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INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: RISE NRL Program Life-Fit Component

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Assistants: Dr Rachel Sluis, Dr Kathy Ryan

Purpose of the study

Sport is an important part of Australian culture. The game of rugby league is among one of the first and most popular organized sports within Australia. In recent years, the National Rugby League (NRL) has begun to take action to enhance the personal development and well-being of its junior players. In accord, the NRL has developed the RISE program, aimed at enhancing Respect, Integrity, Self-Esteem and Engagement of its junior players. The program targets young people between 13-15 years and focuses on the development of technical & tactical skills, physical development and socio-emotional development via a program that includes 4 online modules to be completed at home and 4 associated on-field sessions.

The Life-Fit program will be incorporated into the RISE NRL program to provide the online modules and on-field activities focused on players' socioemotional development. Life-Fit includes (a) an Assess step to understand players level of social and emotional well-being, (b) a Reflect step in which feedback is provided to parents/carers about their child's social and emotional well-being, and (c) a Connect step in which players will participate in online modules at home and associated on-field activities during the RISE program aimed at enhancing knowledge and skills for enhancing social and emotional well-being.

This project is approved by the Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee (GU Ref No: 2018:426). Professor Waters, Professor Farrell, Professor Donovan, A/Professor Modecki and Professor Zimmer-Gembeck all hold PhDs in psychology (with specialty in clinical psychology and developmental psychology) and Dr Usher holds a PhD in physical education. They have been conducting large-scale, cross-sectional and longitudinal studies of youth wellbeing for more than 15 years. They have all published widely in the area of adolescent-based mental health and wellbeing, they have been funded by the ARC, NHMRC, beyondblue, Australian Rotary Health and Griffith University to conduct this research. We are all internationally renowned leaders in youth mental health and wellbeing and have the necessary training, expertise and experience to conduct this study.

What participation involves

Players will complete 4 online modules to be completed at home and 4 associated on-field sessions in the RISE program. During the first sessions, players and parents/carers will learn about the content of the Life-Fit program including the three steps of the Life-Fit Program: Assess, Reflect, Connect and how it will be incorporated into the RISE program.

When you complete the online RISE program registration information, parents/carers will complete a brief questionnaire to provide demographic details about your child and yourself. You will also be asked to provide contact details in order to receive emails related to the Assess and Reflect steps, and to receive follow-up calls if necessary.

Players will complete the Life-Fit Assess step online as part of the RISE program registration. This includes some short questionnaires about players' health and wellbeing (e.g., anxiety, negative feelings, grit, gratitude). All questions have been used extensively in teenage wellbeing projects.

After the Assess step, the Life-Fit system will score the responses and a member of our Life-Fit team will contact parents of any players scoring in high ranges for negative feelings, anxiety, and behaviour to provide assistance and referral suggestions for further assistance if appropriate. This will be done separately from the coaches and officials in the RISE program so that players' status within the NRL is unaffected by the information and assistance they might benefit from.



Players will participate in 4 online modules to be completed at home and 4 associated on-field sessions as part of the RISE program in which they will receive information and learn skills for enhancing social and emotional wellbeing. The online modules and associated on-field activities include information based on research findings that relate to promoting healthy habits around social media use, sleeping and energy drinks, grit and optimism, managing emotions using breathing, muscle relaxation, positive self-talk, and positive behaviours, and staying connected with others by using gratitude and positive actions. The onfield activities supplement the online content and involve engaging activities drawing

on rugby league skills and fitness while embedding key content from the online modules. Players will receive handouts and learn helpful strategies during the online modules. They will also receive an email with a link to the Life-Fit Connect step, which provides user-friendly information, downloadable resource tip sheets and links to reputable health and wellbeing websites and other support services to assist them in accessing evidence-based information to enhance their wellbeing and personal development. Players can access the Connect step at any time and as often as they wish once they have been enrolled in Life-Fit program.

Finally, players will complete the Assess step of Life-Fit again after the RISE program. This will help determine if the program has assisted players in developing their personal and social wellbeing. Players will also be asked to complete a short questionnaire about their evaluation of the Life-Fit program. This will help us ensure we keep the program interesting and relevant for young people.

Participation for research purposes is voluntary

Although all players participating in the RISE program will complete all the sessions outlined in the program including the Life-Fit online modules and associated on-field activities, participation is voluntary in terms of your child's de-identified information being used for applied purposes such as preparing reports and research papers. This ensures that we can evaluate the benefits and areas for improvement of the program and share that information with other researchers and practitioners working with young people. Non-consent to use your child's information will not involve any penalty and will not affect your child's standing with the NRL or at Griffith University. Permission to include your child's information may be withdrawn at any time without consequences.

Confidentiality and Privacy Statement

All data from this study will be kept confidential. Numerical codes only will be used for identifying data and no personal identifying details will be stored with the responses collected from children. The data collected from this research will be reported in general terms only and will not involve identifying information about children who participated. Computer records will be password protected and hard copy data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the School of Applied Psychology, Griffith University for a period of 5 years and will then be destroyed.

Legal Privacy Statement

Griffith University requires the following privacy statement to be included in this information sheet. The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your identified personal information. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded. For further information consult the University's Privacy Plan at <http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/plans-publications/griffith-university-privacy-plan> or telephone 3735 4375.

Risks

Providing information as part of the Life-Fit program does not pose any foreseeable risks to players. Life-Fit requires the completion of a survey with a number of questions before and after the RISE program. However, we have ensured the questionnaire is not too long, many players of the same age have completed the same or longer questionnaires, and the purposes of the questionnaire is to obtain information to ensure that players receive care and support to improve their wellbeing and personal development.

Results from all participating players will be reported to the NRL in aggregated format only so that no identifying information about any individual player is included. Aggregated results may also be disseminated via journal articles and / or conference presentations. Participating players can access a plain language summary of overall research results by emailing us at lifefit@griffith.edu.au.



Benefits of this research

Participation in Life-Fit allows for feedback on the health and wellbeing of young people. The feedback is offered on an individual basis, as well as on a group level basis when Life-Fit is used within a group format. Moreover, young people are able to connect with resources to facilitate improvement in areas of their lives that they may be having difficulties in.

The ethical conduct of this research

Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. If potential participants have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the research project they should contact the Senior Manager, Research Ethics and Integrity on 3735 4375 or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au.

Providing written informed consent

Your consent is required for us to use the information obtained from you and your child during this program for the purposes of preparing a written report for publication which presents the findings from all players, parents/carers, and NRL staff together, so that no individual person can be identified. This will help us advance science and knowledge about how to effectively develop and implement player wellbeing programs in sports settings, so we would greatly appreciate your consent to include the information from you and your child in this project.

Please do not hesitate to contact Professor Allison Waters on the contact details provided below if you wish to discuss the study in any way. Thank you for considering the participation of your child in our research program.

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