



TORONTO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY (Formerly Ryerson University)

Consent to Participate in Research

The belongingness, exclusion, and meth and sex (BEAMS) study: Examining the effects of online belongingness and exclusion on the meth use patterns of gay, bisexual, and queer-identified men (GBQM)

Investigators:

This research study is being conducted by Graham Berlin (principal investigator) and Dr. Trevor Hart (co-investigator and study supervisor) from the Department of Psychology at Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University) in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

This study is partially funded by Graham Berlin's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Doctoral Scholarship and the American Psychological Association's Malyon-Smith research award.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please contact the researchers:

Principal Investigator:

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Study Supervisor:

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Introduction and Purpose

You are being asked to participate in our research study. Our study aims to improve understanding of how experiences of rejection and use of hook-up apps impacts gay, bisexual, and queer-identified men's (GBQM) motivations to use crystal methamphetamine ("meth"). We are also interested in how these factors relate to GBQM's use of meth in the past 6 months. Ultimately, we are looking to understand if psychological and social factors are related to motivations to use meth and how these factors might be related to having problems with meth use. Factors of interest include sensitivity to rejection, emotion regulation, feelings of loneliness, and sexually compulsive behaviours. A total of 400 participants will be recruited.

To participate in this study, you must:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Live in Canada or the United States
- Identify as a sexual minority man (gay, bisexual, and queer-identified)

- Have had sex with a man in the past 6 months
- Have used meth in the past 6 months
- Be fluent in English

What You are Being Asked to Do

You are being asked to participate in a research study by completing an online survey. This survey will take 20-30 minutes to complete and includes questions asking about past and current experiences. Questions will ask about experiences of online discrimination from other GBQM, frequency of online hook-up app use, reactions to rejection, how you experience emotions, feelings of loneliness, whether sex interferes with your functioning or other activities, motivations for using meth, frequency of meth use in the past 6 months, and how your meth use is or is not affecting other areas of your life. You will be asked how much you agree with statements like: “in the mainstream gay community, there is a lot of fighting, bickering, and cattiness,” “I am attentive to my feelings,” and “In the last two weeks, I felt part of a group of friends.” Please complete this survey in a place where others cannot view your screen and where you will not be interrupted.

Data from this study will be shared in academic journal articles, conference and community presentations, and community resources such as fact sheets, infographics, and invited talks. No identifying information will be shared in any of these situations.

What are the Potential Benefits for You?

You might not directly benefit from participating in this study. It is hoped that the research will improve our understanding of the factors that might explain why some GBQM experience difficulties with their meth use whereas others do not. We also hope that our findings will inform therapeutic and community services to support GBQM who use meth.

What Are the Potential Risks to You?

Some of the survey questions may make you uncomfortable or upset. You may simply wish not to answer some questions. For most questions, you will have the option to select “prefer not to answer” if you don’t wish to answer a question that makes you uncomfortable. However, we hope you will answer as many questions as you can! You can stop participating at any time by closing your browser. If you close your browser before reaching the end of the survey, your data up until that point will be retained unless you select the “delete my responses” option on the survey. Selecting this option will tell the researchers that you wish to withdraw your consent *and* any data provided (i.e., questions answered up until that point). If selected, your data will be permanently deleted.

If you exit the survey without selecting the “delete my responses” option, your data will be retained. Once the survey is exited (i.e., by exiting the browser or submitting responses at the end of the survey), the researchers will not be able to identify your responses for deletion because no identifying information is connected to survey responses. All participants are provided a random participant ID, making their responses anonymous. Emails collected for the study are collected and stored separate from survey responses. This means that emails cannot be linked with participants’ survey responses.

We will be asking questions about your age, gender, and ethnicity (i.e., demographic information) and contact information (i.e., email), which could identify you. Your contact information will only be collected to send you: (1) your participation incentive, (2) findings from the study (optional), and (3) information about future research studies (optional). Your email will not and cannot be linked with your survey responses. During the study, your email will be kept confidential and separate from your questionnaire responses. Only Graham Berlin and Dr. Trevor Hart will have access to your email,

which will be kept on a secure, password protected lab drive on the Toronto Metropolitan University server.

Participants' emails provided only to receive the incentive will be destroyed (i.e., permanently deleted from the secure cloud drive where it was stored) once all data has been collected for the study and incentives have been distributed. Your email address may be kept for longer if you consent to us keeping your email address on file to contact you about future studies from our research team or about the study's findings. In this case, your email will be stored in an encrypted file on the secure Toronto Metropolitan University server for 7 years. After 7 years, it will be permanently deleted. Upon deletion of your email, the rest of your data (i.e., survey responses) is anonymous (i.e., labeled only with a unique, randomly generated study ID) and kept fully confidential by the researchers. Your study ID will not be linked with any personal or identifying information at any point during the study.

Your privacy may be reduced if you choose to complete this study on a public computer or in a public place. To reduce this risk, we ask that you complete this study on a personal computer, tablet, or phone, and in a private setting. If using a public or shared computer, we recommend that you clear the browser history and cache and log out of any accounts once you've completed the survey to protect your privacy.

If you experience any distress while completing this survey, please do not hesitate to use the resources listed at the end of this consent form. These services will also be shown at the end of the survey. If you are experiencing a crisis or severe distress and require immediate support, call 9-1-1.

How Your Identity Will Be Protected

We will collect your email to distribute incentives; however, emails will be collected using a separate online survey that is not linked with the primary study survey. Incentives will be distributed once all data has been collected. Your email will be kept confidential and separate from your survey responses. Once the study is complete, emails provided only to receive the incentives will be destroyed. Your survey responses will only be identifiable by a unique study ID. These IDs will not be connected with any of your personal information.

Although your Internet Protocol (IP) address can be tracked through the survey platform, the researchers will not keep this information. Your IP address will only be used to ensure that one individual is not completing the survey multiple times.

Your personal demographic information (age, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) will be kept confidential by the study team. This information will only be presented in aggregate (e.g., X% of participants identified as queer) to protect our participants.

How Your Information Will be Protected and Stored

Survey data will be stored in Toronto, Canada. This survey uses Qualtrics™, an American (USA) company. Qualtrics™ stores data from Canadian institutions in Ireland. This means data is not subject to the USA Freedom Act (i.e., USA authorities cannot access data). To further protect your information, your data will be stored using password protections and/or encryption. Once data collection is complete, all Qualtrics™ data will be downloaded onto secure password protected servers at Toronto Metropolitan University and permanently deleted from Qualtrics™. Survey response data and participant emails will be stored in separate password protected documents. There will be no way to connect emails with participant survey data. Only the researchers named in this study will have access to the data as collected. Any future publications will include collective

information (i.e., data combined across all participants). Your individual responses (i.e., raw data) will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team.

How Your Data Will be Used

When the research is finished, the researchers will keep the anonymized data indefinitely. Only anonymized data will be available for secondary use (by our research team or other collaborators to investigate new research questions). Secondary use of the anonymized data will require research ethics board review and approval. Anonymized data may be shared with other members (research assistants, research staff, and graduate students) of Trevor Hart's lab for collaboration. Some anonymous data may be made available on the Open Science Framework (or similar online storage places), in keeping with Open Science practices. Under these circumstances, the relevant portion of the dataset for published analyses may be made available to allow for the validation of scientific claims (i.e., to make sure that our results can be replicated using the same data and with the same analyses). Any data made available will be anonymized and not contain any identifiable information.

Incentive for Participation

As an incentive for participating in the study, you may select one of two options. The first option is to enter your email for a 1 in 10 chance of winning a \$25 or \$50 Amazon gift card. The draw for the Amazon gift cards will happen once data collection is complete and will be distributed by Graham Berlin (gberlin@torontomu.ca). Lottery winners will receive the Amazon gift cards at the email they provide for this study. The second incentive option is to have \$5 donated by the researchers on your behalf to an international 2SLGBTQIA+ charity. Participants can only select one of the two options. Information about the charity, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association (ILGA), can be found at this [link](#).

For the Amazon gift card lottery, email addresses will be randomly drawn. Each email can only be drawn once (i.e., drawn emails are not returned to the pool once drawn). The \$25 and \$50 gift card amounts reflect Canadian dollars (CAD). As of March 19, 2024, \$25 CAD = \$18.39 USD and \$50 CAD = \$36.79 USD.

Your Rights as a Research Participant

Participation in research is completely voluntary and you can withdraw your consent at any point. Please note that withdrawing from the study will not affect your future relations with the members of the research team or Toronto Metropolitan University. If you choose to withdraw from this study, you are still eligible to receive your participation incentive.

By consenting to participate in this study by selecting "Yes" at the end of this form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights as a research participant.

Questions

If you have any questions about this research, please contact the principal investigator, Graham Berlin: gberlin@torontomu.ca | 416-979-5000 ext. 552180 or visit the study website <https://www.beamstudy.com/>. You can also contact the co-investigator and supervisor, Dr. Trevor Hart: trevor.hart@torontomu.ca | 416-979-5000 ext. 552179.

If you decide to contact the research team, your identity and your message will be kept confidential.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Toronto Metropolitan University Research Ethics Board for information (REB 2023-365).

Toronto Metropolitan University Ethics Board
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Toronto Metropolitan University 350 Victoria Street Toronto, ON M5B 2K3
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This study has been reviewed and approved by the Toronto Metropolitan Research Ethics Board (REB 2023-365).

Please print a copy of this page to use in the future.

Below is a list of mental health and substance use resources. These same resources will also be shown at the end of the survey.

Canadian Mental Health and Substance Use Resources

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) – suicide and crisis hotline information as well as general mental health resources and services

- [Website](#)
- [Bounce back](#) –
- [Directory](#) to find a local CMHA

Support Services Directory (directory to search for suicide crisis services, suicide bereavement support, and mental health support)

- [Website](#)

Mental Health and Substance Use Resource Directory (wellnesstogether.ca)

- Directory of free mental health services, including online articles, e-courses, and one-on-one counselling.

Online Directory of National (mostly online) Substance Use Services

- [Website](#)

IN Magazine – 2SLGBTQI+ Community Resource Directory

- [Website](#)

Crisis Hotlines

- ***Talk Suicide Canada***
 - 24/7 Phone: 1-833-456-4566
 - 24/7 Phone (Quebec/en français): 1-866-277-3553
 - Text (4pm-midnight ET): 45645
 - 24/7 Kids help phone (under 18 years): 1-800-668-6868 | text: 686868

US Mental Health and Substance Use Resources

National Directory of Mental Health Facilities ([Website](#) or [PDF download](#))

- Affiliated [webpage](#) (findtreatment.org) – enter state, city, or zip code to find services near you.

National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers – Addiction Industry Directory ([directory link](#))

- Can search for accredited programs across the US. Search using words like “meth” and “LGBT” to find related services.

National Helpline (Treatment referral and information, 24/7)

- Phone: 1-800-662-4357

Crisis Hotlines:

- ***Trevor Lifeline*** (24/7, free and confidential support by phone, text, message (SMS), and online chat for LGBTQ+ young people)
 - o Phone: (866) 488-7386
 - o Text: 678678
 - o [Website](#)
- ***988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline***
 - o Phone/Text: 988
 - o [Website](#)