**Parent Information Sheet**

**Study Title**: How can young people use social media in a positive way?

**Researcher**: Lindsay Elder

**ERGO number:** 54820

Your child is being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like your child to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and use the contact details of the research team at the bottom of this form to ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to consent. You may like to discuss it with others but it is up to you to decide whether or not your child takes part. If you are happy for your child to take part after reading this information you will be asked to follow this link *[insert Qualtrics survey link]* to give your consent. We would be very grateful if you could complete this form within the next **2 weeks.**

**What is the research about?**

My name is Lindsay and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) in my second year of a three-year training programme at the University of Southampton. As part of this training I am completing a piece of research for my thesis (funded by the University of Southampton), which is looking at how young people can use social media in a positive way. Young people use social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat for lots of reasons, including: keeping up-to-date with the latest celebrity gossip, creating social events, posting photos, chatting with friends, and many more. As social media is being used more and more frequently, it is important that we try to identify which online activities can be beneficial for young people.

**Why has my child been asked to participate?**

For this research, I am hoping to recruit approximately 385 young people from different schools and colleges in the South of England to participate in the research. Your child has been asked to participate because they are aged 11-18 years old and attend either a secondary school or a college. This age group has been chosen as it is at a time in young people’s lives where they use social media more and more frequently to do things like keep in touch with friends, organise social events, and receive or share information related to their education.

**What will happen to my child if they take part?**

If you would like your child to take part, you will be asked to provide an email address for them on the online consent form that can be found here *[insert Qualtrics link].* The researcher will then contact your child via this email address to explain the research and ask them to follow a link to a survey website to create an account. Please note that your child should use the same email address that you provide on the consent form when they make their account on the survey website.

Your child will then read some information about the research and complete the first survey online. After they have completed this survey, they will be randomly allocated a group number, which will determine their daily activity for the remainder of the study. This daily activity will either be: to chat to an existing friend or family member on social media, go on social media without speaking to anyone, or chat to a friend or family member face-to-face. Your child’s daily activity will remain the same for the whole study period. When your child is not completing their daily activity, they can do their usual activities and use social media in any way they like.

For the next six days after your child has set up Lifeguide account and answered the questions, your child will be reminded by email at 5:30pm to log onto the website to answer a short survey, do their daily activity, and answer another short survey following the activity. It doesn’t matter too much how long they spend on their daily activity, as long as they have had a chance to do it. But we think about 5 to 10 minutes is probably about right. If they are busy when they receive the email reminder or are unable to access the internet to go online at that time, they will have until the prompt the next day to do their daily activity and the surveys. This means that your child will not have to cancel or rearrange any of their usual activities in order to take part in the study. On the seventh day, they will be asked to do their daily activity as normal and then complete a final “end survey”. This will be the end of your child’s participation in the research.

The study will run for **seven consecutive days** during term time. Your child can complete all surveys, including the baseline and end surveys online. The diagram below shows what your child will be asked to do and in what order over the seven days.

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**Are there any benefits in my child taking part?**

Your child’s participation in the research will help improve our understanding of how people your child’s age can use social media in a positive way. Although you and your child will not receive any direct reward, the results of the research will be shared with your child’s school or college to encourage education around positive and healthy use of social media. You may also request a summary of the research by contacting the researcher once the project has finished.

**Are there any risks involved?**

This research does not involve any invasive or physical activities that will put your child at risk. However, some of the questions that your child will be asked in the surveys may be sensitive topics for some children e.g. asking them about their friendships, which could make your child feel upset. However, your child will have the contact details of the researcher and two supervisors of the research project during the research should they need to seek support. After the research has ended, your child will be asked to read a debrief form online where they will be encouraged to contact a member of the research team if they would like to discuss any emotional experiences that may have arisen from taking part in the research. They will also be signposted to the following websites should they wish to seek further general support:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/useful-contacts/>

**What data will be collected?**

On the parental consent form, you will be asked to provide your child’s email address. The research team will use this email address to contact your child to explain the study and to send your child prompts at 5:30pm each day for the seven days that they are taking part. Please note that the email address you provide should be the same email address that your child uses to create an account on the survey website.

During the research, we will ask your child to complete some online surveys each day. These surveys will ask your child about things like their age, gender, ethnicity, friendships, and feelings.

Although personal information like your child’s email address will be collected at the start of the research, this information will only be used to help the research team contact your child and only the research team will have access to this information. Other personal information, such as your child’s age, gender, and ethnicity, may be used to help examine the data but it will not be possible to identify your child from this information.

**Will my child’s participation be confidential?**

The people that will know about your child’s participation in the research are you and your child. No other people will know about your child’s participation unless you or your child wish to tell them. The information we collect about your child during the course of the research will also be kept strictly confidential. This means that only members of the research team and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about you and your child for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to yours and your child’s data. All of these people have a duty to keep yours and your child’s information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

Copies of the consent form you complete will be stored on the Qualtrics platform, which only the research team will have access to. These consent forms will then be transferred into a secure university file that only the research team will have access to.

**Does my child have to take part?**

No, it is entirely up to you and your child to decide whether or not they will take part. If you decide you want your child to take part, you will need to complete the consent form to show you have agreed to their participation in the research. If you consent to your child taking part, your child will then be invited to read some information about the study online and tick a box to say they’d like to take part too. The parental consent form linked here *[insert Qualtrics here]* will need to be completed online, preferably within the next **two weeks.**

**What happens if I or my child change our minds about participating in the study?**

You and your child both have the right to change your mind and withdraw without giving a reason and without your child’s participant rights being affected. To do this, you and/or your child can contact a member of the research team (the researcher and the two supervisors) to inform them that you would like to withdraw. You and your child may withdraw your child’s participation up until one month following the last day of your child’s participation in the study. At this point, the data will have been made anonymous for the purpose of data analysis, and it will therefore be impossible for the research team to identify your child’s data as their name will have been removed and replaced with a participant number.

If your child withdraws from the research, they will still have access to the same support as children who do participate until the end of the study duration.

**What will happen to the results of the research?**

This research will be written up and the findings of the research may be published. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you and your child without your specific consent. You, your child, and your child’s school/college may also request a summary of the results after the project has been finished by contacting the researcher.

**Where can I get more information?**

If you have any more questions about this research you may contact one of the research team below:

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| **Researcher’s details:** | **Supervisors’ details:** |
| Name: Lindsay Elder  Email: [l.elder@soton.ac.uk](mailto:l.elder@soton.ac.uk) | Name: Dr. Tim Cooke  Email: [t.cooke@soton.ac.uk](mailto:t.cooke@soton.ac.uk) |
|  | Name: Dr. Catherine Brignell  Email: [c.brignell@soton.ac.uk](mailto:c.brignell@soton.ac.uk) |

**What happens if there is a problem?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researcher team using the above contact details who will do their best to answer your questions.

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, [rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk](mailto:rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk)).

**Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, ‘Personal data’ means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University’s data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University’s policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason (‘lawful basis’) to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the ‘Data Controller’ for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University’s data protection webpage (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University’s Data Protection Officer ([data.protection@soton.ac.uk](mailto:data.protection@soton.ac.uk)).

**Thank you for taking the time to read this information and considering your child’s participation in the research.**

If you would like your child to participate, please follow the link here [insert Qualtrics link] to provide your consent.