



PARENTAL/LEGAL GUARDIAN PERMISSION FOR CHILDREN TO TAKE PART IN RESEARCH

TITLE OF RESEARCH: Family Content Creation: Understanding Families' Experiences

Principal Investigator (person in charge of research): Leah Cates, Media Studies PhD student, Rutgers University

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amy Jordan, Distinguished Professor, Rutgers University

Note: For simplicity, this form uses plural terms such as "your children" and "they." If you are permitting only one child to participate these terms refer to your individual child.

This form provides information to help you decide if you want to permit your children to take part in a research project about family content creators and the social media industry. If you choose to allow their participation after I answer your questions, I will ask for your verbal consent. Please keep this consent form if you would like a copy of it for your records.

Who is conducting this research and what is it about?

I am a PhD student at Rutgers University working under the close supervision of my advisor, Dr. Amy Jordan. My research looks at how creating social media content shapes families' everyday lives and relationships, from the perspective of families themselves. To better understand how the digital media industry works, I am spending three days at VidCon and speaking with content creators, fans, and industry professionals.

What will my children be asked to do if they take part?

Your children will have a brief conversation with me at VidCon about content creation and the social media industry. Depending on your and their availability, I may also ask to have a longer interview with them, which could last for an hour or more. If they are interested in this, and you permit it, I will request both your and your children's permission to audio record it so my notes are accurate. I will never publish these recordings; they are only for my personal data analysis. You and your children do not need to consent to recording for them to take part.

What are the risks and/or discomforts my children might experience if they take part in the research?

- Mild Emotional Discomfort: Like any conversation, what we discuss could sometimes feel stressful to your children, or they might get tired of answering questions. However, they can skip any question they do not want to answer, take a break, or stop talking to me at any time.
- Privacy Risks: Especially if your children are content creators or public figures, someone reading my research publications might figure out their (and potentially your family's) identity. To make this less likely, I will use fake names (pseudonyms), and I may change or hide minor demographic details and facts about their lives.
- Data Breach: There is always a tiny risk of a digital data breach, but I minimize this risk by keeping all files in a secure, password-protected Rutgers Box cloud account.

Are there benefits to my children, or will my children be paid, if they take part in this research?

Your children will not receive any direct benefit or payment for taking part. However, they might enjoy reflecting on their experiences and teaching me their perspectives on the social media industry. Their insights could help others better understand the lives of digital creators or the perspectives of people who follow them.

How will you keep information about my children private or confidential?

I will make every effort to keep your children's personal information confidential. Here's how I'll protect their privacy:

- Pseudonyms: In my research records and publications, I will use a fake name for your children (which you and they can help choose) and may change or omit minor demographic and life details.
- Secure Storage: I will keep a separate spreadsheet linking your children's real identity and contact info to their fake name. I'll securely store this spreadsheet, along with the conversation recordings and data, in my password-protected Rutgers Box account.

- **Data Deletion Timelines:** I will permanently delete the spreadsheet linking your children's real names to their pseudonyms after 7 years, and I'll permanently delete audio recordings after 3 years. Because I plan to work with this dataset for a long time, there is no plan to delete the rest of the data (e.g., written transcripts).
- **Limits to Who Sees Your Children's Data:** Besides me, the people who might have access to the recordings and research records are my advisor (Dr. Amy Jordan) and other trained, professional researchers with whom I may collaborate on future projects using this dataset.

There are some important limits to confidentiality:

- **No Total Guarantee:** I cannot guarantee total confidentiality. Especially if your children create public social media content, someone reading my research might guess their identities. However, I will try to mask their identities by using fake names and potentially changing or leaving out minor details about them.
- **AI Transcription Risks:** I plan to use artificial intelligence (AI) software to transcribe my recordings, and I will compare the text to the audio for accuracy. The Rutgers IRB, which keeps research participants safe, has approved my use of this software, and I will take every precaution to protect your children's data. However, using AI software always carries a minor risk of a data breach or the software provider using information in ways I cannot completely control.

What will happen to my children's information — data and/or recordings — collected for this research after the research is over?

I may use the information collected for other research that I conduct, including collaborative projects with trained, professional researchers. I would follow the same processes described above for privacy and confidentiality (without obtaining additional permission from you and your children).

What will happen if I do not permit my children to take part in the research or if I later decide that I do not permit my children to stay in the research?

Your children's participation is completely voluntary. You can withdraw your children at any time, and your children can choose not to participate or to skip any questions. If you or your children tell me they want to stop during our interactions, I will delete their responses. If you decide *after* VidCon to withdraw your children's data, you must email me at leah.cates@rutgers.edu before the study is published.

Who can I contact if I have questions?

You can contact me (Leah Cates) at leah.cates@rutgers.edu or my faculty advisor (Dr. Amy Jordan) at a.jordan@rutgers.edu. If you have questions about your children's rights as research participants, you can contact the Rutgers IRB at (973) 972-3608 or (732) 235-9806, or email them at irboffice@research.rutgers.edu.

Verbal Consent: As your children's parent or legal guardian, your oral agreement allows your children to participate in this research, with the knowledge that you and/or they are free to withdraw their participation at any time without penalty. Your oral agreement for me to record allows me to audio record your children. I will not use recordings for any reason besides what's written in this form.