**INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF PARTICIPANTS (2)**

**Adolescent attitudes to vaccines and side effects**

**Invitation**

I would like to invite your child/ward (henceforth referred to as ‘child’) to participate in this research project which forms part of my PhDresearch. Before you and your child decide you are both happy for them to take part, it is important for you both to understand why the research is being done and what their participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

**What is the purpose of the project?**

This project aims to understand what teenagers think about vaccines and side effects in their own words. While lots of research has focused on parental and healthcare workers’ (doctors, nurses etc.) attitudes to vaccinations, little research to date has focused on the views of teenagers themselves. **Please note the aim of this project is NOT to persuade your child to receive vaccinations, but simply to explore and report on their opinions.**

**Why has my child been invited to take part?**

Your child has been invited to participate in this project because they are aged between 12 and 15 years, are in school years 8, 9 or 10, live in England and you (or they) hesitant about receiving some vaccines or have said no to some vaccines.

**What happens next?**

Please discuss this information sheet with your child. A short version of this information (Form 1 - called 'Information sheet for teenagers') is available online and has been shared with you both. Please make sure that your child reads this document and that you discuss it together. If you or your child have any questions, please contact me at angie.pitt@kcl.ac.uk or on 07842 869817**.**

If you both decide that you are happy for your child to take part in the project:

1. If they haven’t done so already, please ask your child to complete the survey, with your assistance if required. If you and your child are unable to access the internet, please call us on the number above and we will post your child a paper copy to complete and return by post. The survey is to collect some details about your child (e.g., age, gender, ethnic background) as we would like to hear from a diverse range of teenagers from backgrounds and with different views.
2. Return the **assent** **form** (3 – to be completed by your child) and the **consent form** (4 – to be completed by you) to us by scanning or photographing it and sending a copy of the image via email to angie.pitt@kcl.ac.uk.

If your child is emailing these forms to us, please make sure a parent or guardian is included in the email for safeguarding reasons.

1. We will screen the survey answers and choose participants to make sure that we hear from a broad range of teenagers with different backgrounds across England. We will let you both know within one month of completing the survey whether your child has been selected to take part. Please note, the deadline to complete the survey and return the consent/assent forms is **15th March 2025.**
2. Research fraud (imposters pretending to be valid participants) is increasing. King’s College London does not tolerate fraud of any kind. To ensure that only genuine teenagers aged 12-15 years, in school years 8, 9 or 10 in England participate in this study, we reserve the right to verify that your child is a teenager aged 12-15 years by answering screening questions by email, telephone or Microsoft Teams (with the camera switched on) ahead of their interview. If necessary, we may ask your child to show ID (passport, school pass etc.) on camera or in person. Where the interview is going to be carried out by telephone, we may ask you to email or post photo ID for your child to the lead researcher. If you send us a copy of your child’s ID, we will delete it (paper copies will be shredded) as soon as it has been checked.
3. If your child is selected to be interviewed, we will contact you both by email to arrange an informal online or in-person interview at a convenient time (that doesn’t clash with school lessons, clubs, or hobbies). This chat will last 30 minutes (45 minutes for interviews in pairs) and will take place either online via Microsoft Teams, in person in a public place (school, youth club etc.) with a responsible adult present (youth worker, teacher or other adult approved by you), or by telephone. We’ll ask your teenager to be interviewed without their parent or guardian to ensure we hear their own views. Questions your child will be asked include whether they have had vaccines in the past, what they think about vaccines and side effects, and where they might go for more information about vaccines. We may also ask your teenager to draw pictures, diagrams or other creative methods to help them to share their ideas.

**Interviews in pairs**

We co-designed this study with teenagers, and they told us that some participants might be more comfortable being interviewed in a pair with a friend, so we have made this an option. In the screening survey, your child will ask whether they would like to participate in the study with a friend. If so, they are required to name the friend, and ask the friend to contact me directly by email (angie.pitt@kcl.ac.uk). The pair interviews will take slightly longer (45 minutes to 1 hour) and both friends will be eligible for a £20 voucher. We will remind both participants that anything said in the interview remains confidential, but cannot guarantee that friends will not share information discussed in the interview.

**Does my child have to take part?**

No - participation is completely voluntary. Choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you or your child in any way. We will also check verbally at the beginning of the interview that your child is still happy to participate.

**Incentives and benefits**

Teenagers are offered several vaccines as part of the Routine Immunisation Schedule (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-complete-routine-immunisation-schedule/the-complete-routine-immunisation-schedule-from-february-2022) and so have a right to have their views on vaccines heard. This project will give them an opportunity to share their opinions and to have those opinions conveyed to policymakers in England. In addition, children who participate in an interview with the researcher will receive a £20 Amazon voucher to thank them for their time. Finally, children who are interested in pursuing science careers in psychology or sociology will get to experience first-hand what it is like to be a participant in a research study.

**What are the possible risks of taking part?**

Children may feel uncomfortable speaking to a researcher about vaccines. The researcher will take steps to put your child at ease, such as reassuring them that there are no wrong answers and that this is not a test. In addition, your child will be assured that their answers are confidential, and their name will not be shared. Where we quote your child in our research or share a drawing they have done, we will never identify them by name, school name or image.

Children can ask to end the interview at any point. In the unlikely event that a child becomes upset during the interview, the interview will be stopped, and a trusted adult (parent/guardian) will be contacted. The team recognise that, for some, vaccines can be a controversial topic. If the interview raises questions for the child or yourself around vaccines, reliable sources of information will be provided. The research team will never encourage or discourage a child about vaccination.

The researcher is trained in safeguarding and youth outreach and holds an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate. For safeguarding purposes, the research team will only use work contact details (and will never share personal contact details with a child). We ask that a parent or guardian is always included in emails from children for safeguarding reasons, and the research team will always include a parent or guardian in emails when emailing children.

**Data handling and confidentiality**

Your child’s data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection law (including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018).

* Interviews will be recorded (video or audio) and transcribed by a third-party transcription company who will write out in full the conversation between the researcher and your child. Once the accuracy of the transcription is checked, your child’s name will be removed from the transcript and the video or audio recording will be permanently deleted.
* Transcriptions will not be linked to your child’s name. A participant number will be used in place of your child’s name.
* Name and contact details for you and your child will only be kept until all interviews are completed (on or before 31st March 2025). On completion of interviews, names and contact details will be deleted.
* Where scans or photos of ID are required to verify your child’s age, these will be permanently deleted (paper copies will be shredded) as soon as verification is completed.
* Anonymised data (from which your child cannot be identified) will be retained by King’s College London for up to 10 years.
* Data may be shared within the research team, and with third party transcription service providers.
* Participants will not be identifiable in the final research, either by name, school name or image, even if we directly quote your child. Participants will be identified by participant number, age, region and/or ethnic background only.
* Where participants choose to take part in the study with a friend, both friends will hear the opinions, ideas, and anecdotes shared by the other adolescent during the interview. Both participants will be reminded at the beginning and end of the interview that any information shared during the interview should remain confidential.

King’s College London has a responsibility to keep information collected about you and your child safe and secure, and to ensure the integrity of research data. Specialist teams within King’s College London continually assess and ensure that data is held in the most appropriate and secure way. If you would like more information about how your and your child’s data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection laws, please visit the link below. If you can’t open this link, let us know and we can send you a printed copy of the document by post.

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

**What if I change my mind about my child taking part?**

You and/or your child are free to withdraw from the study at any point of the project, until **31st March 2025,** by emailing angie.pitt@kcl.ac.uk or writing to the researcher at the address at the end of this form. After this date,withdrawal of your child’s data will no longer be possible. You and/or your child will not have to give a reason to withdraw from the project, and withdrawing will not affect either of you in any way. If you or your child choose to withdraw from the project by 31st March 2025 we will not retain the information you have given thus far.

**How is the project being funded?**

This project is being funded by the United Kingdom Health Security Agency.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-health-security-agency>

**What will happen to the results of the project?**

The results of the project will be summarised in a university PhD thesis and will be published in an academic journal. Results may also be shared at conferences and with policymakers. If you or your child wish to receive a copy of the published research, you can request one by emailing angie.pitt@kcl.ac.uk.

**Who should I contact for further information?**

If you have any questions or require more information about this project, please contact Angie Pitt at angie.pitt@kcl.ac.uk or on 07842 869817.

**What if I have further questions, or if something goes wrong?**

If this project has harmed you or your child in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the project you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

**Professor James Rubin (gideon.rubin@kcl.ac.uk)**

**Weston Education Centre, King’s College London**

**10 Cutcombe Road, London SE5 9RJ**