

**Title of the Project:** The Social Skills Peer Observation Tool (SPOT): A New Method of Assessing Social Skills

This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee (Project ID Number): 11837/001

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Please take time to read the following information carefully before you decide whether or not to take part. Talk to others about the study if you wish or ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take as much time as you need to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

### **What is the purpose of this study?**

We all act differently in social situations, and often the way we express ourselves affects what others think about us. Having good social skills is important for helping us form friendships, relationships and to communicate with each other. Some people may find social situations difficult, and may need some help to improve their social skills.

There are many ways to look at someone's social skills, but most of these are completed by adults (such as clinicians, parents or teachers). This study aims to develop a new way of evaluating people's social skills, using peers of a similar age who will observe someone taking part in a social task and then tell us what they think. It is important to be able to measure people's social skills accurately, so that we can find treatments and trainings that are more effective in helping people develop better social abilities.

### **Do I have to take part?**

Taking part in the study is entirely voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not you wish to take part; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. If you do decide to take part, you are still free to stop at any time without giving a reason.

### **What will happen if I take part?**

If you agree to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form and we may also ask your parents to sign one too. You and your parents will also be asked to provide your contact details and to complete two short questionnaires about your strengths and difficulties, and social skills. Then, you will be invited to take part in a task that involves a mock audition for a new reality TV show for young people your age. You will have to speak for 45 seconds to show the TV judges why they should select you for the show. This will be filmed with a video camera, and you will be given a T-shirt to wear.

### **What will happen next?**

Once you have completed the questionnaires and the video task, the researcher will edit the videos to make sure they have the correct length and format. The researcher will send a copy of the video to you via email, so that you can have a look first and let us know if you are happy for us to share it with other participants as part of our questionnaire. If you change your mind and would like to withdraw from the study, you can let the researcher know and your video will not be shared. We might also ask you to tell us what it was like for you taking part in this study.

Once you agree for the video to be shared, all videos will be entered in an online survey, which will be completed by peers of a similar age to you. These peers will not be given copies of the videos and they will not be told any other

information about you. Once they complete the survey they will not be able to access it again. The information you provide us with as part of the study will be held on a secure computer at UCL.

### **What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?**

Some people may find it difficult or upsetting to be contacted to take part in the study or to complete some of the tasks. Some people may find being filmed uncomfortable or may find it upsetting for the videos to be shared. Our research team can talk to you either over the phone or via email and to advise where to get further help if you need it. Please contact us or visit your local GP or health care team if you have found being approached to take part in the study upsetting.

### **What are the benefits of joining the study?**

Taking part in this study means you will be helping us understand social skills difficulties, and how to measure them. This will be helpful for evaluating treatments and trainings, to make sure they are effective.

Everyone taking part will be entered into a prize draw, to win an Amazon voucher of £50. You will also be able to keep the T-shirt we give you as part of the filming.

### **Will my involvement in the study be kept confidential?**

Yes. We will follow best ethical and legal practice and all information about you will be handled in confidence. All information will be collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Only authorised members of the research team will have access to your personal details. The information you provide us with will not be used or made available for any purpose other than for research and improvements in health care. Your name or any other personal details will not be in any report or publication. Any research data generated and made available to others for further research will have your personal identity removed.

The software and online platforms that will be used for sharing the online survey and video recordings have appropriate security policies and have been approved by the UCL Data Protection office.

### **Can I know the results obtained from the study?**

A summary of the study's findings can be emailed to those who are interested. Please let the researcher know if you would like that.

### **What will happen if I want to withdraw from the study?**

You can withdraw from the study at any point, without having to give a reason. If you decide to withdraw, we will stop collecting data from you. However, data that has already been collected up to the point of your withdrawal will remain in the study.

### **Further information**

If you would like any further information about this study, please contact the researchers directly:

**Email:** [kalia.cleridou.10@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:kalia.cleridou.10@ucl.ac.uk)  
[w.mandy@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:w.mandy@ucl.ac.uk)

**Thank you for your interest in this study!**