

PARENT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Parent,

This is to introduce you to the plans for the ten year follow-up visit for the Western Australian Pregnancy Cohort Study (known as the Raine Study). As you know a lot of information was collected during your pregnancy and over the first eight years of your child's life. You will remember that we planned to see all of the children again soon after their tenth birthday. Our specific aim in seeing the children at this age is to see if we can determine the influence of various factors, occurring during pregnancy and early life, on the children's development. We have a particular interest in children's language development, learning and behaviour. These are becoming very important issues for you now that your child is in primary school and we hope you will be interested in continuing with our study. We are certainly very excited by the prospect of this new study and the possibilities it presents.

Behaviour disorders and learning difficulties are very common in the community and occur in up to 20% of school aged children. In treating these problems, early identification and management often leads to much better results for the child and family. It is very important that we become better at being able to detect these children in their early years. To be able to predict which children may be at risk of such problems it is important to know what factors during the mothers pregnancy and during a child's early life may predispose a child to such problems. For example it is known that some children who are born very prematurely may be at risk of learning problems. It is not certain whether it is the early birth itself or factors leading to the early birth that may result in this increased risk. This study will help us to better understand these things.

Once again you will be invited to bring your child to the Institute for an assessment. This will be similar to the previous assessments your child has had. In addition we will be offering some tests of your child's learning, language development, and coordination. It is important for us to collect this information about children with and without problems in these areas so that we can identify differences that may go along with them.

The tests include a vocabulary test, a test of reasoning ability, a test of language development, a test of eye-hand coordination, and a test of overall coordination. Generally each of these tests lasts 10 to 15 minutes and are fun for the child to do. They will tell us about your child's language skills, a little about their thinking abilities and their ability to use their muscles and coordination.

During the time your child is engaged in performing these tests, we will ask if you would like to complete a brief questionnaire about your child's behaviour.

In addition we would also like to determine your child's academic achievement in relation to the time they have been within the education system. With your permission we will approach the Principal at your child's school to ask

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As part of this follow-up we would like to determine your child's academic achievement in relation to the time they have been within the education system. With your permission we will approach the Principal at your child's school to ask him/her to complete a short questionnaire for us. We will also ask your child's teacher to complete a questionnaire. The Principal's questionnaire will seek information about the school, including the school environment, stability of teaching staff and access to special programmes and extra funds. Information will be sought from the teacher regarding their perception of your child's learning within their particular class and your child's behaviour.

In Year 5 Government school students, all Catholic and most Independent school students, undertake the Year 5 Western Australian Literacy and Numeracy Assessment. We have the approval of the Education Department of WA to use the Government schools' results of this testing if you are agreeable. For children attending Catholic and Independent schools we will seek approval from the school Principal if you are agreeable. The testing undertaken is appropriate to the State's educational curriculum and the tests have standards appropriate to our local population. This makes it an ideal way for us to identify how each child is progressing at school.