

Carnegie Mellon University
Children's School Research Policies
2024-2025

All faculty, research associates, and students who wish to conduct observations and/or research in the Children's School must follow these six steps.

Step 1: Becoming Research Eligible

The Carnegie Mellon Institutional Review Board stipulates that all individuals conducting research with human subjects must demonstrate completion of the education program on the use of human participants in research taken through the

Dr. Carver will also evaluate the project for consistency with our philosophy (e.g., no competition, commercial characters, extrinsic rewards, etc.) and negotiate the rough time schedule for each project to assure adequate access to the children and research space without undue disruption (i.e., 4 studies run one week and none the next).

Step 3: Reviewing the Study with the Educators

Researchers who will be interacting with large numbers of children or doing longitudinal studies (i.e., as opposed to merely observing or doing a pilot study of a few children) typically attend a Friday afternoon staff meeting to describe the study and discuss ways to run it smoothly in the Children's School context. This meeting can be scheduled with Dr. Carver during the initial approval process.

Step 4: E1

- **Turn off your cell phone.** Cell phone use is not permitted in classrooms or labs. If

- During most of the following time blocks, the teacher will conduct one “circle time” that involves gathering all the children to discuss the school day. Since this time is both

- Each child has the right to refuse to participate in the study. If the child says, “Maybe later”, try to ask one more time later in the session. If the child refuses again, the card then goes into the **Refusal** envelope, and then you will approach another child.
- On your way to the lab with a participant, **enter your code number** beside the name of the subject on the Research Participation List posted in the office.
- Always **keep the door open** while working with a child.
- At the end of the session, **put a "participation sticker"** on the child to alert the parents that the child has been in a study. The sticker should give the parents a clue for asking the child about the activity, such as, "Ask me about the lemonade stand game."
- Put the child's name on a copy of your **Parent Experiment Description**. Have the child walk with you to his/her locker before returning to an activity so that you can **put a**

After a study has been approved, Mrs. Stilinovich will post a description of it on the research bulletin board and include a copy in our weekly news. As soon as possible thereafter, the observer/researcher is responsible for submitting a report of the results to Dr. Carver, so that she can either post it along with the initial description or write a shorter version for the bulletin board and newsletter. The observer/researcher should also send copies of all papers written about the studies conducted at the Children's School to Dr. Carver. She will make them available to parents and teachers and/or may ask you to lead a discussion of your research at the school.

***** Hints for maintaining good relations with the Children's School Staff *****

- Speak, behave, and dress in a professional manner.
- **Make arrangements well ahead of time.**
- Keep your cell phone off while working at the Children's School
- Remember that you might want to conduct additional studies at the Children's School,

Special Considerations for Research at a Laboratory School

Prepared for Researchers at the Carnegie Mellon University Children's School
Dr. Sharon M. Carver

Because children in a laboratory school context participate in many studies each semester, everyone involved needs to collaborate to ensure that each research experience is positive and leaves the child interested in further participation. In addition, we must think beyond the ethics of any one study to consider the potential impact of studies on each other, the combined impact of studies, and the impact of the collective research endeavor on the school and classroom operations. Furthermore, because parents are signing the consent form prior to the study designs, we must take care to only approve studies that we are confident would pass the parents' scrutiny. All of these considerations require that the study review be in some ways more stringent than the standard Institutional Review Board process. At the same time, because it is all done by the laboratory school director, the process can also be timelier, access to a sizeable subject pool is ensured, and researchers can arrange for quick study modifications following pilot testing.

With that background in mind, here are some aspects of studies that will raise red flags in the review process at the Children's School.

Sample Experiment Descriptions

Make sure the description includes a “game name” that will be memorable to the children, the researcher’s and professor’s names, and information about the purpose, design, procedure, and relevance of the study. Including pictures of sample stimuli often helps with the explanation. NOTE: Please use a 12pt font and double spacing.

Working With Young Children

Ways With Children* - In Speech

1. Use your voice as a teaching tool (calm, moderate tones).
2. Use a tone of voice that will help the child feel confident and reassured, not afraid or guilty or ashamed.
3. Speak in a very matter of fact manner and **avoid baby talk with children.**
4. Make an effort to speak in simple sentences but in a regular tone of voice.
5. Make suggestions or state directions in a positive rather than a negative form.
Example: "Park your tricycle here." -