

Student Information Letter

Teens and Screens Digital Media in Schools

Dear Student

My name is Janene Sproul and I am a high school science teacher. I also do some research regarding digital media use during school hours.

I am asking for your help with the project because you are currently studying in high school. I am inviting students from around the state of Western Australia to take part in this research, to gather information from different school environments. Some students will be sensitive to light, some will not, some will get migraines, some will not, but all the information adds together to give a more detailed picture of digital media use for high school students. For this research, light sensitivity means a person has a bigger response than expected when light from any source (the sun, inside lights, computers) are used.

What would I be asked to do?

If you agree to take part, you can complete the 10 minute survey. **This survey is anonymous, it does not ask for your name, school, or date of birth.**

The survey does

- get completed online after school. Please do not fill these out during school - your education is extremely important and needs all your concentration.
- ask about amount of sleep and breakfast as this can affect light sensitivity. You are asked to comment on whether you had 'Lots', 'Some' or 'None' of these items. It also asks whether you take medication or not. The medication question does not ask for type or amount – just whether you take it every day (preventative) or just when you start to feel unwell (intervention).
- ask what type of digital media you used in each class, and for approximately how long – no exact timing needed!

Are there any special requirements for students to be part of this research?

Yes, there are 4. Students need to

- have parental permission to participate in this research.
- be studying high school courses. This removes need for exact age, to assist with information privacy and confidentiality. Also because the questionnaire is structured around a high school timetable.
- be able to understand written English. This is because the questionnaires are written in English.
- be able to access the internet after school hours for 10 mins. This is because the questionnaires are only accessible on the internet.

Do I have to use digital media every day to participate?

No. All the information from students using differing amounts of digital media helps. The more information students send in, the more accurate I can be when talking to other teachers how much digital media is currently being used in schools.

Do I have to be sensitive to light to participate?

No. All the information from people with and without light sensitivity helps build a better picture.

Do I have to take part?

You are free to say yes or no.

If you say yes, then the anonymous information will be added to other information.

If you say yes, but then want to stop participating, that's ok. Just close the online window and it will not be submitted.

If you say no, that is ok too.

Do my parents/carers have to allow me to take part in the research?

Yes. As this research includes asking questions to people under the age of 18, I have to gain parental/carer consent (permission from parents/carers) for these students to take part. To keep all ages anonymous, I am asking all participants to gain parental consent.

What will happen to the information I give - is it private and confidential?

I use Survey Monkey for the questionnaires because it will not contain your name, email or IP address. This means that you cannot be identified electronically and keeps your answers anonymous. I will analyse your answers as (for example) 'a high school student in a large town in Western Australia', but they will not be traceable to you. As the data submitted to the surveys is anonymous, it cannot be withdrawn once it is submitted.

The survey is being conducted using SurveyMonkey which is based in the USA. Information you provide on this survey will be transferred to SurveyMonkey's server in the USA. By completing this survey, you agree to this transfer and data storage. The collected data will subsequently be stored securely on hard copy and thumb drive in a locked drawer and can only be accessed by myself, Dr MacCallum and Dr Ledger (two Education lecturers at Murdoch University). The data will be stored for a minimum period of 5 years. Records are destroyed immediately after this period, unless the law requires them to be held longer. Records will be destroyed by shredding the hard copy and deleting the files on the thumbdrives.

After I have collected all the information for the project and analysed all of it, I intend to write about it and talk to other teachers about it. I also hope to help some students who are light sensitive and have to work with computers for school. When I do this, I won't be able to write or tell anyone your name as the information is anonymous.

A summary of findings from this research will be available from the www.photosensitivity.info website 'Digital Media in Schools' page after October 2018. You can ask for a copy of early results by requesting 'Preliminary Findings' at janene.sproul@murdoch.edu.au by September 2018, and an email with a summary of the preliminary findings will be sent to you. An overall summary of the results will be provided to the principals of each school that participates in the research.

Is this research approved?

The research has been approved by Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (ref 2016/033). The research has met WA DoE policy requirements.

Who do I contact if I wish to talk about the project further?

Please talk about the project with your parents first. Then, if you would like to ask me any questions about the survey, please contact me by email. If, at any time, you wish to speak with a person who is not involved in the project about how something was handled, please contact Dr Erich von Dietze, Murdoch University Ethics Department, on +61 8 9360 6170.

OK – so how do I become involved?

You have already discussed the project and what it means to take part with one of your parents or guardians – that is how you accessed this information letter. Now you can say for yourself.

If you **do** want to be a part of the project, then you can follow the link below to access the Student Survey

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HQM7HKN>

Thank you for thinking about being part of this research

Janene Sproul
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This study has been approved by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval 2016/033). If you have any reservation or complaint about the ethical conduct of this research, and wish to talk with an independent person, you may contact Murdoch University's Research Ethics & Integrity on Tel. 08 9360 6677 (+61 8 9360 6677 for overseas studies) or e-mail ethics@murdoch.edu.au. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

