

Building F13, Room 116

Human and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC)

21081719@nwu.ac.za

**DATE: ……………………….**

|  |
| --- |
| HSSREC Authorization |

**ADOLESCENT ASSENT FORM**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title of the research project** |  |
| **Ethics number** |  |
| **Principal investigator** |  |
| **Student number** |  |
| **Address** |  |
| **Email address** |  |
| **Contact number** |  |

You are being invited to take part in a research project that forms part of my (study) …. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary,** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part. Prior to the publication of the study's results (or the point that publication is in the process), you may also withdraw the data you generate.

This study has been approved by the **Human Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC …) of the Faculty of Humanities of the North-West University** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki and the ethical guidelines of the National Health Research Ethics Council. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or relevant authorities to inspect the research records to make sure that we (the researchers) are researching ethically.

**What is this research study all about?**

* This … study will be done to investigate …
* To collect this information, I will …
* The researcher has been trained to use the … methods which will be used in the study*.*
* With your parents’ consent and your assent (permission), I will conduct these interviews and record them to ensure that all the information is as detailed as possible.
* Both you and your parents should agree to participate – otherwise the interview may not take place.
* Approximately … participants will be included in this study.
* The objective of this research is …

**Why have you been invited to participate?**

* You have been invited to participate because you are ... Participation in this research will it more meaningful to you.
* The researcher has no relative power over you, and therefore you will be free to give information freely and without any bias or fear of being victimised.
* You will be asked to answer … (open-ended/online/focus group) questions and share your story.
* I do not foresee any stress or discomfort for the participants.
* I will ensure that you are not pressured to answer questions you are not comfortable with.

**I will also ensure that**:

* Since you are under the age of eighteen, your *parents or legal guardian* will first provide permission (*consent*) before we proceed with the interview.
* After they have provided permission, you will have the chance to **freely decide** whether you want to participate or not. If yes, you provide *assent* by signing the document before we start with the interview.
* You clearly understand that you may decide to discontinue whenever you wish during the interview process.
* All necessary information you need about this research is available to you at any time and will be presented in the simplest way possible for you to clearly understand.
* I will allow you to ask me any questions, and you are assured of honest and understandable answers.
* The consent to participate is voluntary, and there has not been any coercion from anyone to participate.

*You will be excluded if: you and your parent(s) do not agree with any of the above inclusion criteria items.*

**What will your responsibilities be?**

* You will be invited to discuss your experiences ...
* To sign this adolescent consent leaflet before the interview starts.

**Will you benefit from taking part in this research?**

The study may provide you with information about … (*how will it benefit participants*?), i.e. directly (e.g. skills development) or indirectly (e.g. contributing knowledge).

**Are there risks involved in your taking part in this research, and how will these be managed?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Potential risk** | **Mitigation strategies** |
| COVID 19 risk during face-to-face interviews | Strict adherence to COVID-19 guidelines that include wearing of face masks throughout, social distancing and regular hand sanitising |
| Emotional distress of the participants | School counsellor/psychologist/psychiatrist  *Please note: The first counseling session will be paid for by the researcher. Additional arrangements and payments of such sessions will be the responsibility of the participant.* |
| Tiredness and discomfort | Comfort breaks of … minutes |
| Lack of privacy and comfort during interviews due to the presence of peers in school | … |
| Other (*apply to your study).* |  |

However, we do believe that the benefits to you and to science (as noted in the previous section) outweigh the risks we have listed. If you disagree, then please feel free not to participate in this study. We will respect your decision.

Should we learn, in the course of the research, that someone is harming you, or that you are intending to harm someone, then we must tell someone who can help you/warn the person you are intending to harm.

**Who will have access to the data?**

The only other people involved in coding and transcribing, apart from the researcher, are members of the research team (i.e. my supervisor) and will sign confidentiality clauses as part of the ethics requirement. (*Apply to your study*).

**What will happen to the data?**

* The *handling, storage, security* and *analysis of data* is critical in ethical considerations. I will ensure data in both hard-(printed) and soft copy (electronic) are safely locked away and password-protected, respectively. Only approved people in my research team (researcher and supervisors) may have access to my raw data where the need arises. At the analysis stage, as will be the case throughout, the use of coding will reinforce participants' non-identification, hence upholding the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity.
* *Anonymity* will be ensured by giving you the opportunity to choose your own fictitious names/I will assign a fictitious name to you before the interview starts. Only this name will be used in the research process.
* *Confidentiality* will include the use of pseudonyms for participants, organisations and locations. It involves not disclosing any information gained from an interviewee deliberately or accidentally in ways that might identify an individual.
* The data will be *stored safely in electronic form* for a period of five years after which it will be destroyed.

**Will you be paid/compensated for taking part in this study and are there any costs involved?**

The participants will receive no rewards for their participation. However, the participants may receive pre-packaged food and something to drink. We will ensure that Covid-19 safety rules will be followed to ensure that you stay healthy.

**How will you know about the findings?**

* You will be fully informed of the purpose of the study and your role in the study
* You will be informed of the results of the study will be made available to you after the study has been completed via email in the form of a summary and/or dissertation/thesis.
* Once the data has been analysed, the results will be made available to participants for member checking (i.e. making sure that all the information you shared during your interviews was captured correctly by me). Both your parents and you may read through this – *if you recommend changes, I will make these changes.*

**Is there anything else that you should know or do?**

* You can contact ... (researcher) at … (cell phone number) and … (email address)if you have any further queries or encounter any problems.
* You can contact the chair of the Human Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (Prof Erharbor Idemudia) at 018 389 2899 or [Erhabor.Idemudia@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Erhabor.Idemudia@nwu.ac.za) if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by the researcher.
* You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.

**Declaration by minor participant**

By signing below, I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ agree (assent) to take part in a research study entitled: “…”.

I declare that:

* My parent or legal guardian has provided consent for participation in the study.
* That even if my parent provided permission for me to participate, I may still decide not to do so. Both me and my parent/legal guardian should agree on my participation, otherwise the interview may not take place.
* I have read and understood this information and consent form, and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
* I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person obtaining consent, as well as the researcher (if this is a different person), and all my questions have been adequately answered.
* I understand that by taking part in this study is **voluntary,** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
* I understand that what I contribute (what I report/say/write/draw/produce visually) could be reproduced publically and/or quoted, but without reference to my personal identities.
* I may choose to freely leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
* I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished if the researcher feels it is in my best interests.

Signed at (*place*) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on (*date*) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_\_

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signature of participant Signature of witness**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration by the researcher**

I *(name)* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ declare that:

* I explained the information in this document to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
* I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
* I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (*place*) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on (*date*) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_20 \_\_\_\_\_\_

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signature of researcher Signature of witness**

**Declaration by researcher and participant**

**Personal face-to-face interviews during COVID-19 restrictions**

**Additional declaration by the participant in those instances where the participant requests to participate in a personal face-to-face semi-structured interview:**

By signing below, I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge the following information related to the required measures regarding COVID-19:

I declare that:

* It is my personal choice and preference to participate in a personal face-to-face semi-structured interview with the researcher.
* This requires that I consent to the following strict measures to safeguard the personal health and safety of myself and that of the researcher/interviewer/primary investigator:
* I consent to the researcher taking my temperature before the interview using a thermometer.  **Yes  No**
* I confirm that my temperature measured at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ degrees.  **Yes  No**
* I consent to use the three-ply mask provided by the researcher. **Yes  No**
* I consent to wear the three-ply mask for the full duration of the interview.

**Yes  No**

* I consent to the researcher sanitising the interview context using a sanitiser with 80% alcohol content before the interview commencement.  **Yes  No**
* I consent to the researcher using a sanitiser with an 80% alcohol content before and during the interview if required.  **Yes  No**

Signed at (*place*) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on (*date*) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_

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**Signature of participant Signature of the researcher**