



## Information for Parents or Guardians

We are writing to invite your Year 8 daughter to take part in an exciting project funded by the National Institute for Health Research and being carried out by researchers at the University of Bristol.

### Why are we doing this study?

**PLAN-A** (or Peer-Led physical Activity iNtervention for Adolescent girls) aims to find out whether Year 8 girls who receive training to become a “peer supporter” can encourage their friends to adopt an active lifestyle. Studies show that increased physical activity is good for children’s health. Despite the health benefits, activity levels drop during adolescence, particularly for girls. We are hoping to identify new ways to promote physical activity among Year 8 girls. Peer supporters have previously been used successfully to help prevent smoking in adolescence and we are interested in finding out if this will work in improving physical activity.

### What does the pilot study involve?

We are starting with a pilot study so that pupils can help us develop the project. We will test out the intervention and seek feedback so we can improve the study before doing a larger study.

Your daughter’s school is taking part in our pilot study. We will test the following elements among the Year 8 girls in her school:

**Peer nomination** – In September, we will ask Year 8 girls to complete a short

questionnaire to identify female peers they feel are influential (e.g., who they trust and respect) in their year.

**Peer recruitment process** – Based on the peer nomination results, we will invite 18% of the girls in Year 8 to become “peer supporters”. It is their choice (with your consent) to do this or not.

**Peer-supporter training** – Girls who want to be a peer supporter will attend a fun and educational **two day** training course to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to informally promote physical activity amongst their peers. This course will take place outside of school and will be run by experts in healthy lifestyles. The girls attending the training will be chaperoned by a school staff member, at least one member of our project team will also be there.

**Focus groups** – Towards the end of the training we will ask your daughter to take part in a focus group, alongside the other peer supporters. We will ask your daughter for her feedback on the training and ideas on how we can improve it. After the girls have been a peer supporter for a few weeks, we will invite them to a separate focus group to tell us about their experience of being a peer supporter in school. The focus groups will be audio recorded.

### Will information be confidential?

We collect limited information in this study and this will remain confidential and anonymous (names removed) unless a child or parent tells us that a child is at risk of harm. If this happens we will inform the school and ask them to follow their safeguarding plan. We may use the

information from the focus group in a research paper, but no names will be used and all identifying information will be removed. We will store the data securely for 10 years in line with the Data Protection Act (1998).

### Does my daughter have to take part?

No, taking part is your/your daughter's choice. **If you DO NOT want your daughter to take part you must inform us by filling out the opt-out form enclosed.** We assume your consent has been given unless we receive this signed form.

**Please note that at this time you are consenting to your daughter taking part in the peer-nomination activity only.** If your daughter is invited to be a peer supporter you will be sent more information and asked to consent to them taking part.

### What should I do now?

If you are happy for your daughter to take part you don't need to do anything else.

If you do **NOT** wish your daughter to take part please ***sign and date the opt-out form and return it to the school via your child's teacher by XXX.***

### Who do I contact if I have questions?

Please contact Dr Mark Edwards, the project manager, via email ([plan-a-enhs@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:plan-a-enhs@bristol.ac.uk)) or by phone on 0117 331 1011

### Who has approved this study?

This research has been approved by the School for Policy Studies Ethics Committee. If you have any ethical concerns about the project please contact Professor Ashley Cooper, Head of Centre, via e-mail: [ashley.cooper@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:ashley.cooper@bristol.ac.uk) or by telephone (0117)9546668.

## Thank you for your interest in the study!