

**Attachment D: Focus Group Moderator Guide for Children (8-10 years old) From Low-income Households**

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## **Moderator's Guide USDA/FNS In-person Kid Focus Groups**

### **ON-SITE, INFORMAL DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN TO MAKE THEM COMFORTABLE WITH THE SURROUNDINGS (10 MINUTES)**

#### **WELCOME AND GROUND RULES**

[OMB Statement read to parents and children before groups begin]

1. First of all, I want to thank you for coming in today. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am very excited that you could all make it today, and we should have a fun discussion. The group discussion will last only one hour. Do any of you need anything before we start? If you need to go to the bathroom during the next hour just let me know and a co-worker will show you where it is.
2. Have any of you ever been to a group discussion like this before? *Moderator to review and explain to the kids the details of the room.*

Well, I want to tell you a few things before we begin. There are microphones in the room that are recording what is said. I have to write a report after I am done today, and it makes it easy for me to be able to go back and listen everything we talked about.

Behind me is a one-way mirror, which means there are a few people behind the mirror watching. A few other people working on this project with me are observing this discussion and taking notes since I can't write everything you say down.

Because we are taping, it is important that you try to **speak one at a time**. It is my only "rule" of the day. So if everyone can be polite and try not to talk over each other I would appreciate it. It will also help the people taking notes to not hear everyone talking one at a time!

3. Before we start I want everyone to know that there are no **wrong answers**. We just want to hear your most honest thoughts, so don't worry if you have a different thought or opinion than someone else in the group. The more thoughts you can share the better! I know you all have great thoughts to share and I can't wait to hear them.

## INTRODUCTIONS

- Ok, so now that I have told you all about the room, let's take a minute before we start to introduce ourselves. *Moderator to go first by saying name again and fun fact about himself- for example favorite thing to do in his free time.*
- Ok, so now that you know a little bit about me, I would love to hear all about you! Let's go around the room and everyone can just say their first name, age and grade as well as their favorite activity.
- What are some types of things you do when you are not at school? [USE TO GAUGE MEDIA USAGE, PROBE: Television, Internet (what sites do you visit), IM, read magazine (which ones)?]

## PERCEPTIONS OF HEALTH/NUTRITION

Today we are going to be talking about health and nutrition. We will also be showing you some statements people have written to try to explain health and nutrition to you. We want to know what you think of them to help us understand how to make them better for kids your age.

Let's start by talking about health and nutrition.

1. What does it mean to be healthy? How do you know if someone is healthy? (Probe on eating habits, physical activity, food choices, etc.)
2. What are some things you do to be healthy?
3. Do you think it is important to eat or drink healthy? Why or why not?
4. [IF NOT MENTIONED PREVIOUSLY:] What do you eat or drink that is healthy?
5. Let's talk about physical activity...like riding a bike, walking, and running. Do you think it is important to exercise? Why or why not? Do you think that exercising can help keep someone healthy? Why or why not?
6. Are there any words/phrases that you have heard about, or seen on TV, that makes you think that something is healthy (food, activities, etc.)? What words/phrases have you heard?
7. Do you ever do any physical activity [IF NECESSARY MENTION: like taking a walk, riding your bicycle, dancing, playing ball]? What kinds of things do you like to do to be active?
  - a. Now for some questions I used the word, "exercise," and for other I used "being active."
  - b. What do you think of when I say, "being active?"
  - c. Is it the same as or different from "getting exercise?" What makes you say that? Is one more fun than the other? Which one? What makes you say that?

[MODERATOR: If respondents are stumped by "physical activity," move to questions about exercise vs. being active. Then ask question stem in 7.]

8. Which do you think is easier, eating things that are healthy or getting exercise? What makes you say that?

9. Is one more fun than the other? What makes you say that?

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION AT HOME

I want to spend some time talking about the different ways you have learned about nutrition and being healthy.

1. What do your parents tell you about nutrition or eating healthy? What do they say?
2. Do your parents try to get you to eat healthy foods? What do they do to try to get you to do this?
  - a. What types of healthy foods do they try to get you to eat? Do they eat healthy foods, too?
  - b. What works? In other words, what have they done that has actually gotten you to eat healthy foods?
3. Do you think it is easy or hard to eat healthy things at home? What makes you say that?
4. In your house, whose job is it to make sure that people are eating healthy things like fruits and vegetables?
5. Do you think it is easy or hard to do any physical activity (like walking, running, dancing, etc.) while at home? What makes you say that? Do your parents do it with you?

## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

1. Let's focus a bit more on eating fruits and vegetables.
  - a. When are you most likely to eat fruit—breakfast, lunch, dinner, snack?
    - i. What do you normally eat during that meal? What did you eat for that meal yesterday?
    - ii. [If snack not mentioned:] Why don't you eat fruit as a snack?  
[PROBE: Better options than fruit, fruit not at home, fruit not given to me]
    - iii. [If lunch not mentioned:] Why don't you eat fruit at lunch?
    - iv. Now, I am going to ask the question a different way, is there a meal when you would like to have fruit as a choice—breakfast, lunch, dinner, snack? What makes you say that?
  - b. When are you most likely to eat vegetables—breakfast, lunch, dinner, snack?
    - i. [IF DIFFERENT MEAL SELECTED:] What do you normally eat during that meal? What did you eat for that meal yesterday?
    - ii. [If snack not mentioned:] Why don't you eat vegetables as a snack? Can vegetables be a good snack? What makes you say that?  
[PROBE: Better options than veggies, veggies not at home, veggies not given]
    - iii. [If lunch not mentioned:] Why don't you eat veggies with lunch?
    - iv. Now, I am going to ask the question a different way, is there a meal when you would like to have vegetables as a choice—breakfast, lunch, dinner, snack? What makes you say that?
2. Earlier, I asked you whose job it was to make sure that people in your house eat healthy things like fruits and vegetables. What if it were your job? Would you want that job? What makes you

say that? What do you think you would do to make sure people ate more fruits and vegetables in your house?

- a. What would you do to get your family to eat more fruits and vegetables?
- b. Would those ideas work for you? Would they get you to eat more fruits and vegetables? Even when you were eating somewhere other than your house? What makes you say that?

## **MILK CONSUMPTION**

1. Now, let's focus a bit on milk and milk products. Let's start with what comes to your mind when I say the phrase, "milk products"? What are some milk products?
2. Is it important to drink milk and eat milk products? What makes you say that?
3. Let's talk about milk for a second.
  - a. Do you drink milk? [If yes:] When do you usually drink milk?
  - b. What kinds of milk do you drink? [PROBE: Fat-free (Skim), Low-fat (1%), Reduced Fat (2%), whole, soy milk]
4. What about the milk products that we mentioned.
  - a. Which of those do you eat?
  - b. Do you eat low-fat or fat-free kinds or the regular kind?
  - c. [IF DON'T EAT LOW-FAT/FAT-FREE KINDS:] Why don't you eat the low-fat/fat-free kinds?
5. Which do you think is easier, eating fruits and vegetables during the day or eating low-fat/fat-free milk products/drinking low-fat/fat-free milk? What makes you say that? [MODERATOR: Differentiate between doing once versus doing multiple times during a day.]
6. What if it were your job to get your family to drink more low-fat/fat-free milk/eat more low-fat/fat-free milk products? What do you think you would do to make sure people did this in your house?
  - a. Would those ideas work for you? Would they get you to drink more low-fat/fat-free milk/eat more low-fat/fat-free milk products? Even when you were eating somewhere other than your house? What makes you say that?

## **PERCEPTIONS OF NEW KEY MESSAGES**

As I mentioned earlier, we want to get your opinion on specific ideas for teaching nutrition and health to children like you.

[The section below will be populated with different nutrition and health messages about fruits and vegetables and fat-free/low-fat milk and milk products.]

[NOTE: Since there are no right or wrong answers, moderator should reassure respondents that it is OK if they do not know the answer to these questions. They should just let us know if they are not sure.]

1. [INSERT MESSAGE ONE; MODERATOR HAVE CHILDREN READ THE MESSAGE]
  - a. What do you think this statement is trying to say?
  - b. What words, if any, were confusing or difficult to understand?
  - c. Do you think it would be easy or hard to do what the statement said? What makes you say that?
  - d. How helpful was the information we just read? Do you think it will help you to eat more fruits and vegetables/drink more fat free/low fat milk? What makes you say that?

Repeat this line of questioning for each of the messages that are developed. ROTATE order of message presentation across groups. After all messages have been asked, ask the following question.

2. Which of the messages that we read did you like the best? [TAKE HAND COUNT] What makes you say that?
3. [WALL SCALE EXERCISE:] Let's say that we have to hang these messages on the wall. One side of the wall means that you would never do what the message says. The other end of the wall says that you would definitely do what the message says. I am going to move each message along the wall. You tell me when to stop. If you think you would definitely do what the message says, then you'd tell me to stop at the other end of the wall. If you would never do it, then say stop near the beginning. If you are somewhere in the middle, then say "stop" there. [MODERATOR "WALK" EACH MESSAGE ALONG THE WALL. IDENTIFY WHERE EACH MESSAGE "STOPS" RELATIVE TO THE OTHERS]
  - a. Let's take a look at where we placed the messages. Do you agree with how we placed them?
  - b. Explain to me why we placed the messages where we did [PROBE: least likely to do vs. most likely to do]
  - c. Insert probing questions based on statement content and placement on wall.

[NOTE: If fruits and vegetables messages and milk/milk products messages are tested, test them separately.]

## **WRAP UP AND FINAL THOUGHTS**

Our time is almost up. I would like to get a few final thoughts from you.

1. What do you think is the most important thing for the people who are trying to help children your age eat more fruits and vegetables to keep in mind as they finish these messages?  
[MODERATOR WILL RECORD RESPONSES ON FLIP CHART AND DISCUSS]
2. What do you think is the most important thing for the people who are trying to help children your age drink more low-fat/fat-free milk/eat more low-fat/fat-free milk products to keep in mind as they finish these messages?  
[MODERATOR WILL RECORD RESPONSES ON FLIP CHART AND DISCUSS]

We're all done for today. Thank you so much for your time; we appreciate that you came. Your opinions and insights have been very helpful. Thanks again and enjoy the rest of your day.

