**Minor Assent Tips**

When children are involved in research, the federal regulations governing human subjects research requires investigators to have the child’s agreement to take part in the study.  This is known as assent. Assent means that the study has been explained to the child and the child is willing to take part in the study. Securing the assent of a minor participant is separate from getting a parent or guardian’s permission/consent for the child to participate.  Generally, IRBs require that the assent of a minor child be sought when the child is seven years of age or older, unless the child’s decision-making capacity is impaired.

For children **under 7 years of age**, only parental consent is required - minor assent is not required by the IRB. However, investigators working with young children are welcome to craft their own minor assent form for these subjects. In certain cases, the investigator may deem a child in this age range is capable of being involved in the assent process. If so, make sure the child is given a simple verbal explanation of what will happen to them or what they will be asked to do. Document this discussion on the parental permission form or in the study records.

For children **7 to 11 years of age**, the assent form should be simple enough for the child to understand what they agreeing to do.  In general, it should briefly explain in basic terms:

* that they are being asked to participate in a research study
* the purpose of the study
* an estimate of how much time is involved in participating
* what will happen to them if they agree to participate (e.g., “answer some questions”)
* the foreseeable risks and/or discomfort and any benefits they may experience (immediate risks and/or discomfort and benefits, rather than future or theoretical possibilities)
* that they should ask their parent/guardian or researcher any questions they have about participating
* that their participation is voluntary (up to them), and that they may stop at any time
* that their parent/guardian knows they have been asked to be a part of the study

For children between the ages of **12 and 14**, investigators should use their judgment in deciding which of the required elements of informed consent would be most appropriate for their study population.

For adolescents between the ages of **15 and 17**, the assent form should closely follow the consent form used for consenting adult participants.

It is very important that the language be appropriate to the subject’s reading level; if the subject population includes a wide range of ages it may be necessary to use more than one form.

**California State University, Stanislaus**

**Minor Assent to Participate in Research (Template 13-17 years old)**

***(Research Title)***

**Purpose of the Research**

You are being asked to be in a research project.

I hope to learn \_\_\_\_ (*state in one or two sentences why the study is being conducted; ex. “to learn more about the effect of using math games in teaching sixth grade math.” Use clear, concise, age-appropriate language).*

Your parent/guardian knows about this study.

**Procedures**

If you choose to participate: *Using a simple, bulleted format, explain what participating in the study means for the minor participant. State clearly the location, length of each procedure, and total time commitment involved.*

* *Describe the activity (interview, survey, etc.)*
* *Duration of the activity for the participant*
* *Explain where the activity will occur (ex. School library, online, etc.)*
* *Any other details*

**Potential Risks or Discomforts**

*Describe any known risks in participating, in clear language. See example below.*

Your parent/guardian knows about the study. If you feel uncomfortable or nervous during the <survey/interview/focus group>, you can skip any question or stop for any reason.

**Potential Benefits of the Research**

*Describe potential benefits, if any. State if there are no potential benefits.*

**Confidentiality**

*Explain how you will keep their answers secure and private. Who will have access to their information?*

**Compensation**

*Explain if the participant will receive any compensation (raffle prize, gift card, school supplies, etc.) after they participate. Or explain that there will be no compensation for participating.*

**Participation and Withdrawal**

You can stop being in the study at any time for any reason.

**Assent**

I have read and understand the information provided above. All of my questions, if any, have been   
answered.

*Participating Child’s Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Participating Child’s (signature) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**California State University, Stanislaus**

**Minor Assent to Participate in Research (Template/Sample 7-12 years old)**

***(Research Title)***

My name is \_\_\_\_ and I am a <student/teacher> at CSU Stanislaus.

I am doing a research study about ***\_\_\_\_.*** *Insert a purpose in simple language***.**

A research study is a way to learn more about people. I’d like to tell you about this study and ask if you will take part in it.

If you decide that you want to be part of this study, you will be asked to \_\_\_. *Insert a simple description, including time involved.*

There are some things about this study you should know.  These are *procedures, things that take a long time, other risks, discomforts, etc.*

Not everyone who takes part in this study will benefit.  A benefit means that something good happens to you.  I think these benefits might be *description*.

When I am finished with this study I will write a report about what I learned.  This report will not include your name or that you were in the study.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be.  If you decide to stop after we begin, that’s okay too.

Your parent/guardian know about the study too. If you have any questions you can ask either me or your parent/guardian.

If you decide you want to be in this study, please print your name.

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, want to be in this research study.

***Parts in Italics should be modified for your specific project.  Other parts may need to be modified as well depending on your research methods or the age/ability of the minors involved.***