



Strengths and Difficulties in Classrooms: A Group Measure for Guiding Classroom Approach

Research Team

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An Exciting Tale...

With a focus on

The Process

rather than the outcomes

Once upon a time awhile back. . .

- Previous projects in 2014-2017
- Story books to classrooms and homes in Christchurch area for the purpose of introducing coping strategies to children who were stressed and anxious.
- Classroom teachers used the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire to track children's responses to the story as a group
- Parents tracked their individual child's response with the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire.



And then
not so long ago. . .

- Validation of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire as a group measure for the purpose of:
 - contributing to efficient teacher assessment for planning;
 - and initiating useful approaches in classrooms.



A look in the treasure chest. . .

- The **Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire** Well-researched tool widely used in mental health in New Zealand and Australia for assessing children's functioning on scales:

- Emotional
- Conduct
- Hyperactivity
- Peer relationships
- Prosocial behaviour.



A new treasure chest to fill. . .

- **Teachers** completed the questionnaire for their classroom group
- **Teachers** also completed the questionnaire for each individual child.
- **Parents** completed the questionnaire for their child.
- Statistical **analysis** will compare:
 - Parent and teacher individual scores,
 - Parents' individual scores with group scoring,
 - Teacher's individual scores with group scoring.



The Treasure Quest

- Started with 7 research partners
- More than 60 teacher respondents to research invitation
- Inclusive of over 900 students and their parents.



Historical Tales. . .

- Having a champion for the project to support participants in each school was imperative;
- Email campaigns were helpful to keeping teachers informed and excited about the project progress;
- Timing of participation requests to fit school calendar events was important;
- Giving teachers messages to use for involving parents was appreciated;
- Small tokens of appreciation generated additional enthusiasm.



Eye on the Sky

Successes bring changes to the plan

- Coding of the surveys
- Instruction for differing schools/classrooms
- Funding for more incentive vouchers



Chapters
in the
Tale of the Quest





MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

New Year! New Opportunity!



Hello Rising Tide Research Partners,

Happy New Year from the Massey Research Team for Rising Tide!

Now that it's a brand new year, we've started a new project related to teachers' perspectives in evaluation of their classroom groups. Using one of the same questionnaires that helped us with the Rising Tide evaluation, we'll be getting your help in comparing group versus individual collective measures of classroom behaviours.

We've even managed to find some small gifts to offer those who are able to help!

Let us know if you're keen? Just send [this email](#) back to us.

Benita

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INITIAL INVITATION





TELEPHONE CONTACT AND IDENTIFICATION OF LEADERSHIP FOLLOWING EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

	A	B	P	Q
1		Contact	Notes on conversation	Action 9/4/18- 10/4/18
2	Y	Melva	9/4/18 11:15 am to clarify number of kids / teachers in the class (52 last year).	RESOLVED - pending her response.
3	Y	Raeleen	T: Haven't spoken with Raeleen, but she filled out our questionnaire last time, and signed up via the email link after I called one time. 9/4/18 emailed re specific details for packs.	9/4/18 Check email for nur
4	Y	Maire	DP: They have said yes but haven't committed to year groups or numbers yet. 9/4/18 emails confusing. Ring to sort out numbers of classes / teachers / students. She didn't understand the research; now gets it, and doesn't need them until after the holidays.	RESOLVED - pending her response.
5	Y	Julie	T/HS: Julie said yes for the junior school and will cc. in the head intermediate teacher. Answered that they had 50 students in Y1-4 and 45 students in Y5-6 but not clear what that looks like.	RESOLVED
6	Y	Tracey		RESOLVED
7	Y	Susan		Wait for her to answer my i 6/4/18 - nearly resolved.
8	Y	Caroline	10/4/18 Yes! They will participate. She'll read the emails and get back to me. 5.10 pm Has emailed to say they are keen, and will call tomorrow to have some questions answered.	Will call me tomorrow mor discuss.
9	TOTAL			
10				
11	Pr	Kim	I'm pretty sure Kim will do it; hoping she will get other teachers to do it too. 9/4/18 call her after 3pm - done; she was in a pt interview, will call back. 10/4/18 Called but she is in pt interviews, reception (Tracy) suggested emailing her, which I did.	10/4/18 Emailed her.
12	Po	Sarah	6/4/18 on holiday now. Sarah (librarian) is keen but it depends on the teachers, and I have no way of gauging whether they are interested other than through Sarah.	X Can't do anything until af holidays.
13	Po	Melanie	10/04/2018 Spoke to a staff member (not Melanie) who asked me to resend the emails and she'll look into it.	Call again.
14	TOTAL			
15				



CODING SURVEYS AND CONSTRUCTING INSTRUCTION SHEETS

Research Code: PA01Name _____



Information Sheet for Parents

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire Comparisons

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire has been a well-accepted tool for identifying areas for parents and teachers to focus on with children and youth. More research using this tool for classroom group measure is needed. This project will compare data from the parent's and teacher's perspectives of individual children or youth, with teachers' perspectives of their classroom groups.

To help us with this project, you have the choice of completing each item on the form provided, and returning it to your child's classroom teacher, or alternatively using this online survey option as follows:

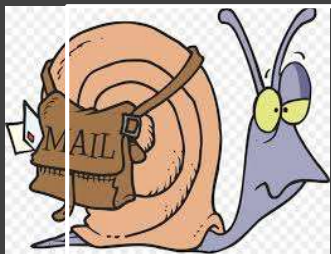
[Comparison of SDQ Measures from Teachers and Parents](#)

The Identification Code requested online is the assigned numbers you will see at the top of each page of this packet. This is used for statistical analysis and information from each form or survey submitted remains anonymous and confidential.

A small gift will be offered to each participant for their assistance in the form of petrol vouchers.

Many thanks,
Benita Soles-Smith

USTRALIA



MAILING RESEARCH PACKETS WITH SURVEYS AND INSTRUCTION SHEETS WITH EACH CLASSROOM PACKET



14 August 2018

To all of our generous research participants,

A note to thank you for your time and effort in helping us with the SDQ Research Project.

The time and effort that each of you have spent in completing surveys, encouraging parents to take part and communicating with us over the past weeks makes possible the work of finding out how this tool may be used in school classrooms.

We hope to have some interesting findings to discuss in the coming months, and will keep you updated on what we find from the data that you've shared.

We have also find enclosed a small token of our appreciation, as described in the initial information sheet.

The vouchers for participants are as follows:
\$40 to teachers with submission of classroom and student SDQs;
\$10 to parents with submission of an SDQ for their student;
Another \$40 to teachers with submission of the SDQs from their classroom parents.

Thanks to you!

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires Research Updates



Thank you to all of you taking part in this research project!

We have sent out all the packets of questionnaires, so hopefully you will have received packets tailor-made for your class or school. Please let us know if you haven't received yours yet, or if you need anything extra.

We understand that Term 2 is a busy term, particularly as the removal of National Standards has changed the reporting requirements this year. Consequently, if you or your staff feel that you will struggle to return the questionnaires to us by our deadline of the 9th July, please contact us and we can discuss alternative deadlines.

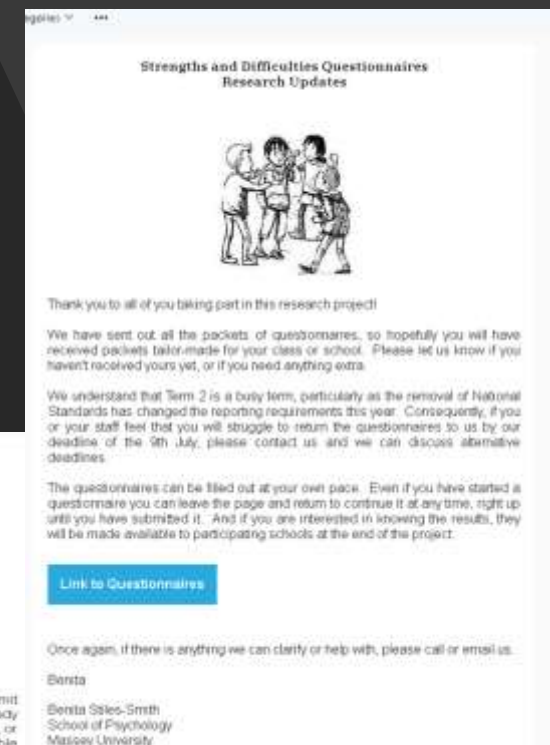
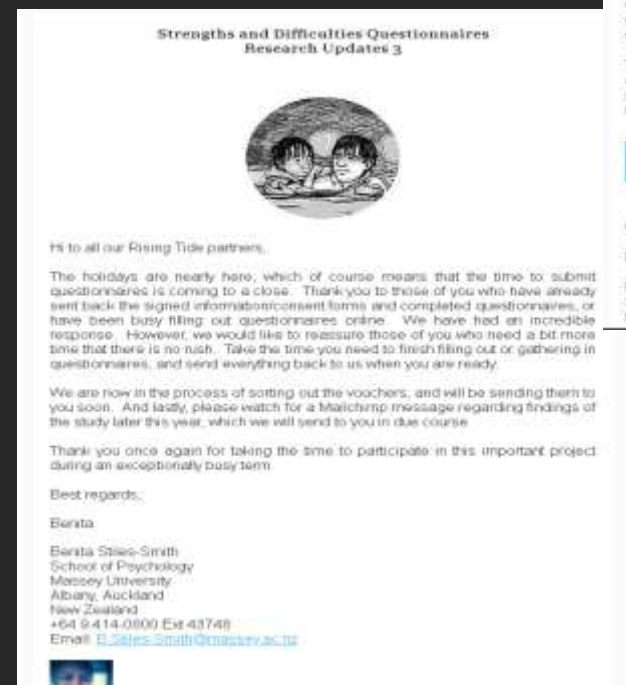
The questionnaires can be filled out at your own pace. Even if you have started a questionnaire you can leave the page and return to continue it at any time, right up until you have submitted it. And if you are interested in knowing the results, they will be made available to participating schools at the end of the project.

[Link to Questionnaires](#)

Once again, if there is anything we can clarify or help with, please call or email us.



REMINDER EMAILS FOR TEACHERS





Update Email with Message for Parents



Just a note to encourage and update all of our valued research partners. Thank you to all of you who are busy filling out questionnaires, we appreciate all the time and effort you are putting in.

However... some of the online questionnaires have not included the research codes found on the top left corner of the paper questionnaires. When this happens we are not able to establish comparative data points for students, which is what this study is all about.

So, we were wondering whether you could reinforce to parents, via your school newsletter, that the codes are essential for us to be able to use the data. If they are finding that entering the codes online is confusing, then please encourage them to use the paper questionnaires instead. And if you could also remind staff that the research codes are a critical component of the research, that would be helpful.

So... headlines by bullet point

- we cannot use data that does not have the research code entered online,
- teacher and parent research codes need to match for each individual student,
- it is fine to use the paper questionnaires rather than the online questionnaires.

Thanks once again for engaging in this project with us!

Benita

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New Zealand



SENDING TOKENS OF APPRECIATION



14 August 2018

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Just a note to thank you for your time and effort in helping us with the SDQ Research Project.

The time and effort that each of you have spent in completing surveys, encouraging parents to take part and communicating with us over the past weeks makes possible the work of evaluating how this tool may be used in school classrooms.

We hope to have some interesting findings to discuss in the coming months, and will keep you updated on what we find from the data that you've shared.

Please find enclosed a small token of our appreciation, as described in the initial information we sent.

Petrol vouchers for participants are as follows:

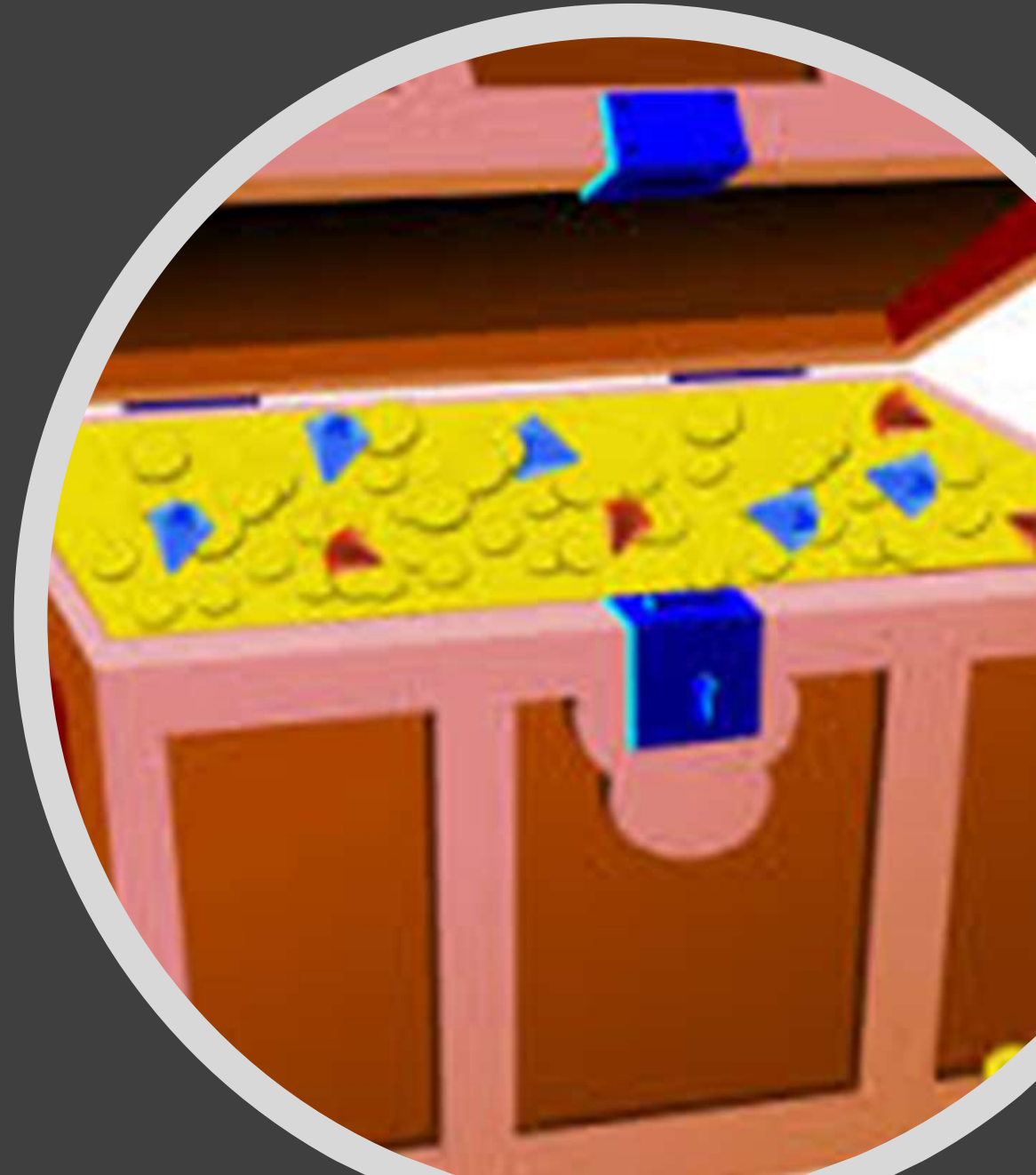
- \$40 to teachers with submission of classroom and student SDQs;
- \$10 to parents with submission of an SDQ for their student;
- Another \$40 to teachers with submission of the SDQs from their classroom parents.

Our thanks to you!

Benita

Treasure Trove

- Over 500 complete data sets (Classroom group, teacher individual, parent individual)
- Over 400 additional classroom group and teacher individual sets
- Very little loss of data





More magic!

Data analysis in process

Happily Ever After. . .

. . . Request from participating schools for continuing research regarding classroom use of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire





Thanks!

?Questions?

- The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire is a well researched tool widely used in mental health in New Zealand and Australia for assessing children's functioning on five scales: emotional, conduct, hyperactivity, peer relationships and prosocial behaviour. Conventionally used for screening individual children, our recent research in the Worry Bug project also explored its application as a classroom group measure. Exploratory use of the tool in this novel way was approved by the authors of the questionnaire and results warranted extension of the investigation. In this project, teachers complete the questionnaire for their classroom group, but also complete the questionnaire for each individual child. In addition, parents complete the questionnaire for their child. Both on-line and paper data collection was offered at the request of participating schools. Statistical analysis will be presented of the comparison of the results of the three data points: parent and teacher, parents and teacher's group scoring, teacher's multiple-individual and group scoring. Positive results would extend the utility of this already well-established instrument, assisting teachers to tailor classroom strategies to address particular patterns of strengths and difficulties presented in student groups. This may be of particular value in the aftermath of natural disasters or in stressed communities.