



**Project Title:** The Development of Social Abilities in Children

**Principal Investigator:** Adam Cohen, PhD, Department of Psychology and The Brain and Mind Institute, University of Western Ontario

### **Letter of Information**

Dear Parent,

I am an Assistant Professor and researcher in the Department of Psychology and The Brain and Mind Institute at The University of Western Ontario. I am conducting research on the development of social abilities in children along with some of the students from my research laboratory. In the following letter of information, the pronouns 'you' and 'your' should be read as referring to the participant (in this case, the child) rather than the parent/guardian/next of kin who is signing the consent form for the participant.

#### **Purpose of this Study**

You are being invited to participate in this research study because we are exploring how children your age begin to make sense of the social world and interact within it and how this understanding changes across development. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information required for you to make an informed decision regarding participation in this research.

#### **Research Studies and Procedures**

If you participate in this study, you will be asked to listen to a story, watch a short video, or watch a scene acted out with toys. The stories and events will often include people doing everyday tasks (putting things away, talking to other people, and so on). Then, you will be asked to answer questions about what you just heard or saw, including recalling events and predicting/explaining what someone might do based on what you saw or heard.

It is anticipated that the entire task will take between 30 and 45 minutes, over one session. The task(s) will be conducted in Westminster Hall on the Western University campus. All materials will be safe for children to handle, and children will be supervised by a trained researcher at all times. We will only run sessions at pre-arranged times convenient for the parent and child.

#### **Possible Risks and Harms**

There are no known risks associated with participation in this study. However, if you start feeling tired while you are participating, please tell the experimenter and he or she will give you a break or stop the study session.

**Possible Benefits**

You may not directly benefit from participating in this study but information gathered may provide benefits to society as a whole by advancing our knowledge of cognitive development. This knowledge could inform programs for educational institutions, and perhaps assist in designing interventions for children overcoming certain developmental difficulties and/or delays.

**Compensation**

You will be compensated with a \$15 gift certificate and a small prize for your participation in this study (for example, stickers, pencils, or a book).

**Voluntary Participation**

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions, or withdraw from the study at any time.

**Confidentiality**

All data collected will remain confidential and accessible only to the investigators of this study. If the data are stored on a computer, they will be stored in such a way that your name will not be connected to the results. If the results of the study are published, your name will not be used and no information that discloses your identity will be released or published without your specific consent. Representatives of the University of Western Ontario's Research Ethics Board may require access to your records for the purpose of monitoring the research. The Research Ethics Board at the University of Western Ontario may contact you directly to ask about your participation in the study. If we find information we are required by law to disclose, we cannot guarantee confidentiality.

**Contacts for Further Information**

If you require any further information regarding this research project or your participation in the study you may contact

Dr. Adam Cohen  
519-661-2111 ext. 84596  
[acohen42@uwo.ca](mailto:acohen42@uwo.ca)

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Research Ethics (519) 661-3036, email: [ethics@uwo.ca](mailto:ethics@uwo.ca).

**Publication**

If the results of the study are published, your name will not be used. If you would like to receive a copy of any potential study results, please provide your name and contact number on a piece of paper separate from the Consent Form.

Because the results are only meaningful with respect to groups and are uninformative about individuals, parents and children will not be notified about individual performance. After the studies are completed, we will send out a newsletter to parents reporting the overall results of the research.

On behalf of my research team and myself, I would like to extend our gratitude to you for reading this letter and considering participating in our study. If you would like to participate, simply sign and return the consent form. You do not waive any legal rights by signing the consent form.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Adam S. Cohen, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Psychology  
Brain and Mind Institute  
The University of Western Ontario  
Westminster Hall, Room 323  
London, ON N6A 3K7

p.519-661-2111 Ext. 84596  
f. 519-850-2554  
e. acohen42@uwo.ca  
w. <http://psychology.uwo.ca/faculty/cohenlab/>

*This letter is yours to keep for future reference.*

**Consent Form**

***Please keep this identical copy of the consent form for your records***

**Project Title:** The Development of Social Abilities in Children

**Study Investigator's Name:** Dr. Adam Cohen

I do not wish to participate in this study \_\_\_\_\_

**If you wish to participate in this study, please fill out the information below**

I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me, and I agree that \_\_\_\_\_ may participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Child's name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**The University of Western Ontario**  
Faculty of Social Science, Department of Psychology  
Westminster College – 361 Windermere Road • London, Ontario • Canada • N6A 3K7  
Telephone: 519-661-4068 • Fax: 519-850-2554 • [www.psychology.uwo.ca](http://www.psychology.uwo.ca)

The Development of Social Abilities in Children, 2013/02/04  
Participant initials\_\_\_\_\_