervisors:

Nicola Taylor: [nicola.taylor@otago.ac.nz](mailto:nicola.taylor@otago.ac.nz)

Anne Smith: [anneb.smith@otago.ac.nz](mailto:anneb.smith@otago.ac.nz)

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# Rural New Zealand Childhoods:

Children's and parents' experiences of living in the country

## A Research Project

*Information for parents and guardians*

# Rural NZ childhoods

A significant proportion of New Zealand's population, one in seven people, live in rural areas, but very little is known about their everyday lives. Views of growing up in the country include those of wholesome and carefree childhoods and, conversely, ones shaped by deprivation and hardship. Researching the everyday experiences of children and parents living in the country is important for understanding and advocating for the wellbeing of rural families.

We are inviting children and their parents to participate in a research study looking at families' experiences of rural childhood in New Zealand.

## The aim of the study

This research project aims to find out about growing up in rural New Zealand, from the perspectives of children and their parents.

Mary Ann Powell is undertaking this project for a Ph.D. in Childhood and Youth studies through the Children's Issues Centre, University of Otago. Every stage of the project is supervised and supported by two supervisors - Professor Anne Smith and Dr Nicola Taylor.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee.

## What will the study involve?

If you and your child agree to take part, you will both be asked to provide information about children's experiences of growing up in rural New Zealand.

Children will be asked to:

- **Meet the researcher** to talk about the project and give consent to participate;
- Construct a **picture** to describe experiences of growing up in the country;
- Participate in an **individual interview** and talk about their everyday experiences;
- Participate in a **focus group** discussion with up to five other children about living in the country.

Parents will be asked to:

- Participate in an **individual interview** and talk about their parenting experiences and their perspectives of rural childhood;
- Keep a **brief record** of their children's activities for one week;
- Participate in a **focus group** discussion with other parents living in the same area.

**One year later** Mary Ann will interview each child and parent again.

The individual interviews with you and with your child will be an hour maximum and will be audiotaped.

This project involves an open-questioning technique where the precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. If the line of questioning develops in such a way that you or your child feel hesitant or uncomfortable you (or they) will be reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and also that you (or they) may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage.

## Voluntary and confidential participation

Participation in the research is entirely voluntary. Consent forms are used to confirm that you and your child's participation is voluntary and will be treated confidentially.

You and your child may withdraw from participation in the project at any stage during the interview process or up to a month following your interview.

There is no payment for participating in the research study, however all materials necessary will be provided and provision will be made for reimbursement of travel costs to attend interviews or focus groups. The location of individual interviews will be at a place agreed with you, such as your home.

We will respect your right to confidentiality. The only people who will have access to the interview material will be myself, Anne and Nicola, and possibly a Maori cultural advisor (if you and/or your child are Maori).

We will ensure that there is no identifying material, such as names and geographical location, used in writing up the study. Your child will be asked to choose a pseudonym.

Should your child reveal any issues of concern or information relating to the safety of themselves, or any other person, we will discuss this with you and them and arrange support from an appropriate agency.