

## **Moderator's Guide:**

### **Adolescent and Young Adult Perceptions Related to Cigarette Smoking**

#### **I. Welcome-Introduction-Ground Rules (5 minutes)**

Thank you for coming here today. Your participation is very important. I'm \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm from Macro International, a research organization. One of the Federal Agency's is sponsoring this research. The purpose of this discussion is to learn about what you know about tobacco products. Your thoughts are very important to us and your time today is appreciated. We will have about [*1 hour for IDI, 2 hours for groups*] hours for our discussion.

As we begin, I want to review a few ground rules for our discussion.

- Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.
- You have probably noticed the microphones and/or tape recorder in the room. They are here because we are audio-taping our discussion. I want to give you my full attention and not have to take a lot of notes. The audio files will be transcribed. At the end of our discussion, I have to write a report and will refer to the audio-tapes when writing the report. Additional project staff may view the tapes at a later date. All tapes will be destroyed at the end of the project.
- Behind me is a one-way mirror. Some of the people working on this project are observing this discussion so that they can hear your opinions directly from you and take notes so that your opinions are accurately captured. However, your identity and anything you personally say here will remain private to the fullest extent allowed by law. Your name, address, and phone number will not be given to anyone and no one will contact you after this interview is over.
- Please turn your cell phone off or to vibrate or silent mode. The discussion will last no more than 2 hours.
- If you need to go the restroom during the discussion, please feel free to do so.
- Most importantly, there are no right or wrong answers. We want to know your opinions and what you think about the issues we will be discussing. Just a reminder, we are not selling anything and I do not work for the people who make these products or who are sponsoring this research, so don't hold back from giving me your honest opinions.
- Do you have any questions before we begin?

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#### **II. Warm up**

I would like to begin our discussion by going around the table and having you tell me your name and what you would be doing tonight if you weren't here.

### **III. General Discussion about Tobacco Products**

As you may know, we brought you here tonight because you smoke cigarettes. We would like to hear your thoughts about smoking and cigarettes. Some of the questions that I will ask you are about your personal experiences with smoking cigarettes. I would like you to be completely honest with me. I'm not going to be offended by your responses. I am here to get your honest thoughts/opinions.

*[Adolescents-Everything you say stays with me. Nobody outside of the research team will hear what you say, not even your parents so please speak freely about what's on your mind]*

**[IDI]**

Let me first start by asking you how long you've been smoking?

Can you tell me why you think you started smoking?

**[Focus Group]**

Why don't we start by sharing with everyone how long you've been smoking and your thoughts about why you started smoking.

### **IV. Memories of First Cigarette**

Do you remember the first time you smoked a cigarette, even one puff? Or the earliest experience that stands out in your mind?

Can you tell me everything you can remember about that experience, like when, where, why, and what it was like? *[Allow for general open discussion]*

*[Probes if needed]:*

- *Where you got the cigarette*
- *Who you were with and where you were*
- *Why you think you smoked that first cigarette*
- *How it made you feel to be smoking*
- *How the cigarette made you feel*
- *The type or brand of cigarette it was*
- *The packaging the cigarette came from*
- *Expectations—was it what you expected? What had you heard about smoking?*

Can you tell me about when you first started noticing friends or family members who smoked? What, if anything, did they tell you about smoking? Do you think their smoking may have changed how you felt about smoking? Why do you think this changed your thinking?

## **V. Memories of When Identified Themselves as a Smoker**

Some people might say there are some people that smoke cigarettes, and then there are others who consider themselves “smokers”.

Do you agree that there are these two types of people? Why or why not?

Can you tell me what it means to you when you hear these terms? What does it mean when someone smokes cigarettes vs. someone who is a smoker? Is there a difference?

### ***[IDI]***

Do you think of yourself as someone who smokes cigarettes or do you think of yourself as a “smoker”?

- How do you think other people see you?

### ***[Focus Group]***

Who in here thinks of themselves as a smoker? Who thinks of themselves as someone who just smokes cigarettes?

- Why do you think of yourself as a smoker? What makes someone a smoker?
- Why do you think of yourself as someone who smokes cigarettes?
- Why do you not think of yourself as a smoker?

### ***[For those who think of themselves as smokers]***

- Do you remember when you started to think of yourself as a smoker?
- Can you share with me why this was the point in your life when you started to consider yourself a smoker? Why was this time different than before?

### ***[Probes if needed]:***

- *First time starting trying to find a cigarette instead of being offered one*
- *First time bought a cigarette*
- *First time wanting to smoke alone*
- *Age*
- *Frequency of smoking*

Do you ever think about what your family or friends think about you because you smoke? Can you talk to me about that?

## **VI. Cigarette Characteristics**

Can you share with me what comes to mind when you think about cigarettes?

*[Probes if needed]:*

- *Do you think about a particular taste?*
- *Do you think about a particular packaging?*
- *Do you think about what other people around you are smoking?*

You told us when we asked you if you wanted to be in this study that you preferred *[menthol/non-menthol]* cigarettes.

- Can you talk about why you prefer this type of cigarette?
- Did you smoke *[menthol/non-menthol]* cigarettes when you started smoking? Why/why not?
- Have you switched to *[menthol/non-menthol]*? Do you remember why?
- Do you have friends or family who smoke your type of cigarette? Why do you think they smoke your type of cigarette? Why do you think they don't?

I want you now to take a few minutes and try to write down 10 words that comes to mind when you think of a menthol smoker and 10 words that comes to mind when you think about a non-menthol smoker. The words you use to describe a menthol smoker may be similar to the words you use to describe a non-menthol smoker or they may be different. There are no right or wrong words.

[Give participants 5-8 minutes to write down their thoughts]

Ok, does anyone want to share with me what they came up with? Let's start with menthol smokers.

## **VIII. Thoughts about Smoking**

Can you share with me your thoughts about your smoking right now? How do you feel about it?

Do you ever regret that you started smoking?

*[For those who regret that they started]:*

- Can you share with me your thoughts about why you regret starting?

*[For those who don't regret that they started]:*

- Can you share with me your thoughts about why you don't regret that you started smoking?

What is it about smoking that keeps you smoking now?

Looking back, is there anything that you wish you had known that might have kept you from smoking?

Is there anything you would have done differently?

Do you ever think about the health risks associated with smoking? If yes, what do you think about, if no, why?

Do you ever think about stopping? Can you explain why or why not and what you think about? Have you tried? Can you share that experience?

### **XI. General Discussion about Educating Others**

How many of you have younger brothers and sisters or friends who don't smoke?

- What would you tell them if they asked you about smoking?
- What would you want them to know? Why?
- What would you tell them if you wanted to convince them not to start smoking?

### **X. False Close**

All of this information is great, thank you for sharing it with me.

I need to leave you for a few minutes to check with my colleagues observing to see if there are any additional questions they would like for me to ask you. Please excuse me for a moment.

### **XI. Debrief/Closing**

Do you have any additional comments or questions before we conclude?

The people observing this focus group are from the Food and Drug Administration. They want to thank you for providing them with very helpful information. They are going to use it to help them develop important education campaigns to help keep people from becoming smokers.

They also want to remind you that smoking is harmful and encourage you to consider quitting. For more information, there are brochures available as you leave.

Thank you for participating in today's discussion. Please remember to pick up your incentive from XX as you leave.