



## Participant Information Sheet for Students



### Who are we?

We are Ashly, Shane, Marie and Enrico from University College London (UCL). We are interested in improving the safety of social media platforms. We have partnered with the drug education charity Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation (DSMF) and the Alcohol Education Trust (AET) to help us run this survey. They work with young people, families, teachers and professionals in schools and colleges. You can find more information about them here: <https://www.dsmfoundation.org.uk/>; <https://alcoholeducationtrust.org/>.



### Why are we doing this research?

We want to find out more about the experiences of teenagers using social media. We want to make sure young people are safe around drugs, both online and offline. This will help us understand your experiences better, and to figure out whether we can do anything to make things safer.



### Why have I been chosen?

You have been selected because you are 13 years old or above and your school has agreed to participate in this research.



### Do I have to take part?

No. Taking part in the study is entirely voluntary. **If you do not want to participate, there will be no penalty.** You can withdraw from the study at any point if you want to.



## What will happen if I take part?

You will be asked to sign a consent form making sure you agree to take part in this study. You will then fill in a survey asking about your social media habits, whether you or someone you know have seen drugs advertised online and your reporting practices. Taking this survey should last around 15 minutes.



## What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

If you feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions, you can:

- Choose not to answer that question. There will always be an option “*Prefer not to say*”
- Stop taking the survey and have a break
- Remember that the survey is **confidential and pseudonymised**.
- Remember that the purpose of this research is linked to subjects that are within the UK national educational curriculum [Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE)]. This does not mean you have to take the survey; it just means that it’s okay to talk about these things at school.

**Confidential** means your answers will **NOT** be shared with anyone except with us (the research team). **Pseudonymised** means that the answers you give will not be linked to your name but given a number (eg. Participant N8354). This means that your answers cannot be specifically linked to you.



## What are the possible benefits of taking part?

If you decide to participate in this research, you will learn how to identify harmful behaviours online and how to report or find support if you have been affected by these behaviours. You will be able to participate in a research project led by a world-leading university and contribute to making social media a safer place for young people.



## Will my school, parents or peers have access to my answers?

No. Your school, teachers and parents will **NOT** have access to your answers. All your answers to the survey will be kept **strictly confidential**. **You will not be able to be identified** in any reports or publications. No one except us (research team) will have access to your answers.



## Limits to confidentiality

You will be asked for your name and school name in the consent form for safeguarding purposes. This means that if a student takes our survey and says they are in danger, we have a duty to help them. In this case, we will have to identify which student is at risk and needs help.

Your name and your answers will **only** be linked **in case there are reasons for us to believe you or someone you know are in danger**. In that case, we will notify safeguarding staff in the school to help. Circumstances that would make us believe this are for example:

- if you say you are having negative thoughts and want to self-harm
- if you are being threatened
- if you feel in danger
- if you are struggling with addiction



## What will happen to the results of the research?

The results of the survey will be written in a report. You, your school and parents **will not be able to be identified**. This report will be shared with DSMF, social media companies and other researchers. You can have a copy of the published results by emailing the contact details provided in this form.



## What if something goes wrong?

You can always reach us by email at: [uclsocialmediaproject@gmail.com](mailto:uclsocialmediaproject@gmail.com) and ask us any questions about the research, voice your concerns or raise a complaint. If you changed your mind and want to withdraw your answers you can send us an email saying this and we will delete your answers.



## Further information

You can find more information, help and advice about drugs at Frank by following this link: <https://www.talktofrank.com/>. You can find general facts and advice for young people at: <https://life-stuff.org/>. You can also anonymously report a crime or access information and support around crime following this link: <https://www.fearless.org/>. You can email us at [uclsocialmediaproject@gmail.com](mailto:uclsocialmediaproject@gmail.com) if you have any questions on the research.

**Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research.**