



## INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH

**Dear guardian!**

You and your child are invited to participate **SITES – social inclusion and diversity in early childhood education and care** study examining:

- Building social inclusion, equality, and belonging in linguistically and culturally diverse early childhood education groups
- The activities of groups of children and interaction between children and adults, as well as among children
- Transitions in early childhood education
- Cooperation between early childhood education staff and guardians in education, and guardian involvement
- Early childhood education service guidance for guardians

Approximately 70 children and their guardians and 30 early childhood education professionals will be asked to participate in the study in 2025–2026.

This document describes the study and participation in it. You can read the study's privacy notice here: <https://www.jyu.fi/en/projects/sites-social-inclusion-and-diversity-in-early-childhood-education-and-care>

The privacy notice explains how personal data will be processed.

### **1. *SITES – social inclusion and diversity in early childhood education and care – study and a request to participate in research***

**You are invited to participate in the *SITES study – social inclusion and diversity in early childhood education and care***, which examines social inclusion in early childhood education from a broad perspective. The study focuses on factors that promote and challenge social inclusion. Of particular interest are everyday interactions and transitions in early childhood education, the experiences of inclusion and belonging that are built in them, children's early childhood education paths, the cultural diversity and multilingualism of children and families, and different cultural backgrounds. In addition, we study educational cooperation and the guidance and support offered to families in the early childhood education service system.

The study collects research data:

- by observation (recording observations, video recording, audio recording) of everyday life in early childhood education in groups of children

- by interviewing children participating in the study, their guardians, and early childhood education professionals
- by recording discussions about early childhood education plans
- by recording children's early childhood education plans and other early childhood education documents

You and your child are invited to participate in a study being conducted in your child's early childhood education group. Early childhood education groups are selected for the study in which the children speak languages other than Finnish or Swedish at home. Your child's early childhood education group has been selected for this study for this reason.

Approximately 70 children, their parents, and educators from four different early childhood education groups will participate in the study in 2025–2026. Two of these groups are for children under the age of three and two are for children aged 3–6. All of the children's groups are linguistically and culturally diverse. In addition, professionals (4–6 people) from the municipality's early childhood education service guidance and management will participate in the study.

This is a follow-up study. You will be contacted later if you do not withdraw your consent to participate in the study.

## **2. Voluntary participation**

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or prohibit your child from participating in the study, discontinue participation, or withdraw your consent at any time during the study without giving a reason. You may also refuse to participate in a specific part of the study, even if you have already given your consent to participate in the study. This will not result in any negative consequences for you or your child.

If you discontinue your participation in the study or withdraw your consent, the personal data and other information collected about you and your child up to that point will be used as part of the research material when necessary to verify the research results.

Events related to data collection will be discussed with children on a case-by-case basis. If it appears that your child wishes to withdraw from an observation, interview, or video recording situation, this wish will be respected.

## **3. Research process**

The SITES study data collection will be carried out in 2025–2026 in a total of two early childhood education centers. Four early childhood education groups are participating in the study.

### **The course of the examination for you and your child**

- In the study, parents are interviewed remotely or face-to-face, based on their consent. The interviews are conducted at the interviewee's discretion, either at the early childhood education center, at the university, or at the interviewee's home. Videos from the center may be viewed during the interviews. The interviews will last approximately 0.5–1.5 hours each. The interviews will cover the linguistic and cultural background of the child and parents, the child's early childhood education path, the parents' relationship with early childhood education, the child's peer and adult relationships in early childhood education, and the cooperation between early childhood

education and parents. The interviews will be attended by a researcher and the parent or parents. If necessary, we will invite an interpreter to assist with the interviews. The need for an interpreter will be agreed upon with the parents..

- The project collects observation, audio recording, and video material on children and early childhood education staff in everyday early childhood education situations, as well as on situations involving parents dropping off and picking up their children. Observations are carried out for approximately 20–25 days per group. Notes are taken during the observations, which are also videotaped. Staff are asked to compile network maps illustrating the peer relationships of the children.
- When collecting observational data, we chat with the kids about the fun and not-so-fun stuff in their day-to-day early childhood education, games and activities at the centre, feelings, favorite places, and playmates, all in a way that's appropriate for their age. We take notes during these chats or record them.
- Children are invited to interviews based on consent. The interviews cover the same topics as the discussions during the observation period. In addition, the children may be shown a 5–10-minute video compilation of their everyday life in the group, after which the content is discussed together. The interviews also utilize photographs taken by the children, children's drawings, situation cards, network maps, and other material as a basis for discussion. Emotion cards can be used to put feelings related to friendships into words. The interviews are recorded. They involve a researcher and a child or a group of children.
- Discussions between parents and staff regarding children's early childhood education plans are recorded either on video or audio, and these recordings, along with children's early childhood education plans and other early childhood education documents, are used as research material.

#### **4. Potential benefits of the study**

By participating in this study, you will be contributing to the production of important new information about social inclusion and diversity in everyday early childhood education. Your experiences and views, and those of your children, will be heard. The research results will help to develop early childhood education practices both locally and nationally. The practical goal of the study is to support and strengthen the social inclusion and sense of belonging of children and families in early childhood education and to prevent inequality and exclusion. The research contributes to strengthening the position of people with an immigrant background as part of Finnish early childhood education and society. The research raises awareness of the importance of taking diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds into account and preventing inequality.

#### **5. Potential risks, disadvantages, and discomforts associated with the study and how to prepare for them**

The interview will take between 0.5 and 1.5 hours. Participating in the study will not cause any risks, harm, or discomfort to you or your child. However, if participating in the study brings up unpleasant feelings, it is a good idea to discuss them with a healthcare professional or someone you trust. You can also contact the researchers at any time to ask for more information about the study or for contact details for experts. The report will aim to keep individuals anonymous, but it is possible that individuals may recognize themselves in the report.

#### **6. Research costs and compensation for research subjects, as well as research funding**

No remuneration will be paid for participating in the study.

## **7. Communication of research results and research results**

The research will result in scientific and popular publications, theses, and conference and seminar presentations. The aim is to disseminate the results in order to develop early childhood education practices and training. All reporting and communication will be carried out in such a way that outsiders will not be able to identify the research subjects from the research results or publications.

## **8. Insurance coverage of the subjects**

The activities and researchers of the University of Jyväskylä are insured.

The University of Jyväskylä's insurance policies only cover damage related directly to the assigned research task and occurring during the actual instructed research task in remote research. The insurance does not cover damage occurring during breaks.

The University of Jyväskylä's insurance policies are not valid for remote studies if the student's home municipality is not in Finland.

The insurance includes patient insurance, liability insurance, and voluntary accident insurance. The subjects (test persons) participating in the studies are insured against accidents, injuries, and damage caused by external factors during the study. Accident insurance is valid during measurements and trips directly related to them.

## **9. Contact details of the provider of additional information**

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