

CHILD ASSENT FORM FOR CHILDREN AGES 7-12

FOR IRB REVIEW OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Assent must be obtained from all children 7-12 years of age. If you do not believe assent is appropriate, you must apply for a waiver of assent.

Instructions: The template that follows provides suggested language for child assent between the cognitive ages of 7-12. Written parental permission for the child’s participation should be obtained prior to child assent (Parental Informed Consent Form). Assent language should be modified as necessary to be age-appropriate for the specific study population. For the 7-12 age group, assent may be obtained verbally. Signature of the child is optional, unless specifically required by the IRB. Whether or not to obtain a signature should depend on the age of the child and nature of the study. A formal assent process is not generally required for children under age 7.

IRB recommends the researcher check the readability level using the “Readability Statistics” function in Word to assure language appropriateness. The readability statistics for the current script are:

* *Flesch Reading Ease score is 84.4* on a 100-point scale. The higher the score, the easier it is to understand the document. Aim for a score between 60 and 70.
* *Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level is 4.7.* This test rates text on a U.S. school grade level. So a score of 4.7 means that a fourth grader can understand the document. Aim for a score of 7.0 to 8.0, however be aware that several sources suggest the target language level for assent forms is a 4th grade reading level.

**Child Assent Form**

**Lawrence University**

Hi. My name is *[researcher’s name]*. I’m a *[teacher at a college/student at a college]*. I’m trying to learn about *[insert topic of study in simple language]*. I want to invite kids to be in a study. Let me tell you how my study works before you decide if you want to be in the study.

I will ask you to *[describe what will take place using appropriate language from the child’s point of view, including the time involved. If the study involves specific questions and if appropriate, indicate that there is no right or wrong answers. Note if you will be audio or video taping the child. If the study involves risks, explain them in child-friendly language].* By being in the study, you will help me understand *[the research question]. If there are direct benefits to the child, briefly explain them.*

Your *[parents/guardians]* will know you are in the study. Your *[parents/guardians, teacher, classmates]* will not know what you have *[said/written/draw/chose/other activity the child is being asked to do].* I will not use your name when I tell other people about the study. No one will be able to tell who I’m talking about.

Your *[parents/guardians]* said it is okay for you to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, you do not have to be. Your *[parents/guardians]* and I will not be upset if you do not want to be in the study. If something makes you feel bad during the study, please tell *[contact name*.*]* If there is anything you do not understand tell me so I can explain it to you. If you do not want to finish the study, that is okay. You can stop the study at any time. Your *[parents/guardians]* and I will not be upset if you do not finish the whole thing. Nothing will happen to you if you want to stop at any time.

You can ask me questions about the study. Do you have any questions for me now? You can also ask your *[parents/guardians]* questions.If you think of a question later, call or email me. You can also ask *[your parents/guardians/teacher]* to call me [*contact name and phone number*] or send me an email at [*contact email*].

Would you like to be in the study and *[talk to me/answer some questions/draw some pictures/play a game/begin whatever activity is planned]*? If you say yes, this means you have read this paper or had it read to you and want to be in the study. If you say no, that means you do not want to be in the study. You can say yes or no. Being in the study is your choice. No one will be mad or upset if you do not say yes, sign this paper, or even change your mind later.

* **NOTES TO RESEARCHER:** The child should answer “Yes” or “No.” Only a definite “Yes” may be taken as assent to participate. *If the child is not able to read the assent form, and verbal assent is obtained using the content in the assent form, the person obtaining assent should place in the chart or research record a statement with the following content.*

I have discussed this research study with [*child’s name*] using language which is understandable and appropriate for

the participant. I believe that I have fully informed him/her of the nature of the study and its possible risks and benefits. I believe the participant understood this explanation and assent to participate in this study.

Initial

**Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Do you have parental permission on file**?  Yes  No ***(If “No”, do not proceed with assent or research procedures.)***

**Did the child voluntarily respond to participation?**  Yes  No ***(If “No”, do not proceed with assent or research procedures.)***

**Signature of Person Obtaining Assent: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**   **Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** ­­­­­­­

**(Optional) Signature of Child: ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_