



Health

South Eastern Sydney  
Local Health District



# Understanding Children's Experiences of Parental Cancer Study

## Letter of Introduction

Dear Parent / Carer,

I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself and my research. I am a PhD Candidate in the School of Clinical Medicine at UNSW. My doctoral research program aims to understand how young children experience and make-meaning of their parents' cancer.

In 2021, I was diagnosed with cancer. I was 34 years of age and parenting two young children. I was curious to know how my children understood my illness and how I, as a mum and a patient, could support them during the changes which were happening in our family as a result of my cancer. There is a critical gap of knowledge in how young children (6 - 12 years) make meaning of parental cancer, particularly through a child's viewpoint. My research project aims to fill this gap by contributing knowledge in how primary school aged children share their lived experiences of having a parent diagnosed with cancer and what supports they seek during this time. Understanding children's experiences will later inform the co-design stage of my research program in developing supportive psychosocial resources together with families which will then be evaluated.

I would like to invite you to help with my project by completing a pre-interview questionnaire about your health and basic demographic questions. Following this, I would like to invite you to a face-to-face interview with yourself and your child to understand how your child understands your cancer diagnosis.

To be eligible to participate in this research study, you must be a parent/carer who has been diagnosed with cancer in the last 12 months and be caring for a child between the ages of 6- 12 years.

Participation in this research is voluntary and no more than 1 hour on one occasion would be required. After completing the pre-interview questionnaire, you will be contacted to arrange a time for the face-to-face interview for yourself and your child/ren and Rhea.

The pre-interview questionnaire may be completed online or in-person (prior to the interview) and may be completed at a time and place that is comfortable for you. The information that you provide will be kept confidential and all responses will be anonymous. All participants are entirely free to stop at any time and may opt to not answer certain questions.

If you would like to join or have any questions about this project, you may contact me by telephone on +61 403 857 715 or email [r.felton@unsw.edu.au](mailto:r.felton@unsw.edu.au).

Thank you for your time reading.

Best wishes,  
Rhea

## The Study Team:



**Rhea Felton**



**Dr Ursula Sansom-Daly**



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**Dr Melvin Chin**

