

Jamie Lachman: Professor at University of Oxford  
Jamie.lachman@spi.ox.ac.uk

You’re invited to participate in an evaluation study of CrisisText: A chatbot developed by Parenting for Lifelong Health (PLH), World Vision (WV), and IDEMS International to strengthen parents, caregivers, and children. We’re doing this study to learn about your experience with CrisisText to make sure the chatbot helps families like yours.

Before you decide if you’d like to join, it’s important for you to know why we’re doing this research and what it involves. You can read through this Participant Information Sheet.

If you have any questions about the chatbot or if something isn’t clear, please email the study team at [ParentText@globalparenting.org](mailto:jabuchat@globalparenting.org) or message us on WhatsApp at +27 79 762 3598. We’re here to help you!

Who can join?

To be part of the study, you need to be 18 years or older, be the parent or caregiver of a child under 18 years old, and live in a country with a participating World Vision office. You also need to agree to take part in the study.

Do I have to join?

No, it's up to you if you want to join or not. If you don't want to participate, nothing bad will happen to you or your family. If you do choose to join, you can stop at any time. If you want to stop getting messages, you can type "STOP MESSAGES". Additionally, if you participate but don’t want to answer some questions that the chatbot asks, you can simply skip any questions. You can still get the chatbot messages even if you don't answer the questions.

**What happens if I join?**

If you decide to join, you’ll need to read the consent form below and answer “Yes” on WhatsApp to the question, “I have read and understand the information, and I give consent to participate in the study”.

* The study team will then send you a survey through WhatsApp with about 8 questions. The survey asks questions related to parenting and your well-being.
* After this, we’ll begin the CrisisText programme. This programme includes sessions with tips aiming provide encouragement and actionable tips to:
  + 1) Help parents heal from depression, anxiety, and trauma;
  + 2) Improve parenting practices to keep children safe and healthy amidst crisis
* We’ll send you a survey with questions again after you participate in CrisisText, and again one month later.

Do I get anything for joining?

We hope the CrisisText programme will provide helpful tips to build strength, hope, and encouragement for you and your children!

**What happens to my information if I join?**

We only collect what’s needed for the study and store it securely. We will never ask for your name, and we do not ask for other identifying information such as date of birth. We also do not store your phone number. We only collect basic demographics (age, sex, number of children, and country).

Your information, including the answers you give during the surveys and data on how much of the program you complete, will be kept safe on secure servers connected with IDEMS, PLH, WV, and University of Oxford. All data will be kept for five years after the study. Ethics committees and monitors may check the information. We cannot remove or change your information, even if you stop participating; the reason for this is that we do not collect your identifying information (such as your name), and therefore, we won’t know which information is yours to remove or make changes. After the study, we may share the information with other researchers, but it will never be possible to know who took part.

**What happens to the research results?**

Your participation and what you tell us will help us understand how to support families like yours. We plan to share the results in journals, policy briefs and conferences so others can learn from this study too. When results are shared, it will not be possible to know who took part. We will never ask for your name.

**Who is in the study team?**

The researchers of this study are Dr Jamie Lachman (Universities of Cape Town and Oxford) and Sydney Tucker (University of Oxford).

Are there any risks in joining?

We don’t expect any risks to you if you join this study. We hope the CrisisText programme will provide helpful tips to build strength, hope, and encouragement for you and your children!

If any questions make you uncomfortable, you don’t have to answer them. If you become upset when using the programme, you can type “HELP” to receive troubleshooting messages, including resources in your local context.

Additionally, remember, you can stop participating anytime, without giving a reason.

Who pays for the study?

This study is funded through Parenting for Lifelong Health, World Vision, and the Global Parenting Initiative, funded by the LEGO Foundation (CVR00940), Oak Foundation, the World Childhood Foundation (16191), The Human Safety Net, and the UK Research and Innovation Global Challenges Research Fund (ES/S008101/1).

Data protection

The University of Oxford, IDEMS, PLH, and World Vision make sure your information is used safely and correctly, just for research. The study follows data protection laws like GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) in the UK and POPIA (Protection of Personal Information Act) in South Africa. You can learn more about your rights regarding your data by following this link: <https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/individual-rights>

Who has approved this study?

This study has received approval from the University of Oxford’s Social Sciences and Humanities Interdivisional Research Ethics Committee.

Who do I contact if I have questions or concerns?

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a study participant, you can contact the study team at [ParentText@globalparenting.org](mailto:jabuchat@globalparenting.org) or on WhatsApp at +27 79 762 3598 (messages only).

If you have more questions or concerns about your rights, you can contact the ethics committee listed:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Telephone** | **Email** |
| University of Oxford | +44 1865616578 | [ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk) |

Informed Consent to Take Part in the Study

Please read these statements carefully:

* I have read the information above and am ready to participate in CrisisText.
* I had time to think about the information, ask questions, and have all my questions answered.
* I know I can say yes or no to participating. Even if I say yes, I know I can stop using CrisisText anytime, and nothing bad will happen.
* I know my name will not be collected at any point during participation in CrisisText.
* I know who can see my information, including how much of the program I complete and my responses to questions. I understand it will never be linked to my name, and I know how it will be kept safe now and after the program.
* I know who to tell if I have a problem while participating in CrisisText.

***If you have read and understand the above document, agree with the messages and give consent to participate in the study, press “Yes” in WhatsApp. Type "EXIT" in WhatsApp if you do not want to participate.***