

14/09/2005

TIME USE SURVEY OF MOTHERS

Thank you for agreeing to consider participating in this survey.

The National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health (NCEPH) is a research centre at the Australian National University. It researches issues that affect the general health of the Australian people.

This project is a small-scale pilot study of how mothers of young babies spend their time, how this affects their health and well-being, and how their time use is related to other factors such as their family situation or household income. This includes activity categories such as childcare, employment and education, personal care, domestic activities, purchasing activities, social and community interaction, and leisure. Similar time use research is conducted in many countries around the world and the Australian Bureau of Statistics publishes a Time Use Survey, but there is very little research that looks specifically at the activities of mothers with young babies. The information we collect will be used to investigate whether a larger study would be worthwhile, and to gather preliminary information on factors influencing a new mothers' use of time and health consequences.

NCEPH will be seeking survey participants in several ways including through advertising in mothers' magazines and through health professional networks. We are asking mothers to participate because the mother is usually the primary carer of infants under one year old.

Your name will not be recorded on the survey instrument and only aggregated data from all the survey participants will be used in the study. Your contribution to the survey will remain confidential so far as the law allows.

If you agree to participate in the survey, we will arrange for a time recording device, rather like a calculator, to be delivered to you. It is simple and easy to use and will come with complete operating instructions. We will ask you to record your main activities for a week when your baby is around 3, 6 and/or 9 months old, by pressing the appropriate buttons on the device. We will also ask you to provide some basic demographic information on a written questionnaire.

If you are willing to participate in the study, please contact us as soon as possible. Our contact details are below.

Your participation will help health professionals and policymakers gain better understanding of the situation of mothers with young babies. After completing a survey period and returning the TimeCorder device in the postage prepaid package provided, you will also be offered a \$10 or \$20 spending voucher with one of two national retailers of baby products, depending on whether you participate in one, or more survey periods.

If you have any further questions about this study, I will be pleased to speak to you. You may telephone me on (02) 6125 5620. Any matters of ethical concern regarding this study at any stage may be directed to the Human Ethics Officer, Research Services Office, Australian National University on (02) 6125 2900 or email Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au.

I hope that you agree to take part in this research. The information collected will make a valuable contribution to our understanding about the impact of mothers' time use on the health of Australians.

Please complete and return the attached consent form to join the study.

Yours Sincerely

Dr Julie Smith
ARC Postdoctoral Fellow,
National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health,
Australian National University,
Canberra ACT 0200.

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Photograph of TimeCorder

