**Information Sheet and Consent Form for aged 14+ adolescents**

**who have experienced developmental adversity**

## **We Need Your Help! Early Experiences and Teenager’s Development**

Hi, my name is xx and I would like to invite you to take part in our research study. Before you decide whether you would like to take part, it is important for you to know what the research is about and what it will involve. Please read this information sheet carefully and discuss it with others if you wish (e.g. with your parent/carer or key worker). If there is anything that is not clear, or if you would like more information, you can contact me on xx or we can arrange to chat in person during one of my visits to xx.

**What is this study about?**

The aim of the study is to look at the effect of early good and bad experiences on teenagers’ development. In particular we want to understand how early experiences can affect the way a person reacts to social and emotional information in the environment. For example, how people react to faces showing different emotions can help us understand how people behave in real life situations. Everybody is different. In this study we are particularly interested in how different things that happened to you in the past – good and bad - might influence how you react to your environment. You may have experienced early adversity (e.g. being treated badly by others) as well as positive support (e.g. having a close friend). We think these experiences are likely to be important for understanding a person’s development and why some people go on to have mental health difficulties while others do not. We want to study teenagers from xx so that we can better understand how past experiences can influence behaviour. We will also be studying some teenagers who do not use xx services to see how similar or different they are.

**Why is the study being done?**

The goal of this study is to understand how past experiences influence young people’s development. Also, we want to learn what helps young people who have had bad experiences do well. If we know more about how past experiences affect the way we deal with our environment, then we may be able to help more young people do well in future and overcome their difficulties.

**What will happen if I take part?**

If you are happy to take part in this study, we will meet for about one hour. We will spend some time at xx doing some computer games and puzzles. The games have been designed to be fun and appropriate for your age. Along with playing the games, you will also be asked to fill in some questionnaires and do some simple pen and paper tasks. We would also like to get in touch with you again, in about one year’s time. One of our goals is to see how you are doing after spending some more time with xx. You do not have to decide now whether you want to take part again and we will get in touch with your key worker first to see if you would like to see us again later. Because we are interested in understanding how genes can have an effect on people’s development, we would like to take a cheek swab of your DNA. A cheek swab involves you rubbing cotton wool buds inside your cheek for about 20 seconds each. It is fast and painless (it may tickle a little). It is important for you to know that no one else apart from the researchers in this study will have access to your DNA. We will not give this information to anyone else, and it will only be used for research purposes.

**What will I be asked to do?**

You will be asked to do some tasks where you look at the computer screen and press buttons; a lot like when you play computer games. For example you will be asked to look at images of different faces and asked to tell us which emotion the face is showing. We would like to ask you some questions about yourself and about your environment. For example, how often certain events happen (e.g. how often you are praised you when you behave well or how often privileges are taken away when you don’t or whether you may have seen aggressive behaviour in your neighborhood). We will also ask you some questions about emotion recognition (e.g. fear, happiness) and give you some simple word and shape puzzles to do with us.

**Are there any risks in taking part?**

We do not anticipate any risks to the teenagers taking part in this study. This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics committee and supported by xx.

**What are the potential benefits?**

We hope that with your help and that of other teenagers, we will find better ways to help children who have suffered from early bad experiences do well. For example, we might help to improve the way they understand and react to information in their environment. Although there may be no immediate benefit for the teenagers taking part in this study, we hope that their participation will benefit other children in the future. Also, we hope that you will find the experience fun and interesting.

**Do I have to take part in this study?**

It is up to you whether or not you take part in this study. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide now, or at a later date, that you do not wish to participate in this research you are free to stop at any time, without giving a reason. We want to make sure that everyone is happy when taking part in our study.

**Will information about me be available to anyone?**

All information collected from you during the course of this research will be kept strictly confidential, unless required by law. For example xx or police authorities will not have access to our research records. It is important for you to know that we are interested in the average performance of our participants, not in any individual teenager. All of our research reports will contain information about average performance of several teenagers in any of our tasks. No individual teenager will be named or singled out.

**Who will have access to the research records?**

Only members of our research team will be able to look at the information we collect. Our study complies with the Data Protection Act of 1998 (DPA). The DPA makes sure the information we collect and keep is well protected.

**How to contact the researchers**

You can ask any questions that you have about the study. If you have a question that you didn’t think of now, you can ask it later. You can contact me at xxx or by email at [x](mailto:charlotte.cecil@ucl.ac.uk) if you need any more information about the study. If for some reason you cannot reach me, you can call xx or send her an email at xx

***Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.***

***Your help makes our research possible!***

**Please tick (√) appropriate box:**

**Yes**, I would like to participate in this study.

If **Yes**:

**Yes**, I am happy to have a DNA cheek swab taken

**No**, I do not want to have a DNA cheek swab taken

**No**, I do not want to participate in this study.

**If Yes, please complete the following:**

I have read the Information Sheet.

I understand that I do not have to take part in this study if I do not want to.

I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.

I have had the opportunity to ask any questions I wish to ask.

It has been explained to me that if I want to I can discuss this study with my parent/carer or my Kids-Company key worker before taking part and I have had the opportunity

to do so.

I have the names and telephone numbers of the research team in case I have any queries in the future.

Name: Date:

Signature:

***Thank you!***

## Picture 6