

*RESEARCH PLAN*

# **GUARDIANS NAVIGATING THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC**

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Maisie Howard | HCID 530

# STUDY OVERVIEW

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## Background

The COVID-19 has drastically altered families' daily routines as quarantine measures have been enacted, causing schools and childcare centers to close and transitioning people into remote work.<sup>1</sup> Community-wide disasters like the COVID-19 crisis can create traumatic stress among individuals, especially for people who care for children. Research has shown that compared to people with "fewer caregiving responsibilities, parents experience potent, negative responses to disasters more acutely."<sup>1</sup> This is because parents have to continuously and actively plan new caregiving, work, and education routines, which creates potential for parents to sacrifice their own mental and social well-being to meet these competing roles and responsibilities.<sup>1,2</sup> This is exacerbated by reduced access to support networks and childcare and education resources.<sup>3</sup>

As a result, parents report experiencing an accumulation of stressors due to COVID-19, including, but not limited to, changes in their mood and overall stress levels, their relationships and interactions with their child(ren) and partners, physical health, and child(ren)'s learning and physical health.<sup>3,4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Russell, B. S., Hutchison, M., Tambling, R., Tomkunas, A. J., & Horton, A. L. (2020). Initial Challenges of Caregiving During COVID-19: Caregiver Burden, Mental Health, and the Parent-Child Relationship. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development*, 51(5), 671-682. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10578-020-01037-x>

<sup>2</sup> Spinelli, M., Lionetti, F., Pastore, M., & Fasolo, M. (2020). Parents' Stress and Children's Psychological Problems in Families Facing the COVID-19 Outbreak in Italy. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01713>

<sup>3</sup> Brown, S. M., Doom, J. R., Lechuga-Peña, S., Watamura, S. E., & Koppels, T. (2020). Stress and parenting during the global COVID-19 pandemic. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 104699. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104699>

<sup>4</sup> Brooks, S. K., Webster, R. K., Smith, L. E., Woodland, L., Wessely, S., Greenberg, N., & Rubin, G. J. (2020). The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence. *The Lancet*, 395(10227), 912-920. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(20\)30460-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(20)30460-8)

## **Research Question**

Specifically, how has the global pandemic affected American families with children in terms of their routines, emotional states, and support networks as a result of working and learning remotely? Additionally, what methods, if any, have guardians adopted in order to mitigate these changes experienced in their households?

## **Study Objective**

The purpose of the study is to determine the ways the global pandemic has affected families with children. Specifically, we want to identify how the pandemic has impacted guardians' and children's routines, emotional states, and social and physical support networks. We also want to identify struggles guardians experience due to increasing prevalence of remote work and schooling and the methods and/or tools they use to adapt with these challenges. More broadly, we want to better understand how guardians navigate their households to accomplish childcare and/or work tasks in a pandemic environment.

## **Ideal Participants**

We are looking for American guardians who act as a primary caregiver of a child or children between the ages of 4 and 6. The ideal participant must have transitioned from working in person to working remotely or becoming a full-time stay-at-home guardian due to the pandemic.

This study requires ideally 20 participants with roughly equal gender distribution. We want a diverse sample of participants with varying distribution of ages, ethnicities, socioeconomic status, and education levels.

## **Activity and Method Considerations**

In this study, we will be conducting a semi-structured interview and a contextual inquiry interview. We chose both of these methods to gain a deeper and more meaningful understanding of how families have been impacted by the pandemic. Much of the secondary research focused on quantitative research methods, which is useful to gain a general perspective on the effects of the pandemic on mental health, but few have addressed ways that guardians have adapted to cope with these changes. We hope by engaging in conversations with guardians, we can gain a more intimate experience of families with children during the pandemic.

# DOCUMENTATION GUIDE

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## Team Roles

### Facilitator and Interviewer

- Acts as primary contact for participant
- Introduces team to participant
- Receives signed or verbal consent
- Conducts semi-structured interview
- Conducts contextual inquiry
- Follows up and debriefs with participant
- Sends out consent form before session
- Distributes gratuity at the end of session
- Ensures session stays on schedule

### Observer and Note Taker

- Takes notes during semi-structured interview
- Takes notes during contextual inquiry
- Takes notes on participant's nonverbal communication

### Documentarian Support

- Sets up recording session on Zoom
- Ensures video camera remains functional during session
- Ensures participant's microphone is functioning properly
- Ensures teammates' microphones are functioning properly
- Takes notes and captures snapshots of participant's nonverbal communication throughout session

## Forms and Data Collection Checklist

- Consent Form
- Gratuity Release Form
- Semi-Structured Interview Guide
- Contextual Inquiry Guide

## Tools and Technology Checklist

- Pen
- Paper
- Laptop
- Zoom Link
- Interview Scripts
- Recording Device
- Laptop with Camera

## Video Notes

- Enable recording capability in Zoom
- Ensure participant has a device that allows for video call
- Request front-facing camera view of participant from their device
- Ask participant to set up their camera to get a wide shot of a specific place in their homes during the contextual inquiry

## Photography

- Ask participant to take picture of adjustments they've adopted during the pandemic (i.e., new remote office and/or school space, new activities etc.)
- Ask participant to take a picture where they are situated to do the interview
- Capture snapshots of participant and their environment during contextual inquiry

## Audio Notes

- Ensure participant's and team's microphones are on and functioning
- Mute observer/note taker and documentarian after introduction so only the facilitator and participant have their microphones on
- Capture 60 seconds of ambient noise at the beginning and end of session to allow room for editing
- Record debrief among team members to discuss thoughts and takeaways after each session

# SESSION SUMMARY

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Each session will consist of two parts. The first portion will be a semi-structured interview, followed by a contextual inquiry. There will be a facilitator who will guide the interview, a silent observer/note taker to write down notes about the interview by hand or laptop, and a silent documentarian who will capture photos and audio and video record the session. The entire session will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

## Activity Breakdown

### **Introduction and Consent Form (5 min)**

The Facilitator will introduce the research team and explain the role of each member to the participant. The Facilitator will then go over the purpose of the study and the consent form to make sure the participant understands the nature of their participation that the team is requesting.

*See Facilitator Script A and Consent Form*

### **Warm Up (5 min)**

The Facilitator will first ask some basic demographic questions to get a picture of the participant's household including who lives in their household, their relationships within the home, and their professional life.

*See Facilitator Script B*

### **Semi-Structured Interview (40-60 min)**

The Facilitator will lead a semi-structured interview that asks key questions about changes in participants' routines, mental health, social support networks, and methods they've utilized to adapt to the pandemic environment.

*See Facilitator Script C*



### **Contextual Interview (10-20 min)**

The Facilitator will ask the participant to demonstrate an adaptation they've adopted as a response to the emotional, social, and environmental changes caused by the pandemic. The contextual inquiry will begin with a tour of the space where this adaptation or adjustment takes place. The Facilitator will ask questions to encourage conversation with the participant to better understand their needs, motivations, and strategies.

*See Facilitator Script D*

### **Gratuity Release and Debrief (5 min)**

The Facilitator will thank the participant for their time and participation. The Facilitator will send the participant their reimbursement via email at the end of the session. The participant will then be asked to sign the gratuity release form to confirm that they have received their reimbursement.

Before the end of the session, the Facilitator will give a brief overview of the session to debrief the participant.

*See Facilitator Script E and Gratuity Release Form*

### **After Session**

A team discussion will be scheduled after the interview for approximately 10 to 20 minutes to reflect on the session or to write down additional notes.

# FACILITATOR SCRIPT A

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## Introduction and Consent Form (10 min)

Hi, thank you for taking the time to talk with us today. My name is [name]. I want to start by introducing our team to you.

>> *Introduce team members*

I will be the main facilitator today and my other teammates will be taking notes and capturing this session for future reference. Before we get started, I would like to go over the consent form with you and receive a verbal confirmation that you understand what we are asking of you and your rights as a participant.

>> *Give copy of consent form to participant*

>> *Go over consent form*

I want you to know that there are no right or wrong answers. We just want to learn about your experiences as a guardian during the pandemic.

If at any point, you do not want to answer a question or would like to withdraw from the study either, during or after the interview, please don't hesitate to let me know and we will move on to the next question or stop the interview. Is that okay?

>> *Affirmative response*

We would also like to audio and video record our session together. Could you give me a verbal confirmation that you are okay with this?

>> *Affirmative response*

Great, I want to go over the schedule for today, to give you an idea of what to expect.

This session will be broken into 2 parts that consist of a semi-structured interview and a task-based contextual interview. Together, both of these interviews will take between 60 and 90 minutes. Does that sound okay?

>> *Affirmative response*

Fantastic, we will start with the semi-structured interview. Then we will take a short break after the first portion. If at any point you need to take a break, please let me know. We can pause or stop the session at any time.

>> *Affirmative response*

Awesome, before we get started, do you have any questions for me?

>> *Answer any questions*

If participant does not consent:

Thank you again for your time, but we cannot conduct this interview without your consent to the terms stated in the consent form. Please sign this release form so I can provide you with your gratuity..

>> *Provide gratuity release form*

# FACILITATOR SCRIPT B

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## Warm Up (5 min)

Before we get started on the semi-structured interview, I would like to ask you some basic demographic questions.

>> *Affirmative response*

What is your name?

>> *States name*

Are you okay with us using your real name in this recording or would you like to choose a pseudonym to use in place of your name?

>> *Affirmative response or chooses pseudonym*

Can you give briefly tell me who lives in your household and describe how you are related with one another?

>> *Describes members and their relationships in the household*

How old is your child or children?

>> *States age of child or children*

Before the pandemic, did your child or children go to school or daycare outside of the home?

>> *States whether child was in school or daycare before the pandemic*

**During the pandemic, does your child or children go to school or daycare outside of the home?**

*>> States whether child is currently in school or daycare*

**Before the pandemic, did you work?**

*>> States work life status before the pandemic*

**During the pandemic, do you work?**

*>> States work life status currently during the pandemic*

# FACILITATOR SCRIPT C

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## Semi-Structured Interview

I am now going to ask you questions about the relationships in your household and the ways your family has been impacted by the pandemic. As a reminder, all of your responses will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes among the members of our team. Are you ready?

>> *Affirmative response*

## Interview Guide

### Routine

1. Can you walk me through a typical day for you during a work week before the pandemic?
2. Can you walk me through your child's typical day before the pandemic?
3. Can you describe your interactions together with your child before the pandemic?
4. What are the biggest changes in your daily routines caused by the pandemic?
  - a. What are some of the benefits of the new routine?
  - b. What are some of the disadvantages of the new routine?

### Emotional and Relational Changes

1. How has the pandemic affected the relationships in your household such as your relationship between you and your child or your relationship between you and your partner?
  - a. What do you think is causing these changes?

2. When it comes to caring for your child, in what ways have you been able to foster social interactions between you and your child?
  - a. What about fostering social interactions between your child and your child's friends?
  
3. Has your emotional state changed since the pandemic? If so, in what ways has it changed?
  - a. What makes you feel like that?
  
4. Has your social support network changed since the pandemic? If so, in what ways has it changed?
  - a. Do you have anyone to help you with taking care of your child?
  - b. Who do you rely on for social support currently? Has that changed since the pandemic began?
  - c. How do you keep in contact with family and friends?
  - d. What do you value from a support system during a time like this?

### **Adaptations / Methods**

*Pull from specific changes participant experience in their routines, emotional states, and support systems.*

1. What have you done to accommodate [change experienced]?
  - a. Has it worked?
  - b. What do you like or dislike about it?
  - c. How did you come up with this idea and/or adaptation?

# FACILITATOR SCRIPT D

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## Contextual Inquiry Interview

Now we will switch to the contextual inquiry portion of the interview. This will involve you showing us a space in your home and possibly demonstrating a task. We may also take snapshots or ask you to take photos of things in your home. Are you comfortable with this?

>> *Affirmative response*

Can you show us where you did the semi-structured interview and take a picture of it for us as a future reference?

>> *Affirmative response*

Can you show us where you [pull from adaptations / adjustments participants mentioned in semi-structured interview]?

>> *Affirmative response*

>> *Have participant switch to their phone or tablet to walk around if using computer or laptop*

As you show us, please describe out loud what we are seeing and what you are doing. Try to point out things you've utilized to make this adjustment possible.

>> *Allow participant to take charge of demonstration*

Can you describe the situation that prompted you to make this adjustment?

>> *Participant responds*



Can you walk us through a recent time where this adjustment really benefited or got in the way of your current situation?

*>> Participant responds*

## **Conclusion**

That's all the questions I have for you today. Before we wrap up, I want to open it up for the rest of my team to see if they have any questions they'd like to ask.

*>> Unmute team members to ask questions*

Do you have any questions for us as a team?

*>> Participant responds*

Based on what we discussed, is there anything you would like to add or want us to know?

*>> Participant responds*

Thank you for taking the time out of your day to do this. We value your experience and we will keep in touch with you when we have something to share!

# FACILITATOR SCRIPT E

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## Gratuity Release and Debrief

We really appreciate your participation in our research study. Your experiences and thoughts have provided us with valuable insights that will help inform our decision solutions in the future. Before you go, we would like to send you the promised gratuity with a digital Amazon gift card.

*>> Sends digital gift card*

Now we will send you the gratuity release form, saying you received the promised reimbursement.

*>> Sends gratuity release form*

You also have all our emails. If you have any concerns or questions in the future about your experience today, do not hesitate to reach out. Do you have any questions?

*>> Waits for response, answer any additional concerns or questions*

Thank you again for participating. We appreciate your honesty, time, and attention. Have a wonderful rest of your day.

# CONSENT FORM

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*Researchers: Maisie Howard, Nathan Keyes, Angela Xu*

*Institution: University of Washington (Human-Computer Interaction & Design)*

## **About the Study**

The purpose of this study is to understand how the global pandemic has affected American families with children in terms of their routines, emotional states, and support networks as a result of working and learning remotely? Additionally, what methods, if any, have guardians adopted in order to mitigate these changes experienced in their households?

## **Research Details**

With your consent, you will be asked to participate in a 60 to 90 minute interview with the research team. Interviews will take place over Zoom. Pending your consent, these interviews will be audio and video recorded. In these interviews, you will be asked about your experiences regarding your day-to-day life during the pandemic and how these changes have affected your life and how you are adapting to these changes.

In addition, we will be performing a 15-20 minute recorded contextual interview that is task-based. Specifically, you will demonstrate a particular task within your current environment over Zoom.

## **Participation Rights**

- You do not have to respond to any questions you do not feel comfortable answering, and you may give as little or as much information as you choose.
- You can decline to be recorded.
- You may withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study after the interview is completed, please contact any member of the research team. You will incur no negative consequences, and I will not use any of your information in our study.
- The results of this study—including direct quotations from interviews—will be shared among our program and possibly used as a portfolio piece for our own personal work.
- Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide if you would like to participate or not, and you may withdraw from the study at any point during the study.

**Confidentiality**

Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. Your name will not appear in conjunction with the data gathered during this interview—unless you expressly give us permission to use your name.

**Time Obligation and Compensation**

Participation in this interview will take approximately 60-90 minutes of your time. You will receive a \$20.00 gift card as acknowledgement for participating in this study.

**Contact Information**

Maisie Howard: mayrose@uw.edu

Nathan Keyes: nake6245@uw.edu

Angela Xu: angelaxu@uw.edu

**Consent**

By signing “yes” I am agreeing to voluntarily enter this study. I understand that, by signing this document, I do not waive any of my legal rights. I have had a chance to read this consent form, and it was explained to me in a language that I use and understand. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have received satisfactory answers

I also understand that if I am submitting this consent form via email that the process of typing my name below and completing the interview indicates my voluntary agreement to participate. My signature below also indicates that I am 18 or older.

YES, I agree to participate in this study.

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**Printed Name**

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**Signature**

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**Date**

*\*If you are unable to sign, a verbal consent at the time of interview is also acceptable.*

# GRATUITY RELEASE

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## ***Guardians Navigating the Global Pandemic***

*Researchers: Maisie Howard, Nathan Keyes, Angela Xu*

*Institution: University of Washington (Human-Computer Interaction & Design)*

*Email: mayrose@uw.edu, nake6245@uw.edu, angelaxu@uw.edu*

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have received a gift card valued at \$20 for my voluntary participation in this research study.

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**Printed Name**

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**Signature**

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**Date**