Assent Script/Form Templates for Younger and Older Children

**General instructions:**

These templates are intended to assist researchers in developing assent scripts and forms when working with child participants. Although formal requirements for the elements that should be present in a consent form exist, no such requirements exist for assents. As such, researchers should draft assent content that they believe will best inform the participants about the study, using age-appropriate language. The length of the assent should be proportional to the complexity of the study and the age of the participants. ***It is advised that researchers use language that is simple, is appropriate for the target age group, and avoids jargon.*** In studies that involve a large age range of participants, the assent should be written at a language level that is appropriate for the youngest participants in the study. To check the readability and grade level of your document, please review the instructions on the [Microsoft Support page](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/get-your-document-s-readability-and-level-statistics-85b4969e-e80a-4777-8dd3-f7fc3c8b3fd2#ID0EBDD=Microsoft_365).

It is advised that verbal, rather than written, assent be obtained for all child participants. This is particularly the case with younger children who cannot read assent documents. For older age groups, it may be appropriate to have children sign an assent form document. Ultimately, the capacity to provide verbal or written assent to a particular study must be evaluated by the researchers. This capacity can be determined by both the age of the child and the complexity of the study.

This document is intended to be used as a template and must be updated to be specific to your research project. Instructional text is presented inblue emphasis font.Please delete any instructional text and any information that is not applicable to your research project prior to REB submission.

Younger Child Assent Verbal Script

Hello, my name is [name], how are you?

I want to tell you about a study I am doing! I’m here todaybecause I do research at the university. We do research to learn more about something, and I’m learning about describe your topic/goals*.* We asked you to be in our study because list inclusion criteria.

OPTIONAL Deception, concealment, partial disclosure: Some things about the study cannot be explained right now, but we will explain them after we are done.

If you want to join this study,I am going ask you to describe procedures, such as answering questions, or other activities. Include a timeline (for 45 minutes, for one hour today, tomorrow, and the next day, etc.)*.*

Describe the risks and discomforts for participating. Be aware that children may see different risks to participating than adults because they have different fears.You can tell me if you want to take a break, or if you don’t want to answer a question or do a task. You shouldn’t feel that way for very long, but if you do and feel this way after we are done here today, you can tell your parent or guardian and they will tell me.

Use any of the following statements as appropriate:

This study will help us learn more aboutdescribe the topic under investigation*.*
We don’t know if being in this study will help you.
We think that this study will help you by describe direct benefits.

You do not have to do this study if you don’t want to. It is up to you. You can say yes now and change your mind later. No one will be mad if you don’t want to be in the study or change your mind.

Do you have any questions? If you have any questions later, you can stop and ask me. If you have any questions after we finish today, you can ask your parent or guardian to email or call us.

Would you like to be in this study?

[ ] YES [ ] NO

Child’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the person obtaining assent \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Older Age Group Assent Written Form

Insert title of the research project

Principal Investigator: Insert the principal investigator’s name and affiliation to Laurier

Co-Investigator(s), faculty advisor(s)/supervisor(s): Insert the co-investigators’/faculty supervisor’s name(s) and affiliations to Laurier

You are invited to participate in a research study. A research study is a way to learn more information about something. The researchers are Laurier University students/teachers/researchers.

# Information

You are being asked to take part in this research study because we want to find out more about describe topic*.* We are asking you to be in this study because you are list inclusion criteria. ### other children will take part in this study.

You will be asked to describe procedures, such as filling out questionnaires, or other activities, etc. for thirty minutes/an hour/over the next couple of days/etc*.*

OPTIONAL Deception, concealment, partial disclosure: Some details about the study cannot be explained right now, but we will explain them after we are done.

# Will the study hurt?

Describe the risks and discomforts for participating. Be aware that children may see different risks to participating than adults because they have different fears.You shouldn’t feel that way for a long time, but if you do and feel this way after we are done here today, you can tell the researchers or your parent or guardian.

# Will the study help me or other children?

Being a part of this study choose one: will OR will not help you directly. Describe direct benefits, if applicable.

This study will help the researchers learn more about insert topic under investigation, and you will get to learn what it is like to do research. This study may also help children like you or come from communities like yours by describe community benefits.

# Will I get anything for being a part of this study?

Use one of the following:

Yes, you will get insert incentives*.* If there is a payment schedule, such as $10 per interview/visit, please include that information here.

No, you will not be offered anything for being in this study.

# Do I have to be in this study?

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. It is up to you, and you can stop at any time. No one will be upset if you do not want to be in the study, or if you change your mind and stop later. You will still get your describe incentives, e.g., gift card/toy/money if you decide to stop.

Choose one of the following:

We will not use your answers if you decide to stop.

Because of how the study is set up, we will still have your answers even if you choose to stop.

# Will anyone know I participated?

No one outside of your parent(s)/guardian(s) and the researchers will know that you participated. We will add your data to other children’s data and present it in a describe research outputs, e.g., report, presentation, book, etc. If your parent(s)/guardian(s) agree, we may also use some things that you said. No one will know that it was you who said it because we will take out all the information that is about you. The study information about you choose one: will OR will not be given to your parents or teachers.

OPTIONAL: If you tell us that you or someone you know may be in danger, we will have to tell someone.

# I have questions!

If you have any questions, you can ask them now. If you think of any later, you or your parent or guardian can email the researchers at insert your email address *or call* insert a Laurier phone number.

[ ]  I want to be in this study [ ]  I DO NOT want to be in this study

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the person obtaining assent \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Online Studies (when checkboxes are being used in place of written consent)

[ ]  I want to be in this study

[ ]  I DO NOT want to be in this study