

Notice on the study for parents/guardians

Name of the study:

Targeting of healthcare and social welfare services for school-aged children (SOTEPALA)

Invitation to participate in a study

We invite you and your child to participate in a study aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of children's health and social services. The aim is to produce researched information that can be used to develop cooperation within health and social services and with municipalities' educational/cultural services to better serve children and their families. This notice describes the study and your possible part in it.

Please read this notice carefully. If you have any questions, please contact the study coordinator or the principal investigator (their contact details can be found at the end of the document).

If you choose to participate in the study, you will be asked to sign a separate consent form.

The HUS Regional Committee on Medical Research Ethics has issued a favourable opinion on the research plan.

Voluntariness, discontinuation of participation and withdrawal of consent

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the study, discontinue your participation or withdraw your previously given consent to this study without giving a reason at any point of the study without any effect on your child's schooling or your or your child's right to receive the support or treatment you need.

If you wish to cancel your participation in the study, please contact the principal investigator.

If you decide to withdraw consent, the data collected about you will not be used as part of the research data if it can be removed from the data. However, data cannot be deleted afterwards from research results that have already been analysed or published.

What the study examines and why

The aim of this study is to look at what kind of service package is formed by health and social services, how the services are targeted to children in need of support at schools and how beneficial pupils in grades 5 and 8 and their parents/guardians consider the school doctor's reception.

Research on the topic is important because no other country has exactly the same kind of school healthcare system and other student welfare services. Concerns have also been raised in public about whether the establishment of wellbeing services counties has weakened the cooperation between student welfare and schools.

Research methods

Pupils in grades 5 and 8 from schools in several municipalities in southern Finland and their parents are being invited to participate in the study.

For you and your child, participation in the study means completing a short online questionnaire after a school doctor's appointment. You can fill in the form on either a mobile phone or a computer. Completing the survey takes approximately 5 minutes. No prior preparation is required to participate in the study.

During the study, you or your child will not be subjected to any treatment measures.

The consent form also asks for permission to connect the survey responses with this school year's data on your child's school attendance (need for enhanced or special-needs support, test scores and school absences) and healthcare and social welfare registers (the child's diagnoses, client relationship with a school social worker or school psychologist, number of health centre visits and child's social welfare service contacts). The aim is to assess how health and social services are targeted at children who need support at school. In addition, we will assess whether children who are social services clients receive the health services they need.

Conductors and sponsor of the study

This study is being conducted by the Western Uusimaa Wellbeing Services County.

The study coordinator is Silja Kosola, Research Director for the Western Uusimaa Wellbeing Services County, who is responsible for ensuring the safe processing of the research data.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has granted this study funding from the EU's Sustainable Growth Programme (Recovery and Resilience Plan). The funding covers the costs of collecting research data as well as the salary costs of the research staff.

Possible benefits and risks of the study

While there is no direct benefit to you or your child from taking part in this study, the information produced by the study will help us to develop more functional health and social services from the clients' point of view and to ensure that cooperation with schools is also intensified in the interest of clients. It is hoped that the research results will help make services into a coherent whole instead of being so fragmented.

The study will not cause any harm to you or your child. In case of unexpected findings in the survey, a doctor working on the study will assess their significance and contact you, if necessary.

Legal basis of the study, processing of personal data and confidentiality

This study is subject to Finnish legislation on research and personal data protection. Researchers and other research personnel are committed to complying with good scientific practice and the ethical guidelines for research. A more detailed description of the legal basis of the study can be found at the end of this notice.

The data and research results collected from you and your child will be processed confidentially as required by legislation. All persons processing your information will have a confidentiality obligation. For more information on the processing of your personal data and your rights, please see the end of this notice.

Additional information and contacts

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact the principal investigator or other personnel. You can discuss with them any concerns you may have during the study.

Study coordinator

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Principal investigator

Sanna Salonen, dissertation researcher, L.M.

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CONSENT

Consent to participate in the study

My child and I have been asked to participate in the study: Targeting of healthcare and social welfare services for school-aged children (SOTEPALA).

I have received information about the study both in video format and in writing and have understood what I have been told. I know enough about the study.

I understand that participation in the study is voluntary. I can interrupt my and my child's participation at any stage of the study without giving a reason. I also have the right to withdraw my consent at any time before the end of the study. I am aware that despite my discontinuation of participation and/or withdrawal of consent, the data collected about my child will be used as part of the research data to the extent necessary to ensure the reliability of the research. Refusal, interruption or withdrawal of consent will not affect my or my child's status as a healthcare customer.

Date _____

Name _____

Date of birth _____

Home address _____

Signature _____