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Canada-Wide Science Fair

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Projects ? Ethics

Youth Science Canada has policies governing the use of human participants, animals (vertebrate and invertebrate) and animal parts in research by young scientists (elementary and secondary school students). Ideally these policies are consulted prior to beginning work on the project; however, even if they have not been, they define what is acceptable at the Canada-Wide Science Fair.

Use of Human Subjects

Participation of Humans in Research - Low Risk

All human participants in scientific research must give Informed Consent, which comprises consent,

confidentiality and the right to withdraw. Class surveys of attitudes, beliefs or skill tests, such as "Do my

classmates remember better if they read while listening to jazz or hip hop?" may be termed Low Risk, as

defined in the Participation of Humans in Research - Low Risk ^[1] policy.

For Low Risk projects, completion of the simple Participation of Humans - Low Risk (Form 4.1A) is required.

Approval by the student's adult supervisor is usually sufficient to ensure that the appropriate ethical issues

have been addressed. Be aware, however, that not all such surveys are low risk. For example, a survey to measure the Body Mass Index of class members could affect participants' self-esteem and would therefore be classified as Significant Risk.

Participation of Humans in Research - Significant Risk

The Participation of Humans in Research - Significant Risk [2] policy establishes what constitutes a drug and

specifies that drugs and invasive procedures may only be used in a science project experiment under the

direction of a qualified Scientific Supervisor.

Effective October, 2010, sensory food projects (i.e., those designed only to assess the sensory characteristics

of a food or drink), within certain restrictions (e.g., not involving "energy drinks"), are the only ingestion

projects considered to be low risk. Significant risk ingestion projects are only allowed at the CWSF if carried

out under professional supervision at a laboratory with its own internal Ethics Review Committee, such as a

university or hospital laboratory. Projects in which human participants, including the student researcher, are

required to consume a substance or apply a substance to the skin must be carefully reviewed for compliance

with the indicated Humans in Research policies before any testing begins.

All projects involving human participants in ways other than surveys and skill tests are considered Significant

Risk. For Significant Risk projects, the more detailed Participation of Humans - Significant Risk Approval

(Form 4.1B) must be completed, and the indicated approval procedures must be followed.

Use of Animals (Vertebrate and Invertebrate)

All experimental care and use of animals in Canada is subject to the requirements of the Canadian Council on

Animal Care (CCAC), a national, peer-review organization founded in Ottawa in 1968. CCAC documentation

states: ?Youth Science Canada, amongst its responsibilities, regulates animal experimentation in science

fairs.?

Research using vertebrate animals for science fair projects may only be carried out in one of five ways:

