

Update for ACT and Victorian Partners: March 2016

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the *kContact Newsletter*, which provides an update on the progress of the kContact research study, in the ACT and Victoria.

Since we last wrote to you we have achieved significant milestones with the project, including the completion of additional recruitment in Victoria, commencement of baseline data analysis, and we are most of the way through the intervention.

Intervention News

Through many conversations with practitioners over the last three months, we have been hearing of very creative practices that take in the spirit of the intervention. There are many ways to cover the themes of each intervention stage, even where formal conversations with parents are not possible. Sometimes this involves working through the carer who is coordinating contact visits, or it may involve taking note of non-verbal communication. We would love to see evidence of this sort of creative practice in the checklists, so that our findings reflect the best contact practice that is occurring.

We have included below some quotes from caseworkers who have described the positive aspects of the kContact intervention:

“The intervention Stages 1 and 2 opened up conversation for how access could be improved for the child and her mum. The family room is really focused towards babies, so we decided to start doing access in the community. One access we went to a coffee shop and another one we went to a local park. For the park visit, the mother brought the ageing dog along which the child hadn’t seen for 7 years. This was a really positive and lovely experience. Having the conversations also gave permission to expand the possibilities for access. For example, encouraging the mother to bring along activities to the access, so they have started scrapbooking the family tree. The mother has brought some really great historical things. We have also been able to do “normal” family things, like going shopping, which has also been a positive experience for their relationship.”

Victoria site

“Relationships with birth parents have improved which is making other aspects work well too i.e. consulting with parents about other matters.”

ACT site

If you have any other examples you would like to share in our next newsletter please email us at ICPS.KContact@acu.edu.au

Update

We continue to receive intervention checklists. Thank you to those who have submitted them so far. Currently we have received checklists for about 24 children (out of 68 children) in various stages across the ACT and Victoria. Adherence to the kContact intervention framework is looking relatively good for these children which is exciting. We also hope that benefits for the children concerned will soon emerge! Please keep them coming.

While the intervention period involving checklist completion officially finishes at the end of April, we ask that you keep going with the practice enhancement until the follow up interview for the child has taken place. This ensures that the interview captures the actual intervention practice.

Sadly, Larissa Rossen our Intervention Coordinator will be leaving us at the end of March. We would like to thank her for her valuable contribution in supporting the intervention. If you have any queries or updates about the intervention please contact Tracey Bullen or Margaret Kertesz via phone or the study email ICPS.KContact@acu.edu.au.

And the winner is...

We have conducted a draw for the workers who participated in the baseline interviews for a \$100 gift voucher and the winners are....

ACT Winners

Emma McCauley
Michael Framp

VIC Winners*

Christine Ryan
Janie Chaskiel

Beke Mapiye
Louise Hay

The vouchers will be sent out shortly.

Another round of \$100 vouchers will be drawn amongst workers who participate in the second round of interviews, which have now commenced.

*As there are additional sites in Victoria we conducted four draws.

Children's Study Update

- The children's study has completed the follow up interviews, speaking with 18 children and young people aged eight to fourteen years. Rhys has commenced coding and some preliminary analyses.

Progress over the last few months

- Additional baseline interviews have been completed in Victoria increasing the sample size to 133.
- Data entry of the first baseline interviews has been completed and preliminary analysis has commenced.
- We have submitted a paper based on the literature review for publication. We have submitted 5 abstracts for the ISPCAN (International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect) and AIFS (Australian Institute of Family Studies) conferences this year.

What we hope to achieve over the next few months...

- We will be providing ongoing support and coaching for staff at the intervention sites by collecting and reviewing the intervention checklists. We will also be providing the intervention sites with feedback about the intervention checklists and following up with managers about the observation / recording of intervention stages to monitor the fidelity of the trial and support the practice change involved.
- We are commencing and completing the follow up interviews with children, parents, carers and staff.
- We plan to complete baseline data analysis and commence drafting articles reporting the baseline results.
- Finally, we would like to collect the latest policies relating to contact (local to teams as well as organisation wide) from all of our partner agencies. While we collected these at the beginning of the study, we hope to pick up any that were missed and any that have changed in the last 2 years. If you could please send your policies to Tracey or Margaret by Saturday 30 April 2016 that would be greatly appreciated.

Save the Date

For members of the Stakeholder Advisory Groups we have scheduled our next meetings.

Dates proposed: Victoria: Tuesday 17 May 2016, 1.30-3.00pm

ACT: Tuesday 24 May 2016, 11.30am – 1pm

Project Team

Victoria	ACT
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