



CONSENT 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

This form provides information to help you decide if you wish to take part in a research project about family content creators and the social media industry. If you choose to participate 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 industry professionals, content creators, and fans.

What will I be asked to do if I agree to take part?

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

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

- Mild Emotional Discomfort: Like any conversation, what we discuss could sometimes feel stressful, or you might get tired of answering questions. However, you can skip any question you do not want to answer, take a break, or stop talking to me at any time.
- Privacy Risks: Especially if you are a content creator or public figure, someone reading my research publications might figure out your (and potentially your family's) identity. To make this less likely, I will use a fake name (pseudonym) and might change or hide minor demographic details and facts about your life.
- 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 me, or will I be paid, if I take part in this research?

You will not receive any direct benefit or payment for taking part. However, this might be a valuable opportunity to share your beliefs about and reflect on the social media industry and family content creation, which may be instructive to those who read research publications based on the findings.

How will you keep information about me private or confidential?

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

- Pseudonyms: In my research records and publications, I will refer to you with a pseudonym, which you can help choose, and I may change or omit minor demographic and life details.
- Secure Storage: I will keep a separate spreadsheet linking your real identity and contact info to your pseudonym. 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 real name to your pseudonym 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 (for example, written transcripts).
- Limits to Who Sees Your 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 you create public social media content or are a public figure, someone reading my research might guess your identity. However, I will try to mask it by using a pseudonym and potentially changing or leaving out minor details about you.
- **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 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 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 fellow trained, professional researchers. I would follow the same processes described above for privacy and confidentiality (without obtaining additional permission from you).

What will happen if I do not want to take part or decide later not to stay in the research?

Your participation is completely voluntary. You can withdraw at any time. If you tell me you want to stop during our interactions, I will delete your responses. If you decide *after* VidCon to withdraw your 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 rights as a research participant, you can contact the Rutgers IRB at (973) 972-3608 or (732) 235-9806, or email them at irboffice@research.rutgers.edu.

Verbal Consent: By speaking with me for this study, you acknowledge that you are 18 years of age or older, agree to take part in this research, and know that you can stop at any time without penalty. If you verbally agree to let me record our conversation, you are giving me permission to audio record you. I will not use recordings for any reason besides what's written in this form.