



2027 Summer Research Project Template

Help us present your project in a way that connects with the right students. Thoughtful, engaging descriptions tend to attract stronger and more suitable applications. Thank you for putting a project forward - these programs rely on your contribution, and we couldn't do it without you.

Section	Description
Project title	Loneliness and Connectedness: Understanding Children's Social Worlds
Hours & delivery	- Hours of engagement: 36 hours per week - Delivery mode: Hybrid (primarily on-site; St Lucia) - Weekdays and some weekend days
About the project (150–250 words)	Loneliness is increasingly recognised as an important developmental issue, with links to poorer mental health, reduced academic engagement, and longer-term wellbeing challenges. Although often associated with older adults, loneliness is also common in childhood and adolescence and may peak during the teenage years. Importantly, loneliness is not simply the absence of social contact. From a Social Identity Approach to Health perspective, it can reflect a lack of meaningful group memberships and identification. In contrast, feeling socially connected through family, peers, school, and extracurricular contexts can provide belonging, support, and purpose. This project examines how children experience loneliness and social connectedness across developmental and social contexts. Students will contribute to research involving children and families through activities such as surveys, interactive mapping tasks, behavioural tasks, and structured literature work. By integrating developmental and social identity perspectives, the project aims to improve understanding of children's social worlds and help inform future approaches designed to strengthen social connection and wellbeing.
What you'll do (100-150 words)	Students will take part in a range of research activities across the project. Depending on project needs and timing, this may include assisting with recruitment and data collection with children and families, supporting survey administration, interactive mapping tasks, and behavioural tasks, and helping to prepare or organise study materials. Students may also undertake structured literature searching and synthesis on loneliness and social connectedness, assist with transcription, coding, and data entry, and contribute to the development or piloting of child-centred measures such as online Social Identity Mapping. Where appropriate, students may also assist with preliminary data analysis and preparation of research outputs. The mix of activities will provide experience across multiple stages of developmental and social psychological research.
What you'll learn (100–150 words)	Students will gain practical experience in developmental and social psychological research, with a particular focus on children's loneliness, connectedness, and social identities. The project offers opportunities to build skills in recruiting and working with children and families, administering research tasks, and supporting high-quality data collection. Students may develop experience in literature searching and synthesis, transcription, coding, data entry, and the organisation of research datasets. They will also gain insight into the development and piloting of child-centred research measures, including online Social Identity Mapping, and may be introduced to preliminary data analysis and the preparation of research outputs. More broadly, students will learn how developmental and social identity perspectives can be integrated to understand children's social worlds and wellbeing.
Project outcomes (75–125 words)	By the end of the project, students are expected to have contributed to one or more active research activities examining loneliness and social connectedness in children. Depending on the timing and stage of the research, this may include completed recruitment or data collection tasks, organised and coded datasets, literature



	summaries, transcription or data-entry outputs, or materials supporting the development and piloting of child-centred measures. Students may also contribute to preliminary analyses or the preparation of research outputs. The overall aim is for students' work to make a meaningful contribution to ongoing research designed to better understand children's social worlds and inform future work on strengthening social connection and wellbeing.
Who should apply? (75–125 words)	This project is suitable for UQ School of Psychology students with an interest in Developmental Psychology, Social Psychology, or both. It will particularly suit students who are interested in children's social relationships, loneliness, connectedness, identity, and wellbeing, and who would like experience working on research involving children and families. Previous experience working with children is desirable but not essential. Students should be organised, reliable, comfortable working as part of a research team, and willing to engage with a mix of data collection and structured research tasks. Because the project may involve direct work with children and families, applicants must hold a valid Working with Children Blue Card.
Team & supervision (75–125 words)	The project will be supervised by Dr Callyn Farrell in the UQ School of Psychology. Students will work within an active research environment focused on developmental and social psychological questions concerning children's loneliness, social connectedness, and social identities. Supervision will include guidance across the research activities relevant to each student's involvement, which may include data collection with children and families, literature work, coding, measure development, and preliminary analysis. The project is designed to give students practical experience contributing to ongoing research while receiving support in developing research skills and understanding how different stages of a project fit together.
Additional opportunities (optional)	The project may provide a pathway into further research experience in developmental or social psychology, particularly for students interested in children's social relationships, identity, loneliness, and wellbeing.
Additional requirements (if applicable)	Students must hold a valid Working with Children Blue Card.
Contact	(Yes/No), students (may/may not) contact the supervisor before applying. Direct enquiries to: c.farrell@uq.net.au