Research Permission Form for Parents of Minor Subjects

You are being asked to allow your child to be in a research study.

**Purpose:**
The purpose of this study is to learn about Internet online communities. We hope to learn more about the experiences of the people using them.

Most of the researchers in this study are students in the Online Communities course taught by Dr. Bruckman. (more information at http://www.cc.gatech.edu/~asb/teaching/). This research study is part of their educational experience.

**Procedures:**
If you decide to allow your child to be in this study, his/her part will involve:
- Agreeing to be interviewed. It would be conducted in person, via the telephone, or online. It should take no more than an hour.
- The interview will focus on your child’s experience as a participant in an online community.
- The interview will be recorded.

**Risks/Discomforts**
The following risks/discomforts may occur as a result of your child’s participation in this study.
- There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts in this study. The risks involved are no greater than those involved in daily activities such as speaking on the telephone or using e-mail.
- Since many of the researchers are students, there is a slight chance that they will make mistakes or not conduct themselves appropriately during the interview. If this should happen, please contact Dr. Amy Bruckman at telephone (404) 894-9222.

**Benefits**
The following benefits to your child are possible as a result of being in this study.
Your child is not likely to benefit in any way from joining this study. However, they will be helping us learn more about online communities.

**Compensation to You/Your Child**
There is no compensation for participation.
Confidentiality
The following procedures will be followed to keep your child’s personal information confidential in this study.
To protect his/her confidentiality, his/her name will not appear in any publications. A pseudonym (a fake name) will be used instead. However, in the case of quotations from things that have been done online (such as blog entries, forum posts, etc), this disguise could be vulnerable. A determined and skillful person could potentially break it. Since many online sites are open to the world, search engines (i.e. Google) index them. Therefore a person could take a quotation and use a search engine to find the actual page. This would break the pseudonym disguise. We do not think that this research will uncover sensitive information. In case it does, we will leave out direct quotes that could be found in a search engine.

The data that is collected about your child will be kept private to the extent allowed by law. To make sure that this research is being carried out in the proper way, the Georgia Institute of Technology IRB will review study records. The Office of Human Research Protections may also look at study records.

In the case of electronic communications and web-based consent, you should be aware that the experiment is not being run from a "secure" https server. There is a small possibility that responses could be viewed by unauthorized third parties (e.g., computer hackers).

Using Your Child’s Real Name

In some cases, people we interview are proud of things they have done online (for example creative projects). They would like to have their real name listed in our published reports. If you would like to request that we use your child’s real name if possible, please sign below. Your child must also agree to this. We will not be able to use your child’s real name if we feel there is anything that might embarrass your child in our report. For most people, using a fake name is the right choice. Therefore you do not need to sign here but you may if you wish.

Please use my child's real name if possible (optional):

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Costs to You
There are no costs to you or your child, except for your time.

In Case of Injury/Harm
If your child is injured as a result of being in this study, please contact Dr. Amy Bruckman at telephone (404) 894-9222 or asb@cc.gatech.edu. Neither the Principal Investigator nor Georgia Institute of Technology have made provision for payment of costs associated with any injury resulting from participation in this study.

**Subject Rights**
- Your child’s participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to allow your child to be in this study if you don’t want him/her to be involved (or ‘to participate’).
- You have the right to change your mind and remove your child from the study at any time without giving any reason. There is no penalty.
- Any new information that may make you change your mind about allowing your child to participate in this study will be given to you.
- You will be given a copy of this permission form to keep.
- You do not waive any of your or your child’s legal rights by signing this permission form.

**Questions about the Study or Your Child’s Rights as a Research Subject**
- If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Dr. Amy Bruckman at telephone (404) 894-9222.
- If you have any questions about your child’s rights as a research subject, you may contact Melanie Clark, Georgia Institute of Technology IRB at (404) 894-6942.

If you sign below, it means that you have read (or have had read to you) the information given in this permission form, and you would like your child to participate in this study.

________________________________________________________
**Subject Name**

________________________________________________________
**Parent/Guardian Signature**

________________________________________________________
**Date**

Please either fax the signed form to Amy Bruckman at fax (404)-894-3146 or mail it to the following address:

Dr. Amy Bruckman  
Technology Square Research Building  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
85 5th St.  
Atlanta, GA 30332-0760