

FOCUS GROUPS WITH RURAL YOUTH TO TEST STRATEGIC CONCEPTS

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Research Objective: Conduct focus groups with rural youth aged 12–17 to understand their reactions to several strategic concepts to support the development of a youth smokeless tobacco prevention campaign.

NOTE TO REVIEWER: Question probes are italicized below each main question and may change or be invalidated based on participant response. There are suggestions for the moderator to follow, and will be used as deemed relevant and necessary in the natural flow of discussion. Moderator instructions are highlighted in yellow. Materials are highlighted in blue.

INTRODUCTION TO FOCUS GROUP/OPENING EXERCISE (10 min.)

Thank you so much for coming today—we appreciate you taking the time to talk to us. My name is [Moderator name], and I'll be moderating this group today. We're here to get your feedback on several ideas for advertisements designed to prevent/discourage teens from using smokeless tobacco that are being developed for the FDA. These ads are aimed at teens like you, so I would like to know what you think about them.

Before we get started, I want to say a few things:

- There are no wrong answers. Our whole purpose for being here is to hear what you think, so please speak up, especially if what you have to say is different than what someone else is saying. You may represent what a lot of other teens think.
- You don't have to answer every question, but I do want to hear from everyone, so I might call on you at some point.

We are being audio recorded, but that's just for note-taking purposes so I don't have to write everything down. The camera is here to stream our session to people who are working on the project, but it is not recording you. Everything we talk about here will remain private to the extent allowable by the law., your individual responses will not be reported back to the FDA, your name will not be associated with anything you say in our reports, and we will not share with your parents any information you provide on tobacco – including your beliefs, attitudes, or past experiences. We do ask that you keep whatever is said here confidential, since people might share personal thoughts.

Does anyone have any questions before we begin?

Icebreaker

Okay, great. First, let's get to know each other more. I'm going to have everyone go around and introduce themselves—your name, what grade you are in and then tell us what you would do if you won the lottery. I'll go first.

[Moderator introduces herself and then has each participant introduce himself and respond to icebreaker]

Quick Poll

[MATERIALS: red, yellow, green 5x7 index cards]

Now that we know each other more, let's get started. Everyone has red, yellow, and green cards in front of them. I'm going to tell you a statement and you are going to use the cards to show me if you agree or not with what I said. Raise the green card to say you agree, the red to say you disagree and the yellow if you're not sure whether you agree or not or you are in between.

- Kids who live in the city are different from kids who live in small towns.
 - *Why do you agree? / Why don't you agree?*
 - *Would you say you are from a small town?*
 - *How are they different?*
 - *Is this a good thing? A bad thing?*

Okay, how about these next ones – use your cards again to show whether you agree or not.

- I spend a lot of time online.
 - *How often?*
 - *What do you do online?*
- I could not live without social media.
 - *How often?*
 - *Which sites? (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Vine)*
 - *What do you do on these sites?*
- I do not go anywhere without my cell phone.
 - *Is it a smartphone?*
 - *What other devices do you use?(laptop, tablet)*
- I like to spend time playing videogames.
 - *What system? (Xbox, PlayStation)*
 - *What games do you play?*

SMOKELESS TOBACCO: GENERAL DISCUSSION (5 min.)

Did you all do your homework? You were sent a link with some questions to answer. We're going to talk about that first question you had—the one where you had to write down the first 5 things that you thought of about chewing tobacco, dip or spit. Here we have the top five responses that we received.

- *What is chewing tobacco, dip and spit? What is the difference between each?*
- *Why did you think of this?*

- *Is it a good thing? Bad thing?*
- *What else did you think of before or you're thinking of now?*

[The moderator will facilitate discussion by asking participants to elaborate on their responses and discuss similarities and differences. Additionally, moderator will probe on following topics.]

- *How risky is it to use?*
 - *Is it bad for your health? Why/why not?*
 - *How harmful is it compared to smoking cigarettes?*
- *Can you get addicted? How much does it take to get addicted?*
- *Thinking about your school, how many people use it?*
 - *What type of person uses chew, spit or dip? Why do they use it? What are the benefits?*
 - *How do they get it?*
 - *How would adults react if they found out?*

STRATEGIC CONCEPTS (50 min.)

[MATERIALS: Participant Rating Sheets, printed concepts]

I mentioned in the beginning of the session that we are working on ideas for smokeless tobacco advertising to try and keep teens like you from trying or using smokeless tobacco. We would like to share some of the advertising and get your reaction to them.

For each one, I am going to tell you about the idea. Then you are going to read a quick description on the colored pieces of paper and fill out the matching colored question sheet. On the sheet, the first thing you are going to do is grade the idea. Just like in school an “A” means great job, you really like the idea and an “F” means that you didn’t like the idea that it failed. Next, you are going to circle the face or faces that show how you feel about the idea. You can circle as many as you’d like. Those last set of questions ask about different reactions to the idea—just fill in the circle with how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

Again, there are no wrong answers, I am interested in what you think. Be honest; if you don’t like an idea you will not hurt my feelings. At this point, we just want your thoughts on the ideas or concepts so we want your reaction on those and not how we have them displayed on the board—the next step after these focus groups is to figure out how we want to get across the ads visually or in ways you typically see or hear ads.

[The moderator will introduce each concept and allow ample time for participants to complete sheet, at least a couple of minutes. Following the rating sheet, moderator will lead discussion on idea.]

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF CONCEPTS—SEE STRATEGIC CONCEPT STIMULI.]

Ok, now let’s talk about your responses.

- *What are your first thoughts about this idea?*
 - *How did it make you feel?*
 - *What did you like? Dislike?*
- *What is the message saying?*
- *Did it grab your attention?*
 - *Why?*
- *Does this idea make you think differently (than you did before) about smokeless tobacco?*
 - *Why?*
- *Who do you think would listen to this message?*
 - *Why?*
 - *What about the kids in your school?*
- *Do you think it will make teenagers like you stop and think twice about using smokeless tobacco in the future?*
 - *Why?*
- *Is there anything you would change or add to make this idea more convincing?*

[The moderator will introduce the next concept and run through the protocol again. Moderator will budget approximately 10 minutes to focus on each concept.]

IMAGE MATCHING (10 min.)

[MATERIALS: Image matching sheet]

So we just talked about the different ideas that we have for a smokeless tobacco prevention campaign for teens, but usually with advertising you have pictures in a magazine or online ad or it could be a TV commercial. I have a number of pictures here, and I want you to look at each of these and think about if you were making the ad, which of the ideas would you want to use this picture on. Take out your sheet and you will see that there are numbers 1 through 15 for the different picture I will show you. For each picture, circle the ideas that you would want to use this image in, if you got to choose. You can circle one idea, more than one idea, or “None” if it’s a picture you would not want to use in an ad you were designing.

[Moderator will display each image, pausing to allow participants to select their responses. Following all images, moderator will spread out images on table for subsequent probing.]

- *What was your favorite image? Why?*
- *What was your least favorite image? Why?*
- *Are there any images you were expecting to see that you didn’t?*

COMPARISON (10 min.)

[MATERIALS: Comparison sheet]

Before we wrap up, I'd like you to think about all of the ideas we have discussed today. You completed the rating sheets for each idea individually, but now I want you to think about all of them and which ones you liked the most and which you liked the least. Even if you liked all of them – or didn't like any of them – try to answer the questions as best you can. This last sheet asks you to rank the five ideas we talked from best to worst--#1 is your favorite ad and #5 is the one you liked the least.

[Moderator will display/list five strategic concepts on whiteboard and allow a couple of minutes for participants to complete comparison sheet.]

I have a couple of final questions about the five campaign ideas we talked about today.

- *Which idea would you be most likely to talk about with your friend?*
 - *How would you tell them about it? In person, on social media?*
- *Which idea feels like it was speaking directly to you? Why?*
- *Which idea are you most likely to forget? Why?*
- *Who do you think these messages would be from? Why?*
 - *Does it matter who these messages are from? (government, FDA, nonprofit, etc.)*
- *Would you share messages like these online?(Facebook, YouTube, etc.)*
 - *Why?/Why not?*

CLOSING (5 min.)

[Thank participants]

Thank you very much for participating in this focus group. I have enjoyed getting to know you, and appreciate your time and great feedback. Is there anything that you would like to share that you didn't have the chance to share yet?