



CENTRE FOR  
**INTERDISCIPLINARY TRAUMA RESEARCH**  
AUT UNIVERSITY

Invites you to attend a seminar by

**Rebecca Allenby**

*Recipient of HRC Ethics Summer Research Award*



**11 March 2015**

**1.00 pm– 2.00pm in room AB221**

**Child safety in online research with women experiencing intimate partner violence;  
Experiences managing informed consent, confidentiality and safety protocols in the *isafe* study**

Researchers have legal obligations to maintain participant confidentiality. Simultaneously, researchers have a duty of care. These obligations are well documented for research with vulnerable women and research with children. What is less clear is how child safety is managed when research is conducted with their mothers. Given the significant overlap between men's violence against female partners and child abuse and neglect, and increasing child protection advocacy and policy, it is timely to conduct an analysis on child safety in the context of research with women experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV).

In obtaining informed consent, researchers disclose limits of confidentiality. Prevailing discourses for women experiencing IPV are those of disempowerment, and particularly for indigenous women, of children being taken into care. As such, acknowledging the limits of confidentiality during informed consent has implications for whether potential participants will engage in research. Those who feel most disempowered or whose children are at most risk may systematically not engage in the research process.

This presentation will explore safety, informed consent, and confidentiality taking into account legislation, ethical principles and professional considerations. The complexity of the issues will be illustrated using the *isafe* study, an online trial of a safety decision aid conducted in New Zealand with women experiencing IPV. This issue is salient to *isafe* as 44% of participants reported they have one or more children living in their home that they are responsible for. This analysis will inform the *isafe* study and future research, and champion child safety in family violence research.

**Faculty of Health & Environmental Sciences**