# Assent Procedures

Assent is an active affirmation of a desire to participate and differs from consent which is recognized as being granted from an individual with the legal authority to do so. When children/minors under eighteen are involved in research, informed consent must be obtained from the parent/guardian ***and*** assent must be obtained from the child/minor. Similarly, participants for whom the ability to give informed consent may be otherwise compromised, such as individuals with developmental disabilities, must be afforded the same process.

Assent should be administered in a manner that is easily understood by the potential participant (either written or verbal) and should be limited to a one-page format. The individual should be given explanation of the proposed research procedures, the purpose of the research, and any discomforts, in language that is appropriate to the individual’s age, experience, maturity, and condition. Illustrations might be helpful and larger type makes it easier for some individuals to read.

If an assent procedure is to be used, a prototype of the ‘script’ of this procedure should be included in the appendices of the application. Whereas an assent ‘script’ may not be appropriate considering the age range or cognitive capacity of some subjects, researchers should nonetheless provide a description of the measures they will take to assess whether the individual assents or is comfortable participating, such as explaining how they will interpret non-verbal cues like crying or fatigue.

***A particular subject’s capacity to assent must be evaluated on an individual basis***. Keep in mind that your tone, facial expressions and body language may influence a child's assent!

*We have provided some Assent Form templates for your assistance. While you are not required to use these templates, you may find them helpful in constructing your assent procedures. The following template represents an assent script that might be used for adolescents and which provides room for more detail regarding the study purpose and procedures.*

***You may use the template on the following page as guidance 🡪***

**Student Assent Script (adolescents)**

My name is [researcher name]. I am interested learning about how teachers can best support students as they move from high school to college, technical school, or start a career. If you would like, you can be in my study. I would like you to take part in some classroom activities with a current teacher.

If you decide you want to be in my study, you will complete a number of activities. These activities included talking about what your goals are as a learner, person, and worker. We would spend about 20 minutes a day, three days a week, for the school year doing these activities. You would be thinking about what you hope to accomplish in the future and then you would make plans to reach your goals. We would work together to solve barriers to your goals and you would learn how to solve challenges on your own.

There are no risks to your participation in the research study. Other people will not know if you are in the study. I will put things I learn about you together with things I learn about other 10th graders so no one can tell what things came from you. When I tell other people about my research, I will not use your name, so no one can tell who I am talking about.

Your parents or guardian have to say it’s OK for you to be in the study. After they decide, you get to choose if you want to do it too. If you don’t want to be in the study, no one will be mad at you. If you want to be in the study now and change your mind later, that’s OK. You can stop at any time.

If you don't feel like participating in the transition activities I described above, you don't have to, and you can stop participating in the study anytime and that will be all right. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have at any time. Do you want to take part in this project?"