

## SHIRLEY G. MOORE LABORATORY SCHOOL

Human Subjects' Code Number 9610S11829

**CONSENT FORM**Research Involving Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School Children

As a child enrolled in the Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School, your child will be invited to participate in research studies conducted in the school. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to permit your child to take part in the program. Professors and students from the University of Minnesota conduct the studies in question. All studies will have been reviewed and approved by Sheila Williams Ridge, Director of the Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School, and the Lab School staff. All studies will also have been reviewed by the Human Research Protection Program (HRPP), which reviews all research with human participants at the University of Minnesota.

**Background Information**

The purpose of the Laboratory School is to provide a high-quality early childhood school experience for the children, to train teachers in the most up-to-date methods of working with preschool-aged children, and to facilitate the development of our understanding of the preschool child. These goals are why the University supports the program and why attending the Lab School involves taking part in research studies. These goals also guide the types of studies that take place in the Lab School. Many of these studies deal with understanding the social abilities of preschoolers and the processes that are involved in the development of social competence, peer relationships, and friendship formation. Other studies deal with understanding the cognitive/language competencies of preschoolers and their perceptual and motor skills. Some studies deal with understanding individual characteristics of children, such as their temperament and personality, and how these influence their relationships with other children and adjustment to school settings.

**Procedures**

The procedures vary by study, but the general range of procedures can be outlined.

First, many studies involve observations of the children. These observations are usually conducted from the booths attached to each classroom. The children are, thus, often not aware that the observations are being made and these procedures do not affect the events happening in the classroom (In the beginning of the year, children visit the booth with their teachers and it is explained that adults watch from the booth so they can learn about children and teaching.) Observations may be made by photography or videotaping the children and behaviors later scored from the recordings. Sometimes observers are in the classroom; this typically happens only when observations must be made in places like the gym or playground - places which do not have observation booths.

Second, some studies require that the child leave the classroom for brief periods. In these instances, the researchers go through a brief training with the Director and then spend time in the classroom so the children become familiar with them. They then ask children whether they want to "come and play a game". The children make the decision whether to go or not. Often the class takes a "fieldtrip" to see what the "games" look like so that the children know what they are agreeing to do. Children who refuse to go are never pushed into doing so. The types of "games" they might play are very "child friendly". They may involve making judgments about objects (perception studies), finding a hidden toy (studies assessing memory and understanding of physical space), self-control (playing games like Simon Says or Turn-Taking games), and peer-relations games (where children identify the children in their class and point to "three children I like to play with at school."

## SHIRLEY G. MOORE LABORATORY SCHOOL

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These games help researchers learn the social structure of the classroom from the children's perspective.) Research sessions never last more than 30 minutes and typically are designed to last 10 to 15 minutes. If a child agrees to "play a game" and then decides they want to return to the classroom, their wish is always respected.

Third, some of the research involves teachers filling out questionnaires about child behavior. These questionnaires are completed outside class time, so they do not take away from the time the teachers spend with the children. Some research involves asking parents to complete forms. When this happens, the parent is under no obligation to complete the forms or to answer all of the questions on the forms.

Fourth, some of the research involves the study of children's physiology. When these studies involve assessing measures that required placing sensors on the child (e.g. some measures of heart rate), you will be contacted separately and individual consent for these procedures will be obtained. This is because we feel that these studies are more demanding of the children and fall outside the realm of this general consent. Some of the research, however, involves sampling saliva (e.g. for stress hormone measurement). Saliva sampling is inserted into the ongoing activity of the classroom. It involves having the children mouth an absorbent swab until it is wet. These procedures take only 1 to 2 minutes and are typically performed during transition periods. Only children who want to play the "tasting" game provide saliva samples, but most children find this game fun. Temperatures are also sometimes taken. Sometimes children might be asked to wear a bracelet to measure heart rate or body movement, (e.g. like a fitbit). The purpose of all of these physiological measures is to understand the inter-relations between social experiences, behavior and social interaction in young children.

**Risks and Benefits**

The studies covered under this general consent are very low risk. When children are removed from the classroom, they go to rooms that are in the Institute of Child Development. The teachers are told verbally and in writing which children are involved, when they leave, whom they are with, and where they will be. The teachers know all the researchers. They have been screened in the same manner as all of the staff in the Lab School. In studies that involve removing children from the classroom, the teachers typically make unscheduled visits to the testing area to oversee and help direct researchers in the best ways to work with children. Most research rooms have one-way mirrors and all are open to observation. While children miss some class time by taking part in these studies, teachers work to make sure that no child is asked more than once or twice in a week to miss class time. Children are never asked to engage in tasks that would make them cry or frighten them, although they sometimes may experience mild frustration while trying to "play a game". The level of frustration is similar to what they might experience trying to perform tasks in the classroom (e.g., frustration over getting a block tower to stay up). The researchers are trained to help the child manage any negative feelings. Teaching staff work with researchers to design test sessions so that, overall, children find them fun and interesting and return to the classroom feeling good about participating.

**Information to Parents**

To help reduce any risk of these studies and to keep parents informed, the purpose and procedures for all studies being conducted in your child's classroom will be sent home with your child before the study is begun. Not all children will participate but all parents will be informed of all studies taking place in their child's classroom. If you read the description of a study and are concerned about your child participating, we encourage you to talk with your child's teacher, the Director or the researcher.

## SHIRLEY G. MOORE LABORATORY SCHOOL

Human Subjects' Code Number 9610S11829

If you do not want your child taking part in a study, please let us know by telephone (612-624-9543) or email ([will0342@umn.edu](mailto:will0342@umn.edu)). For any study where your child is removed from the classroom to “go play a game” a note is sent home with your child on the day of participation. The note describes the study your child was in and what he/she did. This will allow you to talk over the experience with your child should you choose to do so. You are also welcome to observe any study and to talk directly to the researchers conducting the study if you have concerns or simply want to learn more about what they are doing.

**Compensation**

The children are seldom given anything for taking part in these studies. We feel that giving rewards could create difficulties in the classroom with children potentially vying for rewards and feeling bad if they were not asked to be in a study (because, for example, they were not in the age range needed).

**Confidentiality**

In these studies, children are given subject numbers to identify their data. Data may initially be gathered using the child's first name as an identifier. This happens, for example, when researchers are observing all the children in a classroom and need to move from child to child in a set sequence to make their observations. When first names are used, these are stripped from the observation and data sheets as soon as possible and replaced by a randomly generated subject number. In studies where the same child is tested over time or where different pieces of data need to be combined (as in teacher ratings and observations), a master sheet linking names and subject numbers is kept in a secure place in the researcher's office.

In any publication or presentation of results from these studies, no child will be identified or identifiable. When videotapes are made of the children, these are used only for research and/or educational purposes and will be destroyed within seven years.

**Voluntary Nature of the Studies**

Your decision whether or not to allow your child to participate in a particular study will not affect your current or future relations with the Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School or the University of Minnesota. If you decide to allow your child to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships. If you agree to have your child participate and your child refuses, your child's wishes will be respected. If your child chooses to participate in a study and then changes his/her mind, his/her wishes will be respected.

**Contacts and Questions:**

If you have any questions about this general consent, please talk with your child's teacher or contact Sheila Williams Ridge, Director of the Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School at [will0342@umn.edu](mailto:will0342@umn.edu) or 612-624-9543. For individual studies, the names of the researchers and their phone numbers will be included on the study information sheet you receive upon our approval of the study. Please feel free to call the researchers with questions or to talk about specific studies with your child's teacher or with Sheila Williams Ridge.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s) or the Director of the Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School, contact **Research Subjects' Advocate** line, D528 Mayo 420 Delaware Street Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; telephone (612) 625-1650.

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Human Subjects' Code Number 9610S11829

Your permission includes the use of audio recordings, video recordings, and/or photographic images of your child for research purposes only. Investigators follow University procedures for keeping images confidential and private.

*You will be given a signed copy of this form to keep for your records.*

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have had all questions answered to my satisfaction. I consent to have my child participate in the studies approved under this general consent by the Director of Early Childhood Education programs.

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Child's Name

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Teacher's Name

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Signature of Parent or Guardian

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Date

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Signature of the Director of the Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School

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Date