

ATTACHMENT 5

MESSAGE TESTING FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Focus Group Discussion Guide

Selected Women

I. **Introduction (10 minutes)**

- a. THANK RESPONDENTS FOR ATTENDING. BRIEFLY INTRODUCE SELF.
- b. GROUND RULES
 - CONFIDENTIALITY
 - HONESTY/OK TO DISAGREE
 - TAPING
 - SPEAKING ONE AT A TIME
 - BATHROOM
 - ETC
- c. [GO AROUND THE ROOM, ASK RESPONDENTS INTRODUCE THEMSELVES.] Can you please give me your first name and tell me the names and ages of your children.

II. **Leading concerns [5 minutes]**

- a. Mothers now have to worry about so many things for their families, health issues among them. Very quickly, what are some of the big health concerns you have for children in your community? [PROBE: How about chemicals in your food or what you drink?]
- b. When you hear or read the word chemicals, what comes to your mind?

III. **Knowledge of Environmental Chemicals [5 minutes]**

- a. Here are a few chemicals. With a quick show of hands, have you heard anything about health concerns with any of the following chemicals? [PROBE what they have heard.] [IF NECESSARY, EXPLAIN WHERE THE CHEMICALS ARE FOUND.]
 1. Bisphenol-A or BPA - [IF NECESSARY, SAY: BPA is used to make some types of plastic for products like beverage bottles and baby bottles.]
 2. Mercury - [IF NECESSARY, SAY: may be found in some fish or shellfish.]
 3. Phthalates - [IF NECESSARY, SAY: phthalates are used in the manufacture of plastics; often called plasticizers.]

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- b. How concerned are you about exposure to these chemicals? [PROBE – which concerns you the most? What makes you concerned about these chemicals?]

IV. Message Testing [50 minutes]

- a. We are going to look at some different draft messages regarding these chemicals. For this next item I am going to give each of you a copy to read.
1. What is your initial impression of the item? [PROBE: What would you want to find out by reading the item? How well does the item catch your attention?]
- b. I'm going to give you about five minutes to look over and read the item. As you read, I want you to write on the item to tell me what you think. As you read . . .
- Put a **check (✓)** by information that you think is especially important
 - Put a **circle** around information you think is unclear or needs more explanation
 - Put an **X** next to information that you think is not relevant
- c. Please write on the copy of the item that you have. Try to write a few words why you think the information is important, unclear, or irrelevant next to each mark you make.
- d. What did you checkmark as important? [PROBE: what made you think this was important?]
- e. What information did you circle as unclear? [PROBE: what was unclear about the information you circled? What could be done to make that information clearer?]
- f. What did you put an X by? [PROBE: What made you mark it with an X? How could it be more relevant?]
- g. Who do you think this is written/intended for? [PROBE: Is it for people like you or someone else?]
- h. Who do you think wrote or produced this item? [PROBE: Have you heard of them before? Are they a good source of information?]
- i. If this item were made available to you, would you use it? [PROBE: What about it catches your attention?]
- j. What do you think of this item overall? [PROBE: Is it asking you to do anything? Would reading it make you do anything? What would it make you do? Would you be motivated to take action?]
- k. Is there anything you want to know that this item does not tell you?

V. Information Dissemination – [10 minutes]

- a. We have talked a lot about some chemicals today, and as the materials point out, there is a lot we still don't fully understand yet. Given the fact that there are so many things about these chemicals we don't fully understand yet—the health effects of, all the possible ways that people might be exposed —what kind of information regarding these chemicals and your health would be most

helpful for you? [PROBE: What type of information on chemicals would mothers find compelling to attend to?]

- b. How would you like such information presented to you? [PROBE: Interpretation of probabilistic information and preference for words, numbers, or graphs to understand it.]

VI. **Final Exercise [2 minutes]**

- a. Thanks for coming out today. I just have one final question before I let you go. Think back over the discussion we've just had, and write down for me one thing you've learned or have taken away from this evening's discussion.