IMPERIAL

Participant Information Sheet for Young People: Interviews

Study title

Kaleidoscope: Sharing your gaming activity and wellbeing, a 12-month study of 13–15 year-olds

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You're already part of Kaleidoscope: what this sheet adds

What you've already agreed to: You agreed to the main Kaleidoscope study, described in teen information sheets and repeated in Part 2 of this sheet. Nothing in this sheet changes that agreement.

What this sheet adds: An invitation to an optional online interview with our team between March and September 2027.

What's new: One interview (about 60 minutes, £15). The interview will be recorded and typed up without names, and the recordings are deleted within 8 weeks.

What stays the same: Transcripts are looked after in the same way as the rest of the study data (see Part 2). Your rights to stop and to ask us to delete data also stay the same.

Your choice: Your interview needs your agreement and your parent's consent. Saying yes or no to either doesn't affect your place in the main study, and we won't tell anybody what you say in the interview, unless someone's safety is at risk.

See what you've agreed to: Everything you've agreed to so far is in your study dashboard.

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Part 1: What this sheet adds – interviews

We would like to invite you to take part in an interview. This is an extra, optional part of Kaleidoscope. Part 1 of this sheet explains what the interview involves. Part 2 repeats the information sheet for the main Kaleidoscope study, which you and your parent or guardian have already agreed to, so that everything is in one place. Your parent or guardian has their own information sheet about the interview. They may also be invited to a separate group discussion with other guardians (called a focus group).

Why are we doing these interviews?

Not much research has looked at how young people and their families manage gaming, and teens themselves are rarely asked what they think. We want to hear from you about your own experience of gaming: for example, how you make sure gaming is a good part of your life, how you decide when to stop playing, or tips you have picked up from friends. We are also talking to parents and guardians about the gaming rules and approaches they use at home.

What we learn will also shape a later part of the study. In the last two check-in periods, we may ask some teens to try a small change to their gaming routine (see '(F) Trying a small change' under 'What will I have to do?' in Part 2). These changes will be based on ideas that young people and parents share in the interviews and focus groups. By asking teens how they feel before and after trying them, we can find out whether these ideas are easy to use, whether teens stick with them, how they change gaming, and whether they help teens feel good about their gaming. *These changes will be small and shouldn't get in the way of your everyday life.*

Why have I been invited?

We are inviting about 15–20 teens who are already taking part in Kaleidoscope. Based on the information you provide to us in the surveys we send to you in the main study, we will choose who to invite so that we hear from teens with lots of different gaming habits and backgrounds. Being invited doesn't mean there is anything good or bad about your gaming. It just means that we are interested in hearing about your gaming experiences. You can take part in an interview whether or not your parent or guardian takes part in a focus group.

What will the interview involve?

You will have a one-to-one video call with a member of our research team, lasting about 60 minutes. It is a relaxed conversation, not a test. The researcher has a list of topics to cover, but the conversation can follow what you want to talk about, and they may ask follow-up questions. (Researchers call this a 'semi-structured interview'.)

Topics include the games you enjoy, how you decide when to stop playing, any tricks or strategies you use or have heard about to manage your gaming, and what small changes you think young people like you might try. You can see the full list of interview topics on our website: study.digital-kaleidoscope.org/documents.

There are no right or wrong answers, and you won't be asked to explain or defend how much or what you play.

You can skip any question, take a break or stop at any time, and you can keep your camera off if you prefer. We suggest you join from somewhere private where you feel comfortable

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talking freely. You are welcome to ask us any questions you have about the interview before participating, during the interview, and after the interview is done.

When and where does the interview take place?

Interviews take place between March and September 2027, during the first six months of the study. They will happen online, on Microsoft Teams (a video call app). You don't need a Microsoft account: you can join from a link in a web browser or in the Teams app.

If you and your parent or guardian agree, we will send your parent or guardian a link to our booking calendar, where you can pick a time that suits you. Interviews are offered after school on weekdays, with some weekend times. Once your interview is booked, we will send a message to confirm the date and time.

Every interview is run by a named member of our research team. Everyone on our team who runs interviews has had a DBS enhanced check (a background check that people who work with young people must have).

Recording, transcripts and privacy

How the interview is recorded

We record the audio for the interview on Microsoft Teams, which also makes an automatic transcript (a written version of what was said). Your camera activity during the interview will not be recorded.

Being recorded is part of taking part. If you would rather not be recorded, that is ok, you won't be able to do an interview, but this won't affect anything else in the study.

Typing up and removing names

A member of our team checks the transcript against the recording and fixes any mistakes. They also remove names and anything else that could identify you or anyone you mention. This is called 'de-identifying'. Once this is done, we delete the recording and the automatic transcript, within 8 weeks of your interview.

Where your transcript is stored

We store your checked, de-identified transcript under your Study ID (a random code used instead of your name). We keep it safe in the same way as the rest of your study data (see 'How do you keep my data safe?' and 'How long do you keep it?' in Part 2). Using your Study ID means we can look at what you told us alongside your survey answers and gaming data.

Quotes and sharing the results

We may quote things you say in our reports and articles, but never with your name or anything else that could identify you.

At the end of the study, we will publish de-identified transcripts along with the rest of the de-identified study data (see 'Will my data be shared with other people?' in Part 2). Before we do so, our team will go through every transcript again and remove or change details that could identify someone, such as the names of schools, places or clubs, or unique details about your family. Even so, someone who knows you very well might recognise a story or detail you shared.

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Who hears what you say

Your interview is one-to-one, so only our research team will hear what you say.

We will not tell your parent or guardian what you say in your interview, and we will not tell you what they say in their focus group. There is one exception, to keep you safe: if you tell us that you or someone you know is at risk of serious harm, we will follow our safety rules (called a 'safeguarding protocol'). This might mean telling your parent or guardian, or other people whose job is to help.

What we keep, and for how long

Here is a summary of what we collect from your interview, and how long we keep it:

What	From whom	How long we keep it
Interview recording (sound but not video)	You	Deleted once the transcript is checked and de-identified, within 8 weeks of your interview
Automatic Teams transcript	You	Deleted at the same time as the recording
Checked, de-identified transcript	You	Kept with the rest of the study data, and published at the end of the study
Your interview consent choices (what you and your parent or guardian agreed to)	You and your parent or guardian	10 years after the study ends, like other consent records

Will I get paid for taking part?

Yes. As a thank you, you will get £15 for your interview. This is added to your other study payments and sent in the same way (see 'How do I get my payment?' in Part 2).

Are there any downsides or good things about taking part?

We don't expect the interview to cause any harm, but there are some things you should know before you decide.

Talking about personal things. Talking about gaming and family life can bring up things that feel personal, such as disagreements about gaming at home. You can skip any question, take a break or stop at any time. If anything worries or upsets you during the interview or after participating, you can talk to your parent or guardian, to us, or to one of the organisations listed under 'What if I feel upset or need help?' in Part 2.

Being recognised. We remove details that could identify you before we quote or publish anything, but someone who knows you well could still recognise a particular story or detail.

Time. The interview takes about an hour, plus a few minutes to book a time.

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Good things. Lots of people enjoy talking about their experiences. Your ideas will help shape the changes we test later in the study, and what we learn could lead to better advice for young people and families.

How do I agree to take part?

Your interview needs two agreements: your parent or guardian's consent, and your own agreement. The interview is optional, so it is completely up to you.

If you're invited, we will add a page to your study dashboard (your own private page on our website) that shows the information in this sheet. There, you can tick the statements to show you agree to the interview. Your parent or guardian will get their own information sheet and give their consent for you to participate in their own dashboard. You won't be interviewed unless you have both agreed.

Saying no won't affect your place in the main study, or anything else about taking part. You don't have to give a reason, but you are welcome to give us feedback if you like.

Can I change my mind?

Yes. You can stop taking part in the interview at any time, without giving a reason, even partway through. Your parent or guardian can also withdraw their consent for your interview. If your interview has already happened, you can ask us to delete what you said (see below). To stop, contact us at kaleidoscope@imperial.ac.uk or on WhatsApp (+44 7405 238914), or ask your parent or guardian to contact us.

Stopping the interview doesn't affect your place in the main study. But if you leave the main study, we will cancel your interview if it hasn't happened yet.

Until all the interviews and focus groups have finished (we expect this to be in September 2027), you or your parent or guardian can ask us to delete your interview data, and we will do this within 30 days. After that, we will have started studying the transcripts, so we can no longer remove yours. This is earlier than the deadline for deleting your other study data.

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Part 2: What you've already agreed to – the main Kaleidoscope study

This part repeats the information sheet for the main study, which you and your parent or guardian have already agreed to. Nothing in it has changed. We include it so that everything is in one place, and so you can check how the main study works alongside the interview. If Part 1 says something different about the interview, follow Part 1.

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About this information sheet

Introduction

Questions: kaleidoscope@imperial.ac.uk, or WhatsApp +44 7405 238914.

We are inviting you to take part in a research study called Kaleidoscope. Before you decide, it is important that you understand why we are doing this study and what you would need to do. Please take your time to read this sheet. You can talk about it with your parent or guardian, your friends, or anyone else you trust. Your parent or guardian has their own information sheet too.

We know this sheet is long. You don't have to read it all at once. You can also find the same information in smaller chunks, with pictures and videos, on our website (https://study.digital-kaleidoscope.org).

If anything is not clear, or you want to know more, just ask us. There are no silly questions. Thank you for reading this.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is completely up to you. Your parent or guardian also needs to agree. If you don't want to take part, that's fine. You don't have to give a reason, and nothing bad will happen.

If you and your parent or guardian would like you to take part, your parent or guardian signs up on our website and books a short video call (about 10 minutes) with our team. On the call, we check that they really are your parent or guardian, and you can both ask us any questions about the study.

If I take part, can I change my mind later?

Yes. You can stop at any time, without giving a reason.

If you want to stop, tell us (or ask your parent or guardian to tell us), and we will stop collecting any information from you. Until data collection or the study ends (see 'Stopping the study: Your choices and rights' below), you can also ask us to delete the information you have already given us, and we will do this within 30 days. After that, we can no longer tell which data is yours, so we cannot delete it.

Even if you stop, we must keep a record of what you and your parent or guardian agreed to, and of any payments, for 10 years.

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About the study

Why are we doing this study?

Lots of young people play video games, but we still know very little about how gaming fits into everyday life. We want to understand which games teens play, how often and when they play them, how gaming makes them feel, and how it fits in with family life. We are not trying to show that gaming is good or bad.

We called the study Kaleidoscope because in a kaleidoscope, lots of small pieces come together to make one pattern. In our study, we want to put together pieces of your day, like gaming, sleep and mood, to find the patterns that matter most for how young people feel.

Who is running the study?

The study is run by a team of researchers at Imperial College London, a university in London: Dr Nick Ballou, Dr Ahuti Das Friebel, Ms Josie Brooks, Dr Martina di Simplicio and Professor Sebastian Deterding. Between us, we are experts in psychology (the study of how people think, feel and act), mental health, and technology design. We are part of the Kaleidoscope Lab.

Who is paying for the study?

The study is paid for by the Huo Family Foundation (a charitable organisation that funds research) and by Imperial College London. No gaming companies are paying for or helping with the study.

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Who can take part

Who can take part?

To take part, you must:

(i) Play video games for at least 2 hours a week, on average
(ii) Play most of your games on Nintendo Switch, Xbox, PlayStation, Steam (PC), or an iPhone/iPad. These are the platforms we're able to collect gaming data from
(iii) Be happy to share your gaming data with us
(iv) Have your own smartphone that you don't share with anyone else – this is so we know that the surveys are answered only by you
(v) Have a WhatsApp account – this is because we send the surveys on WhatsApp
(vi) Not be going through a very hard time with your mental health right now – this study is not about serious mental health problems, and we are not able to give the extra support that someone in that situation would need

Why have I been invited?

We are inviting around 300 young people and their parents or guardians from Greater London to take part.

You have been invited because:

a. You are 13, 14 or 15 years old
b. You play video games regularly
c. You have your own smartphone with a WhatsApp account
d. You, or your parent or guardian, said you were interested in taking part.

You may also have heard about the study because your school agreed to share it with students and parents.

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What taking part involves

How does the study work? (Overview)

The study lasts about one year. Each month, we will send you a short survey (about 10 minutes). Surveys will ask questions about your background (for example, your age, gender, and neurotypicality), gaming, how you've been feeling (for example, your mood, loneliness and how satisfied you are with life), how things are going at school, and how gaming is handled at home, such as family rules, playing together and any disagreements about gaming.

You can see the full list of questions we ask at study.digital-kaleidoscope.org/documents.

Four times during the year, for two weeks at a time, you will also answer up to 5 short surveys a day on your phone about your day, your gaming and how you are feeling (about 2 minutes each).

All through the year, we will also collect your gaming data (sometimes called 'telemetry data'). This is the record that your games console or gaming platform keeps each time you play. It shows which game you played, how long you played for, and when you started and stopped. It gives us a true picture of your gaming without you having to remember it all, and it tells us when to send you the short surveys. *We do not watch this data as it comes in and so there is no real-time monitoring of your gaming activity*.

On most platforms, you add our study account as a friend. It can see what any other friend can see. Depending on your privacy settings, that might include your friends list or achievements. We only record a small amount of information about your gaming, which is listed under 'How do you collect my gaming data?'. Our study account will show up in your friends list, so your other friends may see it, depending on your privacy settings.

We will not be able to see your messages, chats or calls, passwords or payment details. We can't control your account, and we will never post anything or change any settings.

Here is an example of what the data we collect looks like:

When	What happened	Game	Your status	What the game shows
Sat 6 Mar, 18:02	Started a game	Star Farmers	Online	Day 12 · Harvest season
Sat 6 Mar, 18:47	Changed status	—	Away	—
Sat 6 Mar, 19:30	Stopped a game	Star Farmers	Online	—

What will I have to do?

If you choose to take part and your parent or guardian agrees, you will go through seven steps (we call them 'phases').

Phase	Name	When	What you do	How long	Compensation
A	Identity check	Start of study	10-minute video call with you, your parent or guardian	10 minutes	£0

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			and someone from our team		
B	Eligibility check	Start of study	A short survey	5 minutes	£0
C	Getting started	Start of study (Month 0)	Set up your dashboard, fill in your first survey (the 'baseline' survey), and link your gaming accounts	About 45 minutes in total	£10
D	Monthly surveys	Monthly, throughout the year	A short survey, sent as a link on WhatsApp	~10 minutes	£3
E	Check-in periods	Four 2-week periods, spread throughout the year	1–5 short surveys a day	~2 minutes	50p per survey. Up to £35 each 2-week period
F	Trying a small change	During the last 2 check-in periods, at most	You might be picked at random to try a small change to your gaming routine, like playing a different type of game than usual	No extra time needed	Included in Phase E
G	Study end	End (Month 12)	Final survey and personalised report	~15 minutes	£15

(A) Identity check

This is the short video call we described under 'Do I have to take part?' above.

After the call, we add you to the study. We will make a Kaleidoscope dashboard (your own private page on our website) for you, and a separate one for your parent or guardian, and send you instructions to log in. Your parent or guardian ticks the statements on their consent page to show they agree. Then you log in to your own dashboard and confirm that you want to take part. This is called giving your 'assent'. We don't collect anything from you until you have both agreed. You can see this sheet, and what you agreed to, at any time in your dashboard.

Your dashboard is your own space. You use it to link your gaming accounts, see your progress and payments, and find answers to your questions. Your parent or guardian can

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see whether you are taking part, which accounts are linked and how much you have earned, but never your answers or your gaming activity.

(B) Eligibility check

You will answer a short survey (about 5 minutes) to check that the study is a good fit for you. You can try the same questions first on our website (study.digital-kaleidoscope.org/join). The website version doesn't save any of your answers.

Some of the questions are about how you have been feeling. Kaleidoscope asks lots of questions about mood and feelings over a whole year, so it isn't right for young people who are going through a very hard time right now. If your answers to these questions are above a certain level, you won't go on to the next step. This is to look after you. It is based only on your answers to the questions. It is not a diagnosis, and it is not a judgement about you. If this happens, we will send you a message explaining that the study isn't the right fit for you at the moment, along with details of organisations that support young people and families.

If you don't go on with the study, we don't keep your answers. We delete them from the survey system within 7 days.

We will let your parent or guardian know on WhatsApp if you don't go on with the study, but to protect your privacy, we won't tell them why.

(C) Getting started

Once you pass the eligibility check, you will:

1. Answer a 'baseline' survey that takes about 30 minutes. It asks about:
    a. You – such as your age, ethnicity, gender and school year. All of these questions have a 'prefer not to say' option if you don't want to answer
    b. Your gaming and other media use (like social media or TV), your sleep, how you're feeling, your family life, your hobbies and activities, and important dates coming up, like exams, tests or competitions.
2. Link your gaming accounts to your dashboard. For example, to link your Xbox account, you add our lab's Xbox account as a friend. This lets us record your gaming automatically. We give you step-by-step guides, and we can help if you get stuck.

Once you have done these steps, we will start sending you the monthly surveys, and the daily surveys during check-in periods.

(D) Monthly, during the year

Once a month for the 12 months of the study, we will send you a WhatsApp message with a link to a short survey. The survey is on a secure website called Qualtrics, so you don't need to download anything. It takes about 10 minutes and asks about your gaming, mood and sleep. We will also ask if anything important has changed since your last monthly survey, like new rules at home about gaming, or starting a new club or activity.

Each monthly survey stays open for 7 days. If you haven't finished it, we send a reminder after 2 days and a last reminder after 5 days.

We only send messages at 8:30am or between 4pm and 9pm on school days, and between 10am and 9pm at weekends and in school holidays.

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(E) During four 2-week periods, spread across the year

Four times during the year, there will be a two-week check-in period. You don't need to remember the dates: we will message you on WhatsApp two weeks before each one, and again the day before. If the dates don't suit you, you can move a check-in period from your dashboard, up to a week before it starts.

During each two-week period, we will send you up to 5 short surveys a day (about 2 minutes each):

a) 1 in the morning asking how you slept the night before. It is sent at 8:30am on school days, and at 10am at weekends and in school holidays. It stays open all day, so you can answer it whenever suits you.
b) 4 during the day asking what you're doing and how you're feeling right then. Each one stays open for 20 minutes. After that, it counts as missed. These will arrive via WhatsApp when you start or stop playing a game (we can tell this from your gaming data). This tells us how you feel before and after gaming.

Each short survey will be sent as a WhatsApp message, and these surveys can be completed without leaving WhatsApp.

(F) Trying a small change

During the last two check-in periods, we **may** pick you at random to try a small change to your gaming routine. For example, playing a different type of game than usual, switching between games more often (without playing more overall), or gaming with friends, a brother or sister, or a parent. Before the check-in period starts, we will explain exactly what the change is and how long to try it for.

During those weeks, the morning survey will have one extra question asking whether you managed to make the change the day before. There are no right or wrong answers, and it's completely fine if you don't manage it. We just ask that you give it a proper try. If it really doesn't work for you or your family, you can stop and let us know.

(G) Study end

At the end of the study, along with your last monthly survey, we will ask you to fill in a final survey. It asks some of the same questions as your first ('baseline') survey, such as your gaming and media use, sleep, how you're feeling and your family life. It also asks what taking part in the study was like. It takes about 15 minutes.

You will also get a personal report showing some of what you told us during the year. For example, how your mood changed across the day, how your gaming changed between check-in periods, what time of day you played most often, and which games you played most. Only you see it, and it's up to you whether to share it. It won't tell you whether your gaming is 'good' or 'bad'. We will send it to your dashboard.

Optional: Data donation (sharing extra game data)

Around months 6 and 12, we may invite you to share more detailed data from up to three games that are popular with 13–15 year-olds: **Roblox, Fortnite and Minecraft.**

Data donation is different from the gaming data you need to share to be in the study. It is a one-off copy of the data that a game company holds about you. Doing this is completely

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up to you, and saying no doesn't change anything else about taking part. The law (called UK GDPR) says you have the right to ask companies for a copy of any data they hold about you.

Once you get your data from the game company, you open it on our website using a secure tool called Feldspar. Your own device removes personal information (including information about other people) and anything else we don't need. Then you see a summary of what's left. You choose which kinds of data to share, and you can leave out any of them. We only get what you choose to send.

If you donate data, we only collect these types of information, and **no** others:

- Playtime: when you played the game, and for how long
- In-game spending: things you bought with real money, and things bought with in-game money like coins
- How you did in the game: for example, how many times you won or lost, or your ranking
- Social activity, without names: for example, how many friends you have (but not who they are), or how many chat messages you sent (but not what they said)

Optional: Interviews

Part-way through the study, we will invite some young people to have an extra online chat with our team, lasting about 1 hour. This part is optional. You can still take part in the rest of Kaleidoscope if you say no.

If you are invited, we will give you a separate information sheet and consent form about the interviews. You and your parent or guardian both need to agree before an interview. Stopping the interviews doesn't end your place in the study, but leaving the study does end the interviews.

What happens if I stop answering?

If you don't answer 4 monthly surveys in a row, we will take this to mean you no longer want to take part, and we will take you out of the study. We will then stop sending you messages and stop collecting your gaming data. We will keep and use the answers and gaming data we already have, unless you or your parent or guardian ask us to delete them. You will still get all the payments you have earned.

During a two-week check-in period, if you don't answer any surveys for three days in a row, we will send you a friendly WhatsApp message to check that everything is working and see if you need help. If you still don't answer any surveys for three more days, we will stop sending surveys for the rest of that check-in period. Monthly surveys will carry on, unless you miss 4 in a row or you tell us to stop.

Stopping the study: Your choices and rights

You or your parent or guardian can stop, pause, unlink accounts or ask us to delete your data at any time. You don't have to give a reason, and you keep any payments you have already earned.

You want to	How	What happens

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Stop sharing one game account	Unlink it in your dashboard, or remove the study account as a friend	We stop collecting from that account straight away. We keep what we already collected.
Pause the study	Email, WhatsApp, or your dashboard (you or your parent or guardian)	We stop sending surveys and WhatsApp messages for one month, but we keep collecting gaming data in the background. After one month, everything goes back to normal.
Leave the study	Email, WhatsApp, or your dashboard (you or your parent or guardian)	Everything stops straight away. We keep and use what we already collected, unless you also ask us to delete it.
Have your data deleted	Email, WhatsApp, or your dashboard (you or your parent or guardian)	We delete your data within 30 days. You can ask for this until data collection finishes. After that, we remove the link to your contact details, so we can no longer find your data to delete it.

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Compensation

Will I get paid for taking part?

Yes. You will be compensated in the form of gift cards as a thank you for your time.

What	Compensation
First ('baseline') survey + linking game accounts (once, at the start)	£10
Monthly survey (11 times, Month 1 to Month 11)	£3 each
Each two-week check-in period (4 times)	50p per survey (up to £35 each period)
Final survey (once, Month 12)	£15
Optional data donations (Roblox, Fortnite, Minecraft)	Up to £10 for each one you upload successfully
Total	Up to £195, plus up to £30 from data donations if you do them, and up to £32 in bonuses (see below)

Bonuses

On top of this, you can earn bonuses for answering surveys regularly:

Surveys	What you need to do	Bonus
Monthly surveys (12 in total, including the final survey)	Complete 3 monthly surveys	£3 each time (up to £12 a year)
Check-in periods (4 in total, up to 70 surveys each)	Answer at least 60% of the surveys in the period (for example, 42 out of 70)	£1.50 per period
	Answer at least 70% (for example, 49 out of 70)	£3.00 per period
	Answer at least 80% (for example, 56 out of 70)	£5.00 per period

For check-in periods, you get the highest bonus you reach (they don't add together). So the most you can get is an extra £5 for each check-in period.

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What if I miss some surveys?

We know you won't be able to answer every survey. Every survey you answer adds to your total. If you miss one, you don't lose any money you have already earned. You can see how many surveys you have answered, and how much you have earned so far, in your dashboard.

How do I get my payment?

Your parent or guardian will decide whether your payment is sent straight to you, or to them for you.

Either way, we send the payment to that person's phone number using a service called Tremendous. It can be swapped for gift cards at around 150 shops and brands, like Amazon, Argos, Apple, M&S and John Lewis. Your dashboard and your parent or guardian's dashboard always show how much you have earned so far. Either of you can use it whenever you like – for example, after each check-in period, or all at once at the end.

You keep everything you have earned, even if you stop taking part.

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Risks and benefits

Are there any downsides to taking part?

We don't expect taking part to harm you, but there are some things you should know before you decide.

Sharing when you play. We can see when you start and stop playing, and some people might find that uncomfortable. We only see what a friend on that platform could see: whether you are online and which game you are playing (or, on iPhone, when the game apps you picked are opened and closed, and whether your phone is locked). *Nobody in our team is watching this as this happens. It is collected automatically, and we only look at it later, for research*. We never see your messages, chats or voice calls. You choose which accounts to link, and you can unlink any of them, or stop taking part, at any time from your dashboard.

Time. Taking part means answering surveys regularly for a year. During each two-week check-in period, you will get up to 5 short surveys a day. Some days this might feel like a lot. You don't have to answer every survey.

Surveys at a bad or unsafe time. Your surveys will come outside school hours, and most will come when you start or stop playing a game. But on days you don't game, they might come when you're busy, like when you're with friends or doing homework. Never answer a survey when it isn't safe, for example when crossing a road or doing anything else that needs your full attention. Each daytime survey stays open for 20 minutes, so you can wait until it's safe, or just skip it.

Questions about feelings. We will ask how you are feeling, and about your gaming, sleep and your day. Most people find this fine, but thinking about your feelings can sometimes be uncomfortable, especially if you're having a hard time. You can skip any question you don't want to answer. If anything worries or upsets you, you can talk to your parent or guardian, to us, or to one of the organisations listed under 'What if I feel upset or need help?'.

Changes to routines. In the last two check-in periods, we may ask you to try a small change to your gaming routine. These changes are meant to be small and not get in the way of family life. But if a change causes arguments at home, you can stop trying it at any time.

Data breach. A data breach is when information gets into the wrong hands, for example through hacking. We have taken every step we can, and we think this is extremely unlikely. But it is possible that personal details (like phone numbers or your gaming account names) could be part of a data breach. To make this less likely, we keep these details separate from your answers and gaming data, in an extra-secure part of our system. If a breach did happen, we have plans in place: we would act quickly to stop it, report it as the law says we must, and tell you and your parent or guardian if it could affect you.

Are there any benefits to taking part?

We can't promise that taking part will help you directly, but lots of young people and families find studies like this interesting and worthwhile.

For you. You get a behind-the-scenes look at a real research study, and you can ask us anything you like about it. At the end, you'll get a personal report showing patterns in your own everyday life. Some young people also find that answering questions about their day helps them notice how they're feeling.

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For other young people and families. Decisions about young people's gaming are usually made by adults, often without asking young people themselves. By taking part, you help researchers, schools, parents and decision-makers understand how gaming really fits into young people's lives. What we learn could lead to better advice and support for young people and families in the future.

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Your data and your rights

What information will you collect about me?

We only collect what we need to answer our research questions and to run the study. Some things we only collect if you choose to share them.

What	From whom	When	Why
Phone number, email, and first name (yours and your parent/guardian's)	You, your parent or guardian	When you sign up	To log you in, send survey links and reminders on WhatsApp, and contact you about the study
Survey answers (eligibility, baseline and monthly)	You	A first survey, then one a month for 12 months	This is the main research data. It helps us understand wellbeing, gaming and everyday life
Short in-the-moment surveys	You	Four 2-week periods during the year; up to 5 a day	To understand how gaming and mood are linked from day to day
Gaming activity from the accounts you choose to link	You	All year, while linked	To see how much and what you play, without relying on memory
Game data you choose to donate	You	Optional, around months 6 and 12	To get a fuller picture of games we can't follow live
Messages you send to our support team	Anyone who writes to us	When you contact us	To answer your questions
What you agreed to (your assent and your parent or guardian's consent)	You, your parent or guardian	When you agree, and any time you change your mind	To show what you agreed to, and when
Payments earned and paid	You, your parent or guardian	All through the study	To send your payments

How do you collect my gaming data?

You choose which accounts to link, and you can unlink any of them at any time from your dashboard. We will never ask for your passwords.

Platform	How it works	What we see

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Steam	You add a study account as a friend	Whether you are online, which game you are playing, and the status text the game shows to friends
Xbox	You add a study account as a friend	Whether you are online and which game you are playing
PlayStation	You add a study account as a friend	Whether you are online and which game you are playing
Nintendo Switch	You add a study account as a friend	Whether you are online and which game you are playing
iPhone	You install two Shortcuts (using Apple's Shortcuts app) that we give you, and pick your games	When those game apps are opened and closed, and whether your phone is locked. We only record the apps you pick, and no others
Data donation	You download your data from a game company, then check it in your web browser	Only the types of data you choose to share, after seeing a summary of each. Information about other people is removed on your device before anything is sent to us

We never collect:

- passwords for any account
- what you say in messages, chats or voice calls on any platform
- your friends list, or other players' data (other players' names can sometimes show up in a game's status text – we remove these before sharing any data)
- bank or card details
- your location, contacts or photos
- which pages you visit on our website

Game companies already have this activity data. Linking your account just lets us see the same information a friend would see. Each game company's own privacy rules still apply when you use their games or services.

How do you keep my data safe?

Your study data is stored on a secure computer (called a server) run by Imperial College London in the UK. It is inside the university's own network and can't be reached from the internet. Its data is encrypted, which means it is scrambled so that only people with permission can read it.

Everyone in the study gets a Study ID, which is a random code made of six letters and numbers. Your survey answers and gaming data are saved under your Study ID, not your name. Your phone number, your parent or guardian's phone number and your gaming account names are kept in a separate, extra-secure part of our system, and never with the research data. We also keep a copy of your gaming data exactly as we received it, in case we need to process it again. Because this copy includes account names, it is kept in the extra-secure part too.

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Survey links use a one-time code instead of your Study ID. None of our surveys ask for your name, your IP address (a number that can show where you are connecting to the internet from) or your location.

Who can see my data?

Only named people in the research team can see your data, and only the parts they need for their job. They log in with two-step verification using secure Imperial College accounts, and any changes to contact details or consent records are recorded.

You and your parent or guardian can't see each other's answers. They can see whether you are taking part and which accounts are linked, but never your survey answers or gaming activity. There is one exception, to keep you safe: if you tell us that you or someone you know is at risk of serious harm, we will follow our safety rules (called a 'safeguarding protocol'). This might mean telling your parent or guardian, or other people whose job is to help.

We use a few other companies to help run the study. Each one only gets what it needs, and follows the standard rules Imperial uses to keep data safe when working with other companies:

Organisation	What it does	What it handles
Meta (WhatsApp)	Sends log-in checks, survey links and reminders, and carries messages to our support team	Phone numbers, messages, and your answers to the short check-in surveys
Qualtrics	Runs the monthly surveys	Survey answers, saved under your Study ID, not your name or number
Microsoft	Booking the video call; Teams for the call and interviews	Name and contact details given when booking; interview recordings
Tremendous	Sends payments	The phone number and email address we already have, to send your payments

Qualtrics stores survey answers in Frankfurt, Germany (in the EU). Meta may handle WhatsApp messages outside the UK.

How long do you keep it?

Until data collection finishes, we can still link your Study ID to your contact details. This means you or your parent or guardian can ask us to delete your data up until then.

When data collection ends, we delete the phone numbers, the gaming account names and the original copy of the gaming data. After that, the research data can no longer be linked to your phone number or gaming accounts. So we can no longer tell which data is yours, or delete it if you ask.

The one exception is if your parent or guardian ticked 'contact me about future research'. If they did, we keep their name, email address and phone number for up to 3 years after the study ends, only so we can invite them to future studies. These details are kept on their own,

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with no link to your answers or gaming data. They can untick this at any time in their dashboard, or ask us to delete their details.

We call the research data ‘de-identified’ rather than ‘anonymous’. This is because it still includes things like your age, gender and when you played. So someone who knows you really well could, in theory, recognise you.

Records of what you agreed to, and of payments, are kept for 10 years after the study ends. This follows Imperial College London’s rules for keeping records. After that, they are safely destroyed.

We handle all data in line with UK data protection law (the UK General Data Protection Regulation, or UK GDPR, and the Data Protection Act 2018).

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After the study

What will happen to the results of the study?

When the study is finished, we will look at everyone's answers together to find patterns. This can take up to two years after we finish collecting data. Then we will share what we found by writing articles for researchers and decision-makers, giving talks at research meetings, and sending short, easy-to-read summaries to everyone who took part and to other organisations who are interested.

Your name and other personal details will never appear in anything we write or say about the study.

Will my data be shared with other people?

At the end of the study, we will put a de-identified version of the research data (without names or contact details) on Zenodo. Zenodo is a free online library for research data, run by CERN, where anyone can download it. This is part of 'open science'. It means other researchers can check that our results are correct, and use the data to answer new questions about young people's lives. Only this de-identified version will be shared.

Before we share any data publicly, we:

- replace your Study ID with a different code that can't be linked back to you, even by someone who knows your Study ID
- never include names, phone numbers or account names
- remove other players' names, and any typed answers that could show who someone is
- check the data for unusual mixes of details that could show who someone is, and remove them or make them less detailed

Once the data is published, people anywhere can use it for research. We can't take it back from people who have already downloaded it.

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Help, worries and contacts

What if something goes wrong?

If you are unhappy about anything to do with the study, or something has gone wrong, please tell us. You can contact the lead researcher, Dr Nick Ballou, at n.ballou@imperial.ac.uk, or the whole team at kaleidoscope@imperial.ac.uk. We will listen and do our best to sort it out. You can also ask your parent or guardian to contact us for you. If it would help, we will involve Dr Martina di Simplicio, a psychiatrist (a doctor who specialises in mental health) who works with children and young people. She can answer questions about the study and suggest where to find support, but she can't assess, diagnose or treat you as part of the study.

If you are still not happy, or you would rather talk to someone who doesn't work on the study, you can contact Imperial College London's Research Governance and Integrity Team at rgitcoordinator@imperial.ac.uk.

If you are worried about how your information has been used, you can also contact Imperial's Data Protection Officer at dpo@imperial.ac.uk, by phone on 020 7594 3502, or by post at Imperial College London, Data Protection Officer, Faculty Building Level 4, London SW7 2AZ.

If you are still not happy with our answer, or you think we are using your personal data in a way that is against the law, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at www.ico.org.uk. The ICO is the UK organisation that makes sure people's data is protected. They recommend that you try to sort things out with us first.

What if I feel upset or need help?

If taking part makes you feel upset or worried, you don't have to wait. You can talk to someone straight away at:

1. Childline. Call 0800 1111 or visit childline.org.uk (free, any time)
2. The Mix. Call 0808 808 4994 or visit themix.org.uk/counselling (up to 8 free counselling sessions)
3. SHOUT. Text message support, text SHOUT to 85258 (free, any time)
4. Samaritans. Call 116 123 or visit samaritans.org (free, any time)

Who has checked the study?

Before a study can start, it has to be checked by an independent group of people called a Research Ethics Committee, to make sure it is safe and fair. This study has been checked and given a favourable opinion by the Imperial College Research Ethics Committee (ICREC), and approved by (individuals name), Head of Department (name the department).

How can I contact you?

If you have any questions that this sheet doesn't answer, or questions that come up during the study, email us at kaleidoscope@imperial.ac.uk or message us on WhatsApp at any time (+44 7405 238914). We reply during working hours, usually within two working days.

This isn't an emergency service. If you need help right now, see 'What if I feel upset or need help?'

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Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

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Black = mandatory wording
Red = Wording which is able to be amended/deleted
Blue = Optional wording

The next pages give more detail about how we use and look after your data. Your parent or guardian has the same information in their sheet.

SUMMARY INFORMATION SHEET

In this research study we will use information from you and your parent or guardian. We will only use information that we need for the study. We will let very few people know your name or contact details, and only if they really need to for this study. These people will be members of the Imperial research team and staff who support them.

Everyone involved in this study will keep the study data, including your personal data, safe and secure. We will also follow all the privacy laws that apply to this study.

At the end of the study, we will save some of the data in case we need to check it, and for future research. We will also publish a de-identified version of the research data (without names or contact details) so other researchers can use it.

We will make sure no one can work out who you are from the reports we write. The rest of this sheet tells you more about this.

How will we use information about you?

Research Study Title: Kaleidoscope: Sharing your gaming activity and wellbeing, a 12-month study of 13–15 year-olds

Study number: 8422990

Imperial College London is the sponsor of this study, and is the Data Controller. This means we are responsible for looking after your information, using it properly, and explaining this to you. Imperial College London will keep your personal data for:

- 10 years after the study has finished, for consent and assent records (what you and your parent or guardian agreed to).
- 10 years after the study has finished, for the main research data.

The study is expected to finish in August 2028.

For more information about the end date, please contact the study team (see 'WHERE CAN YOU FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW YOUR INFORMATION IS USED' for contact details).

We will need to use information from you and your parent or guardian for this research project. This includes personal data and data created during the study.
This information will include:

- your phone number and your parent or guardian's phone number
- your parent or guardian's name and email address, if they give them when booking the video call
- the gaming account names you link
- if you take part in an interview, the interview recording.

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People at Imperial and in the study team (see 'SHARING YOUR INFORMATION WITH OTHERS') will use this information to do the research, or to check our records to make sure the research is being done properly and that the information we hold (like contact details) is correct.
People who don't need to know who you are won't be able to see your name or contact details. Your data will have a code number (your Study ID) instead.

Imperial College London is the sponsor of this research and is responsible for looking after your information. We will keep your information safe and secure by:

- Following data management plans, written and checked in line with Imperial's rules for looking after information. These cover how data is collected, moved, used and stored.
- Storing study data on a secure Imperial College London server in the UK, inside the university's network. It can't be reached from the internet, and its data is encrypted (scrambled so others can't read it).
- Using a code instead of your name (this is called 'pseudonymisation'): your survey answers and gaming activity are saved under a random Study ID, separate from phone numbers and gaming account names, which are kept in a more restricted part of the system.
- Making sure only named members of the research team can see the data, and only the parts they need. They log in with two-step verification, and any changes to contact details and consent records are recorded.

When the study is finished, we will keep some of the data so we can check the results. We will write our reports so that no one can work out that you took part in the study.

LEGAL BASIS

As a university, we use information that can identify people to do research that improves health, care and services. Because we are a publicly-funded organisation, we must make sure that using this information is in the public interest. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use your data in the ways needed to run the study and look at the results. Our legal basis for using your information under data protection law (the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018) is:

• Imperial College London – "performance of a task carried out in the public interest". This means our research should help society as a whole. We show this by following the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research.

Where we use special types of personal information (such as health information, or information about ethnicity), Imperial College London relies on "scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes".

INTERNATIONAL TRANSFERS

We may share data about you outside the UK for research reasons with:

Organisation	Why we need to share data	What data they process
Meta (WhatsApp)	Sends log-in checks, survey links and reminders, and carries messages to our support team	Phone numbers, messages, and your answers to the short check-in surveys

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Qualtrics	Runs the monthly surveys	Survey answers, saved under your Study ID, not your name or number
Microsoft	Booking the video call; Teams for the call and interviews	Name and contact details given when booking; interview recordings
Tremendous	Sends payments	The phone number and email address we already have, to send your payments

If this happens, we will only share the data that is needed. Where possible, we will also make sure you can't be identified from the data we share. Sometimes this may not be possible – for example, if someone has a very rare illness, it may still be possible to identify them. If your data is shared outside the UK, it will be with these kinds of organisations:

- Companies that help us run the study
  - Meta, which runs WhatsApp, for messages and short check-in surveys
  - Qualtrics, for the monthly surveys, stored in the EU
  - Tremendous, based in the USA, for sending payments
- Zenodo, an online library for research data run by CERN in Switzerland, where we will publish the de-identified research data

We will make sure your data is protected. Anyone who uses your data outside the UK must do what we tell them, so that your data is protected about as well as it is under UK law. We keep your data safe outside the UK in these ways:

- some of the countries your data will be shared with have an 'adequacy decision'. This means we know their laws protect data about as well as UK laws do
- we use special contracts which say personal data must be protected just as well outside the UK as inside it. For more details, visit the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) website – www.ico.org.uk
- we do not allow anyone who uses your data outside the UK to use it for anything other than what our written contract with them says
- we need other organisations to have good security to protect your data, at the same level we must meet ourselves. This includes protecting your data from being lost by accident, or being seen, used, changed or shared without permission
- we have plans in place to deal with any possible data breach. For more details about UK rules on reporting breaches, visit the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) website – Personal data breaches: a guide | ICO

SHARING YOUR INFORMATION WITH OTHERS

We will only share your personal data with certain other organisations for the reasons explained in this information sheet, and using the legal basis explained above.

- Other Imperial College London staff (people working directly on the study, or doing other jobs such as support, checks (audits), or making sure contact details are correct), and agents, contractors and companies that provide services to Imperial (for example, printing and post, email, or web services, or companies that help us with any of the things described above). These companies must sign agreements with us about how they handle data.

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We only let them use your personal data for specific reasons, and in line with our rules.

POTENTIAL USE OF STUDY DATA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

When you agree to take part in a research study, the information collected as part of the study, or to get ready for the study (such as contact details), may be given to researchers running other studies, if you agree. These could be at Imperial College London or at other universities or research organisations in the UK or abroad. Your information will only be used for research that follows the law, including the GDPR and the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research.

This information will not identify you. It will not be combined with other information in a way that could identify you, and it will not be used against you or to make decisions about you.

WHAT ARE YOUR CHOICES ABOUT HOW YOUR INFORMATION IS USED?

You can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving a reason, but we will keep the information about you that we already have.
You have the right to ask us to remove, change or delete data we hold about you for the study. We might not always be able to do this if it means we can't use your data for the research. If so, we will tell you why.

- When you agree to take part in this study, your de-identified research data will be published on Zenodo, an online library for research data run by CERN, where other researchers can use it in future research.
- Separately, your parent or guardian can choose to tick 'contact me about future research' on their consent page. If they do, we keep their name, email address and phone number for up to 3 years after the study ends, only to invite them to future studies. They can untick this at any time in their dashboard.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW YOUR INFORMATION IS USED

You can find out more about how we use your information:

- by asking someone in the research team
- by sending an email to kaleidoscope@imperial.ac.uk, or
- by ringing us on +44 7438 274552
- on our study website (https://study.digital-kaleidoscope.org/documents)

COMPLAINT

If you want to complain about how we have handled your personal data, please contact the research team first by emailing kaleidoscope@imperial.ac.uk, or by calling us on +44 7438 274552.

If you are not happy with our answer, please contact Imperial College London's Data Protection Officer by email at dpo@imperial.ac.uk, by phone on 020 7594 3502, or by post at Imperial College London, Data Protection Officer, Faculty Building Level 4, London SW7 2AZ.

If you are still not happy with our answer, or you think we are using your personal data in a way that is against the law, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at www.ico.org.uk. The ICO recommends that you try to sort things out with us (the data controller) first.

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