

## **Recruitment Letter**

Re: Enhancing wellbeing and mental health of Chinese American adolescents through Mobile Health Application

Dear Chinese-American Students (Ages 14-18),

We are writing to ask for your voluntary participation in a research study to enhance wellbeing and mental health among Chinese American adolescents (CAA). We hope to do this by using a Mobile Health Application (MHA) called *RRE (Relax, Reflect, and Empower)*. This National Institutes of Health (NIH) supported study is being conducted by Drs. Chieh Li, Huijun Li, Shengli Dong, and a research team at three universities in the U.S. (Northeastern University, Florida A&M University, and Florida State University).

As Chinese American mental health professionals, we are deeply concerned about CAA's emotional wellbeing. CAA are traditionally perceived as a model minority (i.e., smart, diligent, quiet), and they often experience the serious stress of acculturation, anxiety, and depression. This is coupled with cultural barriers to care and racial/cultural discrimination, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic. We developed *RRE* to help CAA enhance wellness and mental health in a culturally and developmentally appropriate manner. Our study aims to provide a self-help tool for CAAs like you and to seek your cultural and developmental perspectives/ feedback on 2 tools for wellness check-in: either an app (*RRE*) or text message.

As this is a study on culturally responsive interventions for Chinese American adolescents, ***to be eligible to participate***, you must meet the following inclusion criteria:

- 1) Ethnic Chinese descent, were born or has grown up in the U.S.
- 2) 14 -18 years old enrolled in school
- 3) Understand and sign an informed consent (or assent for minors) document
- 3) Read at a sixth-grade level (in order to understand and complete proposed tasks)

In addition, 1) an eligible participant may **not** have a diagnosis of major depression or other mental disorders (which needs more extensive treatment than the *RRE* program can provide). 2) We will do a brief clinical screening of depression and anxiety. People with a score of 3 or above in Patient Health Questionnaire-2 or Generalized Anxiety Disorder-2 will not be eligible to participate in this study (because they need more extensive treatment than the *RRE* program can provide).

### ***Participation includes:***

- A screening test to determine your eligibility for the study
- If you are eligible for the study, you will randomly be assigned into one of the two groups:  
**Group 1** will have daily wellness check-in through our app *RRE* for 5 days/week for 3 months. Of the five wellness checks, four will be brief 5-minute check-ins, consisting of a 3-minute relaxation meditation and a few wellness questions. One will be a 15-minute

full wellness check-in with *RRE*, including relaxation meditation, a few wellness questions, a self-reflection activity, and strategies and resources for self-help.

**Group 2** will receive a text message of wellness check-in (2 minutes) 4 days/week and 1 weekly wellness check-in (4 to 5 minutes) per week for 3 months. Upon request, participants in Group 2 can also have access to *RRE* after completing the wellness program.

**Both groups** will complete pre-intervention survey, post-intervention survey (the 12<sup>th</sup> week), and one-month follow-up survey (the 16<sup>th</sup> week). Each survey will take about 20-25 minutes.

*The benefits* of participation in **Group 1** are access to a culturally tailored, personalized, and an interactive app (*RRE*) to help you generate your own strategies to enhance wellbeing and mental health. The benefits of participation in **Group 2** are a daily wellness check-in through text message 5 days per week for 3 months. Participants in Group 2 will also have access (upon request) to *RRE* after completing the wellness program and follow-up surveys. For both groups, being in the study may help you increase your awareness of self-care and self-help skills.

Upon request, participants in both groups will be provided a certificate of acknowledgement of your participation in the wellness promotion research that was developing culturally sensitive tools for promoting overall wellbeing of Asian-American youth. Participants in both groups will also receive a gift card with the amount up to \$120 upon completion of the daily and weekly wellness check-ins and three surveys, depending on the points you will have earned for completing the wellness check-ins and three surveys. If you want to use the time spent on our project to count toward your volunteer time for school community service requirement, please email Dr. Chieh Li or Dr. Huijun Li. We will discuss the possibility with you.

Should you be interested in this study, please click the link below:

[https://neu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eevS6liHPGVr8XQ](https://neu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eevS6liHPGVr8XQ)

Or you can provide your name and contact information (email and/or phone number). We will discuss the brief screening and consent. After we have informed consent, we will start the screening.

Should you have any questions, you may send an email to [Wellnesscheckin@northeastern.edu](mailto:Wellnesscheckin@northeastern.edu). Our research staff will follow-up with you through an email/ a phone call. Agreement to be contacted or a request for more information does not obligate you to participate in the study. You may opt out by emailing the contact on the letter and requesting that no further contact be made.

Thank you for your consideration, and once again, please do not hesitate to contact us if you are interested in learning more about this project.

Chieh Li IRB

## **Principal Researchers**

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