



ASSENT 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

This form provides information to help you decide if you want to take part in a research project about family content creators and the social media industry. If you decide to participate after I answer your questions, I will ask for your verbal agreement (assent). You can keep a copy of this form.

Who is conducting this research and what is it about?

I am a PhD student at Rutgers University working under the 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 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. If you have time and are open to it, I may ask to have a longer interview with you, which could last for an hour or more. If we talk for a while, I will ask for your and your parents' permission to audio record us so my notes are accurate. I will never publish these recordings; they are only for my personal data analysis. You can participate even if you do not want to be recorded.

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 public figure or online creator, someone reading my research publications might figure out who you are. To make this less likely, I will use fake names (pseudonyms), and I might change or hide minor details about you and your life.
- Data Breach: There is always a tiny risk of a digital data breach, but I have a strong data security plan in place to protect against this.

Are there any benefits to me, or will I be paid, if I choose to take part in this research?

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

How will you keep information about me private or confidential?

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

- Pseudonyms: In my research records and final publications, I will use a fake name (a pseudonym) for you, and you can help choose it. I might also change or leave out minor demographic details and personal facts about your life to hide your identity.
- Secure Storage: I will keep a separate spreadsheet that links your real identity and contact info to your fake name. I'll securely store this spreadsheet, along with our 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 only people who might have access to your recordings and research record are my advisor (Dr. Amy Jordan) and other trained, professional researchers I may collaborate with 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. That said, I will do my best to mask it by using a fake name and maybe changing or leaving out minor details about you.
- **AI Transcription Risks:** I plan to use artificial intelligence (AI) software to transcribe our 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 and your parents).

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

It is completely your and your parents' choice whether you take part. You can change your mind and stop at any time. If you tell me you want to stop during our conversation, I will delete your responses. If you decide *after* VidCon that you want 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 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 Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (973) 972-3608 or (732) 235-9806, or email them at irboffice@research.rutgers.edu.

By speaking with me for this study, you agree to take part in this research and know that you can stop at any time. 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.