**Principles of Assent**

Assent is the agreement of someone who is legally unable to give consent to participate in a study. When you are working with populations who are unable to provide consent, you are required to secure assent instead. In situations where the assent of a participant, and the consent of their parent or guardian are in conflict (for example, if a parent gives consent for their child to participate but the child does not provide assent), their dissent will always override consent (See [TCPS 2 article 3.10](https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_2018_chapter3-chapitre3.html#10) for further information).

Assent forms should still provide the necessary information about the purpose, procedures, risks and benefits of a study, but present that information in a way that matches the participant’s capacity to understand. Because of this, assent forms are usually simpler and more direct than informed consent forms.

The following are examples of assent forms for children in various age groups (ages 4-7. 8-10, and 11-13). Your own assent form might have a different age range or require different language or information. These are only meant to be examples of what an assent form looks like, and your own assent form should be tailored to your own study as needed.

# Assent Form Example for Ages 4-7

The following is an example of an Assent form for children, ages 4-7

**ASSENT FORM**

Welcome to the Children and Video Games Study!

We are asking you if want to help us with a study. We are trying to learn about what kids like you think about video games.

You do not have to be in the Study.

It’s up to you if you want to be in the study. If you change your mind about being in the study, you can tell your parents or me. No one will be mad at you if you do not want to be in the study, and you can stop at any time if you decide you don’t want to later.

What will happen if you say yes?

If you decide that you want to be in the study, we will ask you some questions about what you think about video games. We will ask questions like if you like them, how much you play them, and what kinds of games you like.

Could anything bad happen to you in the study?

We do not think that anything in the study could be bad for you, but some questions might make you feel bad. You do not need to do or talk about anything that you don’t want to.

Who will know you were in the study?

Only your parents/guardian know that you are in the study, and we will not tell anyone else.



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Has somebody explained this study to you?  | Yes / No |
| Do you understand what the study is about? | Yes / No |
| Have you asked all the questions you want? | Yes / No |
| Have you had your questions answered in a way you understand? | Yes / No |
| Do you understand it’s OK to stop at any time? | Yes / No |
| Do you want to be in the study? | Yes / No |

Please circle yes or no:

If any answers are ‘no’ or you don’t want to take part, don’t sign your name! If you do want to take part, please write your name and today’s date.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today’s Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Your parent or guardian must write their name here too if they are happy for you to do the study:

Parent/Guardian Full Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today’s Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The researcher who explained this study to you needs to sign too:

Researcher Full Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Today’s Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Assent Form Example for Ages 8-10

The following is an example of an Assent form for children, ages 8-10

**ASSENT FORM**

The Children and Video Games Study:

My name is Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a researcher at Simon Fraser University. I am asking if you would like to take part in a study. I am trying to learn more about how youth aged 4-13 use, play, and think about video games.

It’s your choice if you want to take part in the study.

It is completely up to you if you want to take part in the study, and you can stop at any time if you decide later that you do not want to be involved. If you change your mind about being in the study, you can tell your parents or me. No one will be upset with you, and you will not get in any trouble if you decide not to take part in the study.

What will happen if you decide to be in the study?

If you decide that you want to be in the study, I will ask you some questions about video games, and what you think about them. I will ask you lots of different kinds of questions, like if you like video games, what kind of games you play, and what you think about them This normally lasts around 30 minutes.

Are there any risks when taking part in the study?

I do not believe that being in this study will hurt you in any way, but there is a small chance that you might find some of the questions upsetting, or that they make you think about some things that you might not want to think about. You do not have to answer any of the questions if you do not want to, and you can stop taking part in the study at any time you want to.



Who will know you were in the study?

Your parents or guardian know that you might be taking part in the study, but I will not tell anyone else. I will make sure that no one knows which answers you gave me.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Has somebody explained this study to you?  | Yes / No |
| Do you understand what the study is about? | Yes / No |
| Have you asked all the questions you want? | Yes / No |
| Have you had your questions answered in a way you understand? | Yes / No |
| Do you understand it’s OK to stop at any time? | Yes / No |
| Do you want to be in the study? | Yes / No |

Please circle yes or no:

If none of the answers are “no” and you want to take part in the study, please write your name and today’s date.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today’s Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Your parent or guardian must write their name here too if they are happy for you to do the study:

Parent/Guardian Full Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today’s Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The researcher who explained this study to you needs to sign too:

Researcher Full Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today’s Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Assent Form Example for Ages 11-13

The following is an example of an Assent form for children, ages 11-13

**ASSENT FORM**

The Children and Video Games Study:



My name is Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a researcher at Simon Fraser University. I am inviting you to take part in a study. I am trying to learn more about how youth aged 4-13 use, play, and think about video games. Video games are a big part of a lot of young people’s lives, so I believe that it is important to learn more about how they actually use and understand them.

Your participation in the study is voluntary.

It is completely your choice if you want to take part in the study, and you can stop at any time if you decide that you no longer want to be involved. If you change your mind about being in the study, you can tell your parents or me. No one will be upset with you, and you will not get in any trouble if you decide not to take part in the study.

What will happen if you decide to participate?

If you decide that you want to be in the study, I will ask you some questions about video games, and what you think about them. I will ask you many different questions, such as if you like video games, what kind of games you enjoy playing, how much time you spend playing video games, and what video games mean to you. This interview will happen online over a computer program called Zoom, and should last around 30 minutes. With your permission, I will record the interview. It is ok if you don’t want to be recorded, I can take notes instead.

Are there any risks when taking part in the study?

I do not believe that being in this study will hurt you in any way, but there is a small chance that you might find some of the questions upsetting, or that they make you think about some things that you might not want to think about. You do not have to answer any of the questions if you do not want to, and you can stop taking part in the study at any time you want to.

Who will know you were in the study?

I have asked your parents or guardian for their permission to allow you to take part in the study, but we will not tell anyone else. I will do my best to make sure that your name is not attached to any of the answers that you give me so that no one knows it was you who said them.



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Has somebody explained this study to you?  | Yes / No |
| Do you understand what the study is about? | Yes / No |
| Have you asked all the questions you want? | Yes / No |
| Have you had your questions answered in a way you understand? | Yes / No |
| Do you understand it’s OK to stop at any time? | Yes / No |
| Do you want to be in the study? | Yes / No |
| Is it OK if I record the interview? | Yes / No |

Please circle yes or no:

If you want to take part in the study, please write your name and today’s date.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today’s Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Your parent or guardian must write their name here too if they are happy for you to do the study:

Parent/Guardian Full Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today’s Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The researcher who explained this study to you needs to sign too:

Researcher Full Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Today’s Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_