

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS: ABOUT THE SURVEY

Dear Student,

We would like to invite you to participate in *The Digital Youth Research Project*. This project is being undertaken by a team of researchers based in South Australia, with partners around the world.

About the project:

This project looks at how young people use technology and the Internet. More specifically, we are interested in exploring patterns of technology and internet use that may be risky. To collect the necessary data, we are conducting an annual survey – which we will ask you to complete each year for four years. The first survey will be in 2018, the second in 2019, the third in 2020, and final survey in 2021.

What the project is looking for:

This project will provide new information about:

- How young people use technology and the internet; and
- The circumstances surrounding young people being drawn into risky online activities.

What will I do?

You will be asked to complete a paper-and-pen survey by researchers and your teacher during class time. You will be asked a range of questions about the way you use the Internet and some of the things you do online. You do not have to participate if you do not want to and you can change your mind at any time during the survey(s). If you decide not to participate, you will be asked to do school work in another classroom.

What benefit will I get from the project?

Your contribution will give us an understanding of (1) how young people learn about the Internet and develop skills and (2) the pathways and patterns associated with risky internet use by young people. Your participation will also help to find ways to address social harms such as identity theft, hacking, and cyber-bullying.

Will you be able to tell who I am?

Your identity will be kept confidential. The research team will not be able to identify you, and your school will not have access to any of the answers that you provide. The research team will assign each participating student a unique participant number, so that we can match your survey responses one year to the next. Your school will retain the only record of which student is associated with which participant number – but will not be able to see or have access to your survey, or any of specific answers that you provide. Only de-identified data will be analysed and reported. While your teacher will know that you have participated in the survey (because you were present), they will also not be able to see or access any of the answers you provide. Teachers may be in the room, but will not walk around the room or look at your answers.

Are there any risks if I participate?

The survey will ask you about your activities online and some of the things that you do online may be illegal. However, the survey questions are designed in such a way that they only capture broad involvement in certain

areas of activity, and do not ask for you to provide any specifics about the nature of that involvement, or information about the place, time or the people that were involved. We will not share your specific answers with anyone once we have finished examining them. Only the research team will have access to the data – which we will hold in compliance with privacy and legal requirements. When we report the results of the data in publications (e.g., books, articles), only summarised data will be published. This means, for example, that we might report that *60% of participants use Facebook regularly*, but we would not specify who does and who doesn't use Facebook.

We therefore hope that you feel free to respond to the questions honestly. However, if any questions make you feel uncomfortable you can skip those questions.

How do I agree to participate?

You do not have to participate in the survey if you do not want to. You are also able to leave the project at any time. Please note, however, that once the final survey is submitted in 2021, you may not be able to change or withdraw your answers. Once we finish data collection, we will destroy the record linking you to the participant number. This means that your survey responses will become completely anonymous at this stage - just one of many thousand other responses.

If you do not wish to participate, please ask your parent or guardian to:

- Visit our project website (www.digitalyouthresearch.org/opt-out) and complete the online opt-out form.
- Complete the hard-copy form that was sent home with you alongside this letter, and send a scan or photo to us via email (digital.research@flinders.edu.au).
- You will be explicitly asked to consent to the survey when it is administered at your school. You can choose to opt-out at the time by telling your teacher, or a member of the research team.

Thank you for your time and we hope that you will accept our invitation to be involved.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Andrew Goldsmith
Flinders University



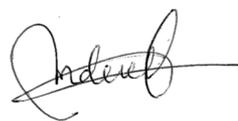
Dr Russell Brewer
Flinders University



Dr Jesse Cale
University of New South Wales



Professor Thomas Holt
Michigan State University



Dr Melissa de Vel-Palumbo
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This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project number 7677). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on 8201 3116, by fax on 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au