

**Group Differences in the Cognitive and Affective Processing of Social and Emotional Cues**

**Information Sheet**

We are recruiting participants for a research project that aims to understand how people with convictions for different types of sexual or violent offences process social and emotional cues. Should you decide to participate, you will be part of the control group for this study.

During the study, we will show you some images that may cause some mild discomfort. They depict hands in potentially painful everyday situations e.g., chopping vegetables with a knife, but no actual injury is shown. Other images depict children and adults wearing swimwear, similar to what one might see on a visit to the local swimming pool.

We will also ask you some questions about your mental wellbeing, including mood and anxiety, and we will ask about your use of different sexual fantasies involving children. If you would be likely to experience considerable discomfort responding to these items, then you should not take part.

All participation is voluntary and anonymous. You will be reimbursed £15 for your time in line with University of Liverpool guidance on participant payments. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important that you understand what is involved and why the research is being carried out. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

**What is the research for?**

The study aims to explore how different groups perform on tasks that measure self-regulation and understanding other people’s emotions and thoughts. It also aims to explore how these responses vary with personality traits. This research could help us to better understand why some people commit sexual or violent offences.

**Who can take part?**

Anybody can take part who is male, aged over 18, and speaks the English language. You should not take part if you have committed a sexual or violent offence, if you have learning difficulties or a neurological condition, are experiencing psychoses, or if you have current substance abuse/dependence or have used alcohol or other substances on the day of testing.

**Do I have to take part?**

All participation is completely voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you can change your mind at any point during the study; you can simply stop completing the study without providing explanation. As we will not be recording any personally identifiable information about you alongside your responses, you will be unable to withdraw your responses or request that your data are destroyed after data collection has been completed.

**What does the research involve?**

Participation will take around 2 hours to complete all study measures. You will first be asked to confirm that you understand what is involved, and whether or not you agree to take part in the study. You will be asked to complete three computer-based tasks:

1. We will ask you to rate your feelings in response to a number of images while we record your eye movements and the size of your pupil
2. We will ask you to watch a short movie and answer questions at intervals while we record your eye movements and the size of your pupil
3. We will ask you to respond as quickly as possible to cues presented on the computer

You will also be asked to provide some simple information about you (for example, your age, gender and ethnicity), and to respond to questionnaire items.

**What does eye tracking involve?**

The eye tracking will be completed in head-free-to-move mode, this means that your head will not be restrained in any way. You will be required to place a small sticky dot to your forehead, between your eyebrows. The researcher will begin the task by focussing the eye tracking camera, a small black box which sits on top of the laptop keypad, and you will be asked to fixate on a given point at the beginning of each trial. This camera will record the movements of your eyes and the size of the pupil (the small dark openings at the centre of the eye that let light in).

**What are the risks?**

Some questions will ask about feelings of anxiety, feelings of low mood, intentional harm or suicidal thoughts, and sexual fantasies involving children.

You will be shown images including hands in painful situations and computer modified images of children and adults in swimwear. None of these images display any actual injury or indecency. If you think that these images will cause you considerable discomfort, then you should not take part. If you do feel uncomfortable while completing the study, please alert the researcher.

The research team are unable to offer any clinical advice or guidance on the subjects involved in this study. We have provided web addresses and contact details for relevant helplines and sources of support at the end of this form. This information will also be provided in a separate document following study completion.

If you would like support for your physical or mental health, or if you are concerned about intentional harm or suicidal thoughts, please contact your GP, or contact your nearest Accident and Emergency Services department (or call 111 or 999) if you feel that your own or somebody else’s life is in crisis.

**What protocols are in place for COVID-19?**

Please see the accompanying document that details university wide COVID-19 protocol, as well as protocols that will be in place during the testing session. Please note that we advise you to receive a COVID-19 test within the 5 days prior to attending the testing session.

**What are the benefits?**

You will be reimbursed with an Amazon e-voucher with a value of £15 for your time in line with University of Liverpool guidance on participant payments. All participants in the research will provide valuable information to help increase our understanding of the cognitive and affective processing of social and emotional cues, and why some people commit offences.

**Is it confidential?**

Your signed consent form will be stored separately to your responses. We will not be able to link your responses back to you. Responses to questionnaire items will remain confidential, however, if you were to provide details of a particular crime that has happened or has been planned, or identified a person who is at risk of harm, either during the testing session or in communications with the researchers in which you identify yourself, then the university would have a duty to report this information to the relevant authorities.

Under COVID-19 procedures, we will collect a contact telephone number and email address for means of our track and trace system. This contact information will only be used for COVID track and trace purposes and will not be stored with/cannot be linked back to your responses.

**What will you do with my information?**

After completing data collection, the research team will analyse all anonymous information. The findings from this research will be submitted for publication in scientific journals. Findings may also be presented during conferences or workshops.

All data will be stored in accordance with the law. Under UK data protection legislation, the University acts as the Data Controller for personal data collected as part of the University’s research. Any queries relating to the handling of your personal data can be sent to the Principal Investigator, Dr Steven Gillespie, who will act as the Data Processor for this study. For more information, please see further information on how my data will be used.

**Can I have a copy of the findings?**

Participants may contact the Principal Investigator, Dr Steven Gillespie, by email to request a summary of the findings following data processing and analysis. We will not be able to feedback about your individual responses.

**What if I’m unhappy or there is a problem?**

If you are unhappy with the research, or there is any problem, please let us know by contacting Dr Steven Gillespie (Steven.Gillespie@liverpool.ac.uk) and we will do our best to help.

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint that you do not want to come to us with, please contact the Research Governance Officer (ethics@liv.ac.uk). When contacting the Research Governance Officer, please provide details of the name or description of the study (so that it can be identified), the researcher involved, and the details of the complaint you wish to make.

**Who can I contact if I have further questions?**

If you would like any more information about this study, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr Steven Gillespie, by email (steven.gillespie@liverpool.ac.uk).

**Further information on how my data will be used:**

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| How will my data be collected? | Your data will be collected via computer tasks and questionnaires. |
| How will my data be  stored? | Data will remain the responsibility of the data custodian (the Principal Investigator), who will be responsible for storing the data securely in accordance with the University's Research Data Management policy. |
| How long will my data  be stored for? | The data will be available indefinitely on a data archive for reuse and future research. |
| What measures are in  place to protect the  security and  confidentiality of my  data? | We will not store any personally identifiable information with your data. We will ask for your name and signature on a consent form, but this information will be stored separately to any responses you provide. |
| Will my data be  anonymised? | All data used in the research will be completely anonymous. We will not be able to link any personally identifiable information about you to your responses. |
| How will my  anonymous data be  used? | The results of the study will be written up for publication in journals and/or shared at conferences or workshops. The results may also be shared with relevant organisations and networks. |
| Who will have access to my anonymous data? | Dr Steven Gillespie and the Co-Investigators will have access to your data. |
| Will my data be  archived for use in  other research  projects in the future? | Your anonymised data will be available on a data archive for reuse and future research. |
| How will my data be  destroyed? | Your consent form and any written responses will be destroyed in accordance with the University’s Research Data Management Policy after ten years. |

**Sources of Information and Support**

**StopItNow! UK and Ireland**

Telephone (Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm: 0808 1000 900

Webpage: <https://www.stopitnow.org.uk/concerned-about-your-own-thoughts-or-behaviour/concerned-about-use-of-the-internet/>

**Victim Support (UK)**

Telephone: 08 08 16 89 111

Webpage: <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/crime-info/types-crime/domestic-abuse>

**National Crime Agency Child Exploitation and Online Protection**

For advice about online child safety visit <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

**MIND**

Infoline: 0300 123 3393; Email: info@mind.org.uk; Text: 86463; Post: Mind Infoline, PO Box 75225, London, E15 9FS

Infoline provides an information and signposting service related to concerns about mental health. It is open 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays).

https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/

**The Samaritans (UK)**

Telephone (24hours a day): 116 123

e-mail (response time: 24 hours): jo@samaritans.org