



## INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

Title of Project: Cyber-risk, Youth and Community: Digital Citizenship in Canada

Sponsor: The University of Calgary

### Purpose of the Study

This research, through a group discussion with students lasting about an hour, asks:

1. How youth perceive and experience risk online
2. What strategies they use in handling these risks
3. How youth understand the role of police and the wider community (e.g. parents and educators) in helping them respond to these online risks
4. What messages youth receive from society regarding how to deal with online risk, and their response to these messages

### What Will I Be Asked To Do?

You are being asked to participate in a group discussion with other students of about the same age, to be held in a private and confidential meeting room at your school. The group is expected to last about an hour. Consent will be sought from both you and your parent or legal guardian. A second phase of this project involves the writing of online journals about experiences online. Information on this, and an additional honorarium, will be provided for those who attend the group discussion.

- **If you are interested in participating in this research, please contact Dr. Michael Adorjan: [MADORJAN@UCALGARY.CA](mailto:MADORJAN@UCALGARY.CA).**

If you have any further questions or desire clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

**Dr. Michael Adorjan**

Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts

University of Calgary

(403) 220-5982, [madorjan@ucalgary.ca](mailto:madorjan@ucalgary.ca)

The University of Calgary's Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB) has approved this research. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the CFREB at: (403) 210-9863, [cfreb@ucalgary.ca](mailto:cfreb@ucalgary.ca).



**Dr. Michael Adorjan, Faculty of Arts, Department of Sociology, (403) 220-5982, madorjan@ucalgary.ca**

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This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you and your child, is only part of the process of informed consent. If you want more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any of the following information.

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This research seeks to explore, through focus groups held with youth aged 13-19, four goals:

1. Examining how youth perceive and experience cyber-risks and which cyber-risks are most salient in their lived experiences
2. Explicating the strategies they use to mitigate these risks
3. Exploring how youth understand the role of police and the wider community (e.g. parents and educators) in helping youth respond to cyber-risks
4. Discovering how youth are receiving and reacting to the messages they receive from society regarding online self-responsibilization (i.e. monitoring and controlling one's actions online) and risk management

PLEASE NOTE that the goal of the focus group discussion is to examine the novel and constantly changing forms of online risk youth are facing today, where they receiving messages about how to handle these risks, and how they are responding to these messages. Participants will thus NOT be asked about their *personal experiences related to victimization online*.

This exploratory project aims to explore the various cyber-risks youth in Canada are facing today. It also asks about the role of the broader community in intervening and assisting youth to manage these cyber-risks.

## What Will Your Child Be Asked To Do?

As the parent or legal guardian of a potential participant in this study, you are being asked to provide consent to permit your child to participate in a focus group with other youth his or her age at his or her school, to be held in a private and confidential meeting room also at the school. The focus group is expected to last about an hour to 1.5 hours. In addition, during the focus group volunteers will be asked to submit confidential online journals of their experiences and perceptions online, and with cyber-risk. Details of the online journals, including a separate consent form, will be provided at that time.

This is what will happen during the focus group:

- The study will be explained
- Your child will be asked if he/she understands his/her role in the interview and agrees to take part
- Your child will be asked about perceptions and experiences related to cyber-risks (these may include, but are not limited to cyberbullying, receiving threats online, cyber-stalking, sexting and other forms of online harassment)
- Your child will be able to comment on, talk about or ask any questions about the topic in dialogue with both the focus group facilitator (a trained research assistant) as well as others in the group

With your child's permission, the focus group will be digitally voice recorded to make sure what is said is accurately captured. Permission from *all* participants must be received in order for group discussions to be recorded.

**STUDY WITHDRAWAL \*\*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\*\*:** Your child's participation in this study is *strictly and completely* voluntary. Your child is under no obligation to participate and no consequences will result from his/her declining to participate or choosing to withdraw from the study *at any point in time*. Your child is entitled to refuse to participate in any portion of the study, and may decline to answer any or all questions asked.

All focus group audio recordings will be deleted as quickly as possible following the production of anonymized interview transcripts. Once transcripts of group discussions have been finalized, group members will be anonymized. At this point withdrawal is still possible, though it may not be possible to identify your child's statements within the group discussion transcripts.

Given the nature of focus group sessions, since a number of participants are involved at once, it is also important for all participants to respect the privacy and confidentiality of all others involved in the group discussion. Your child's confidentiality agreement thus includes space for your child to acknowledge his/her willingness to participate in research as well as agree not to reveal what is disclosed amongst group members and researchers to anyone outside of the focus group.

This study is not being administered/funded by the Calgary Catholic School Board and the Calgary Board of Education (Calgary) and Newfoundland and Labrador English School District

(St. John's), and *the decision to participate or not participate will have no bearing on your child's relationship with his or her school* (i.e. affecting your academic performance or otherwise).

### **What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?**

If you permit your child to participate in a focus group discussion for this project, you will be asked to indicate your own consent below by providing a signature and date. Your child's assent is also required, which will be retrieved in a separate consent form. **Please review this consent form with your child carefully.** If your child agrees to participate in this research, he/she will be asked to indicate his/her assent in the accompanying consent form by providing his/her signature and date. **Further consent will be orally obtained at the time of the focus group to ensure group members understand the nature of the focus group discussion and agree to a group-based confidentiality.** Apart from this informed consent form, *no personal identifying information will be collected, and all participants in this study shall remain strictly and completely anonymous.*

Should your child agree to participate, before the interview, he/she will be asked to provide his/her current age in order to ensure all participants in the study meet the criteria of being aged 13-19.

*Your child is under no obligation to answer any questions during the focus group and may at any time withdraw from the study without consequence.* With your child's permission the interview will be digitally recorded to ensure what is said is accurately captured. Your child has the right to refuse to have the interview recorded.

### **Are there Risks or Benefits?**

In this study, your child will be asked to discuss perceptions of and experiences with cyber-risk. Such reflection may provide insights to your child, and sharing with other group members may help build social ties and confidence. Your child may also find talking about cyber-risks uncomfortable and upsetting. Such discomforts, however, should be no greater than what your child experiences in everyday life. Interviews will be conducted within a safe and private setting at your child's school.

Possible benefits: Your child may or may not directly benefit from participating in this study. As a participant, your child may benefit from participating in a focus group dialogue and sharing his/her insights. Sharing insights with others may help your child gain confidence and/or social connection through the knowledge that other participants share the same concerns and experiences. The knowledge gained from this research will inform policies and practices regarding how best communities can be involved with young digital citizens.

### **What Happens to the Information Your Child Provides?**

Audio recordings will be transcribed and deleted as soon as possible. Any data will be stored in a secure locked location. **Only the research team will have access to this anonymous information.** At no point in time will your child's interview or information be shared with anyone, including teachers at his or her school or other officials, police, or community stakeholders.

Data can only be accessed under the supervision of the Primary Investigator and Co-Investigator who is responsible for protecting your child's privacy. Your child's identity will not be written anywhere. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law. If research is published or presented quoting sections of the focus group discussion your child participates in, no identifying information will be used. Data (i.e. finalized interview transcripts) will be retained for a minimum of five years, as required by the University of Calgary policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research.

### *Agreement to Consent*

Your indication, on this form, of your consent to permit your child to participate in this research (see below) indicates that 1) you understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your child's participation in this research project, and 2) you agree to permit your child to participate in this research project.

3) Given the nature of focus group sessions, since a number of participants are involved at once, it is also important for all participants to respect the privacy and confidentiality of all others involved in the group discussion. Therefore, in a separate consent form for your child, we also seek your child's assent acknowledging his/her agreement not to reveal what is disclosed amongst group members and researchers to anyone outside of the focus group after it is completed. These instructions will be orally stated again before focus groups are conducted.

You are also asked below to indicate your agreement, by checking a box, to have your child's focus group digitally recorded. If you do *not* check the box but sign and date the consent form, you indicate your agreement to have your child participate in the focus group but do not wish the group to be digitally recorded. In this case the group facilitator will take detailed notes during the session.

In no way does providing this consent waive your child's legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. *Your child is free to withdraw from this research project at any time without consequence.* You and your child should feel free to ask for clarification or new information at any time (see contact details below).

**Consent to my child's participation:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name (First and Surname)

Consent to have my child's focus group discussion digitally recorded to ensure accuracy and transparency:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Questions/Concerns**

If you or your child have any further questions or desire clarification regarding this research and/or your child's participation, or are interested in study findings once this research is completed, please contact:

In Calgary:

Dr. Michael Adorjan  
Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts  
University of Calgary  
(403) 220-5982, [madorjan@ucalgary.ca](mailto:madorjan@ucalgary.ca)

In St. John's and surrounding area:

Dr. Rose Ricciardelli  
Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts  
Memorial University of Newfoundland  
(709) 864-7446, [ricciardell@mun.ca](mailto:ricciardell@mun.ca)

If you have any concerns about the way your child is treated as a participant, or your child's rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Calgary's Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board: (403) 210-9863, [cfreb@ucalgary.ca](mailto:cfreb@ucalgary.ca).

In addition, further information about cyber-risks involving young persons may be found at: [www.cybertip.ca](http://www.cybertip.ca)

Online resources on cyberbullying and other cyber-risks are also provided by the Calgary Police Service:

<http://www.calgary.ca/cps/Pages/Community-programs-and-resources/Crime-prevention/Cyberbullying.aspx>

If any discomfort or distress is experienced during or after participation in this research, counseling resources are available through your child's school and the Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868.

A copy of this consent form will be provided to you to keep for your records and reference. The investigator will also keep a copy of the consent form.