

# MAGES

## **Mental Wellbeing in Adolescence: Genes and Environment Study**

**Young Person's Information Sheet**  
**Please keep this copy**



## **Mental Wellbeing in Adolescence: Gene and Environment Study (MAGES)**

- You are being invited to take part in research about genetics and mental wellbeing.
- Before you decide whether to take part in this research, it is important that you understand why we are doing this research and what we are asking you to do.
- Please take as much time as you need to read this carefully and talk to your parents or teachers about it.
- You are welcome to ask the researchers questions if you have any.

### **Why are we doing this research?**

- Lots of young people experience problems with their mental wellbeing at some point.
- When a young person has a mental wellbeing problem, it can affect many aspects of their lives such as their health, education and their relationships with other people.
- There are a lot of different things that can affect your mental wellbeing including your family, friends and your school.
- Mental wellbeing can also be genetic, which means it sometimes runs in families. We can use DNA from spit to look at people's genes.
- We want to understand how the differences in people's genes affects mental wellbeing as you grow up.
- We also want to look at other important things like friendships and relationships with family members. These things can make young people feel safe and happy which could protect them from developing problems with their mental wellbeing.
- To do this, researchers would need to collect DNA (spit) samples from many thousands of young people.
- One way of doing this could be to get spit from students in secondary schools.
- This two year study aims to look at whether we can collect spit samples from young people in a classroom as part of a lesson about DNA and genes.

- We'd also like to link the spit samples to other health information (e.g. from your doctor).

### **Why have I been chosen?**

- You have been invited to take part because you are in Year 7 or Year 8.
- Your school is part of the School Health Research Network (SHRN) and has agreed to be part of this study. The SHRN aims to improve young people's health by asking questions about health and wellbeing once every 2 years.
- Everyone in your year has been invited to take part in the MAGES study.

### **Do I have to take part?**

- It is completely up to you if you would like to take part.
- If you would like to take part, you will be asked to sign a form saying that you agree to be part of the study.
- It's okay to change your mind, and you can say you don't want to take part anymore whenever you like.
- Even if you do not want to give a spit sample, you can still take part in our DNA lesson.

### **What is involved if I do part?**

- We will give you a small plastic tube and ask you to spit into it.
- We will ask that you do not eat or drink anything for 30 minutes before because this can make it more difficult to see the DNA in your spit sample.
- Giving your spit sample should only take about a minute.
- Once you've given us your spit sample, we will store it safely at Cardiff University where we will look at your DNA for our research.
- We would also like to link the spit sample you give us to:
  - 1) Your health and education records (e.g. information from your doctor and your school).
  - 2) Your School Health Research Network (SHRN) survey.

### **What will my spit sample be used for?**

- The spit samples will be tested in our laboratory to make sure that there is enough spit in each pot and there is no food in them.
- Our research will use your spit samples and information you have given us to help us learn about young people's wellbeing.
- Your spit sample will not have your name on it, so no one will know who it belongs to.
- We will make sure that your spit sample and any information you give us is kept safe and private.

### **Will you look at my DNA?**

- As part of this study we will look at your DNA.
- We are only looking at your DNA to learn about young people's wellbeing.
- Your DNA will not show us anything about you individually.
- We will not be able to see any information about your health from your DNA.
- If you change your mind, you can tell us and we will destroy your spit sample.

### **Why are you asking for my permission to link my sample to other records?**

- We plan to look at the links between genes and mental wellbeing, health and education.
- If you say we can, then the spit sample you give us for this study will be linked to other information.
- This information will be about education, health and wellbeing (e.g. records from school or your doctor).
- This information will not show your name and will be kept private.
  
- We would like to link your spit sample to the wellbeing questionnaires that you fill in as part of the School Health Research Network (SHRN) survey.
- This survey is done by all Welsh secondary schools once every two years.

- We will follow very strict rules to protect your privacy.
- Being able to link your sample to other information will help us to understand more about mental wellbeing in young people

### **What happens if my parents say I am not allowed to give a spit sample?**

- You can only take part in this research if your parents agree and they sign a consent form.

### **Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

- All the information that we get from you for this study will stay private and will be stored safely by Cardiff University.
- Your spit sample won't have your name on it, so nobody will know who it belongs to.

### **What do I have to do?**

- If you would like to take part then you will need to return the attached form to the researcher and give us a spit sample.

### **Is it safe to give a spit sample?**

- Yes. Giving a spit sample is completely safe.

### **What will happen to the results of the research study?**

- The results will be written up in scientific papers.
- The results will be shown to people interested in young people's wellbeing.

### **What if I decide I don't want to be involved anymore?**

- You do not have to take part in this study if you don't want to.
- You are allowed to change your mind whenever you like.
- You don't have to explain why you have changed your mind and you won't be in any trouble.

- If you'd like to change your mind then you can contact us to let us know.

## **Questions**

- If you would like to know anything else about this research you can contact us using the details below.

**Website:** [www.cardiff.ac.uk/MAGES](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/MAGES)

**Email:** [MAGES@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:MAGES@cardiff.ac.uk)

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## **Post:**

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**Thank you for reading this and thinking about taking part in MAGES. Please keep this information sheet.**