Supplementary Language for Minor Assent Forms

Instructions: The Minor Assent template posted on [our website](https://dhr.research.northeastern.edu/forms-guidance/templates/) includes recommended language for children aged approximately 9-12. For younger or older children, substitute in the following language as appropriate. You may submit different versions for different age groups.

# Ages 15-17:

For this age group, the language in the [adult Informed Consent template](https://dhr.research.northeastern.edu/forms-guidance/templates/) may be appropriate, especially if the minor participant will be able to review the document together with their guardian. In this case, you may simply add an Assent signature block into the Informed Consent form so that assent and parental permission are documented together.

If a separate minor assent document is needed, use the Informed Consent template and revise as needed. You may delete sections that are not likely to be relevant to the minor (e.g. costs, research-related injury).

# Ages 12-15:

## Introduction

We are inviting you to be in a research study. You don’t have to be in the study if you don’t want to. The researcher will explain the study to you. You can ask them any questions you have before you decide whether you want to be in the study.

## Why are we doing this research study?

We are doing a research study to learn more about [explain study topic or purpose in simple language].

## What will you be asked to do?

If you decide to be in the study, we will ask you to [describe procedures in simple language]. This will take about [# minutes/hours/etc.].

Describe all the tasks that the person will be asked to do or take part in, what will be done to them, and any other involvement. Provide enough detail so that the reader can understand what will happen. Use bullet points or timetables for research that has multiple visits or tasks.

## Will there be any risk to you? Will anything be uncomfortable?

**This section should be consistent with the Risks section of your Protocol Application.** Identify any reasonably-foreseeable risks, harms, discomforts or inconvenience that the participant may experience. Describe the precautions you will take to minimize the risks, discomforts or inconvenience.

**Ex:** You might feel uncomfortable when we ask about [topic]. You can skip any question that you don’t want to answer. We will do everything we can to make sure you are safe and comfortable.

## Will my information be kept private?

Yes. We will do our best to keep the information private. We won’t use your name anywhere public.

Explain any limits to confidentiality, such as mandatory reporting requirements. Explain whether the child’s parent/guardian may be able to see their responses.

## Will being in this research help you?

Describe any direct benefits to the participant from participating in the study. Make it clear that the benefits aren’t guaranteed. If there is no direct benefit, state that and describe any potential benefits to others. **Payment for participation is not considered a benefit.**

**Ex**: Being in this study will not help you. We might learn something from the study that would help other kids like you someday.

## Do I have to participate?

No. You don’t have to be in the study if you don’t want to. If you agree now but change your mind later, you can stop at any time.

* If the research activities are connected to non-research activities (e.g., an educational program), explain how the person can still take part in the non-research activities. **Ex:** You can still do the [activity] even if you don’t want us to use your [worksheet responses] for our research.

## Will you get paid to be in the study?

If participants will be paid or given a gift, state what the payment is and when it will be given. **If not, you may delete this section.**

**Ex**: We will give you a $5 gift certificate to [vendor] after you finish the study.

## What if you have questions about the study?

You can ask any questions now or later. Just let us know.

For older minors, especially in studies where they might have questions that they want to keep private from their guardians, consider including contact information for the research team and the DHR:

If you have any questions about this study, please contact [researcher name and contact information].

If you have any questions about your rights in this research, you can contact the Northeastern University Department of Human Research at Tel: (773) 396-2327, or Email: IRBReview@northeastern.edu .

# Ages 9 and under:

Hi! We are doing a project to learn about [study topic]. We want to know if you want to be in our project.

If you say **Yes**, you will [brief, simple explanation of what the child will do].

It is okay if you say **No**. If you say Yes, but then you want to stop, that is okay too. No one will be upset.

Do you want to be in this project?