



### **Adapting a Problem-Solving Programme for Autistic Children and Young People or those with Learning Difficulties or those with Epilepsy**

We are inviting your child to participate in our research study to adapt and test a problem-solving programme for children and young people who are autistic, have learning difficulties, or have epilepsy. Before you provide your consent for your child to take part in the study, we want to ensure that you have all the necessary information.

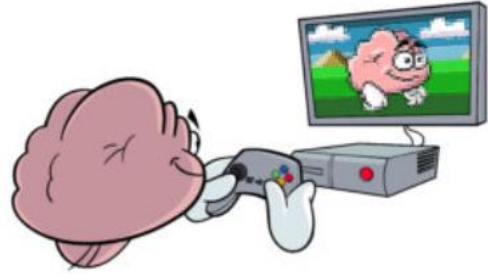
#### **What Is This Study About?**

Children and young people who are autistic, have a learning difficulty, or have epilepsy may struggle with skills like problem-solving, planning, and organising (known as executive function skills). This study aims to adapt a web-based program called Teen Online Problem Solving (TOPS). TOPS provides strategies to help manage executive function challenges that impact everyday life. Originally designed for young people with brain injuries, we want to modify TOPS to benefit children and young people who are autistic, have learning difficulties, or have epilepsy. Your child's opinions and insights on TOPS are crucial as we create a version tailored to their specific needs.



#### **What Will Your Child Do If They Join?**

If your child decides to participate, we will arrange to meet with you and your child (via video/audio call) to tell you more about what will be involved and to find out from you if there is anything that we can do to make participating in the study more enjoyable. This will also be an opportunity for your child to decide if they would be more comfortable if you were to join them for the focus group. If they choose to proceed, they'll join an online call with our researchers and up to 7 other children and young people who have similar experiences. The focus group session will last about an hour and will be recorded. Your child can turn off their camera during the call, and only the research team will have access to the recording. During the session, we'll ask for your child's input on improving the program for children and young people who are autistic, have learning difficulties, or have epilepsy. They can share their ideas on program design and the topics it should cover.



### **It's Their Choice**

Participating in this study is entirely voluntary. Your child is not obligated to take part, and they can stop at any time. If your child is under 16 years old, we'll ask you for consent (with your child's assent). If your child is 16 or older, they can provide consent themselves. We'll also provide you with this information sheet about the study's purpose.

### **They Can Withdraw Anytime**

If your child is part of the focus group and wants to withdraw, they can do so without giving any explanation. Their decision won't impact any compensation or vouchers they might receive.

### **They Can Change Their Mind About Their Data**

After participating, your child has a two-week window to request the deletion of any shared information. After that, we'll remove any details that could potentially identify them.

### **Are There Any Risks?**

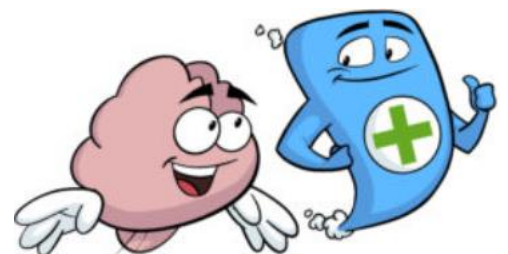
Participating in this study doesn't come with significant risks. During the session, we'll talk about both the positive and negative aspects of the TOPS programme. If anything makes your child uncomfortable or upset, they can leave the call, take a break, or stop participating. Their safety and well-being are our main concerns.

### **Are There Any Benefits?**

Your child's participation will help develop a TOPS programme that can benefit other children and young people. Plus, they'll receive a £25 voucher for their time.

### **What Happens to Their Information?**

While the call will be recorded for transcription, only the research team will have access to it. Once transcribed and de-identified, the recording will be deleted. The anonymised transcript will be securely stored on the University of Exeter server with password protection and may be used for additional research purposes by our team for up to 10 years.



### **How Do We Safeguard Their Information?**

All information, recordings, and transcripts will be securely stored on the University of Exeter server with restricted access limited to our research team. When compiling reports, we'll ensure no identifying information is included. The University aims to be transparent about processing your child's personal data. If you have any queries that the research team can't resolve, you can contact the University's Data Protection Officer at [dataprotection@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@exeter.ac.uk) or visit [www.exeter.ac.uk/dataprotection](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/dataprotection).



### **Got Questions?**

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact:

A/Prof Anna Adlam at [a.r.adlam@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:a.r.adlam@exeter.ac.uk)

Flora Hemming at [m.f.h.hemming@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:m.f.h.hemming@exeter.ac.uk)

If you have any concerns about ethics, you can talk to the Psychology Ethics Committee Co-Chairs, Ian McLaren ([I.P.L.McLaren@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:I.P.L.McLaren@exeter.ac.uk)) and Ciro Civile ([c.civile@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:c.civile@exeter.ac.uk)). You can also reach out to Antony Walsh ([A.Walsh3@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:A.Walsh3@exeter.ac.uk)) if you want to talk to someone else about any worries or complaints.

Thank you for considering this opportunity for your child to participate in our study. Your support is greatly appreciated.