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## Latrobe Valley children helping the next generation

A ground-breaking study tracking the impact of the 2014 Hazelwood mine fire on children has now health tested more than 100 participants.

But despite reaching the significant milestone, more Latrobe Valley children are needed to complete the health check.

The Latrobe Early Life Follow-up Study is the child health and development arm of the long-term Hazelwood Health Study.

Children whose parents completed the ELF survey last year are all eligible to have simple, free health tests that check on the progress of lung development and blood vessels in young children.

ELF Study organisers have been thrilled with the enthusiastic response from young participants and are hoping to test more.

“This is a ground-breaking study - there are no others like it in the world,” study manager Marita Dalton said.

“The children are helping us learn if long term health and development could have been influenced by the air pollution around the time of the coal fire.

“We want to learn how living through a bad, smoky period compares with other known risks for health, like, for example, living in the same house as people who smoke indoors.

“These things are not known right now and the children are helping us to find out.”

Ms Dalton said the health tests are offered in a family-friendly clinic at Latrobe Community Health Service in Morwell until late July.

While the tests are being completed, parents can read to their children and the child can select a toy to take home with them.

The study team thanked the wonderful children and parents for their support and they hope to see more families in the next month.

If all goes according to plan, the study will offer the same checks in 2020.

If you have completed the ELF survey but not enrolled your child for the health checks and wish to do so, phone the ELF Study hotline on 1800 322 102 or email [latrobe.elf@utas.edu.au](mailto:latrobe.elf@utas.edu.au)

The ELF Study is being conducted by the Menzies Institute for Medical Research at the University of Tasmania as part of the larger, Monash University-led Hazelwood Health Study.

### **NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

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