

RURAL SMOKELESS CREATIVE CONCEPT TESTING – FOCUS GROUPS WITH RURAL YOUTH

MODERATOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Research Objective: Conduct focus groups with rural youth aged 12–17 to understand their reactions to several creative 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 participants' responses. These 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/ICEBREAKER (5 min.)

Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to us. My name is [Moderator name], and I'll be leading this focus group. Focus groups are a type of research used to gather opinions on a specific topic. We're here today to get your opinions on several ideas for a public health campaign on smokeless tobacco. We are going to show you several ads and we want to know what you think about them.

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

- I did not create any of the ads you are going to see today. If you like them or if you don't like them, be honest. Your responses won't affect me either way.
- 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.
- Everything we talk about here is confidential. That means your individual responses will not be reported and your name will not be associated with anything you say in our reports. Most importantly, we will not share any information you provide on tobacco – including your beliefs, attitudes, or past experiences – with your parents, teachers, or anyone else.
- I understand that you all go to school together and your classmates who aren't here may be curious what happened – it is okay to describe what we did, but it is not okay to talk about what was said. Everything said in this room stays in this room.
- You've probably noticed there are a few extra people in the room. They are here to observe and take notes—that way I don't have to worry about writing everything down. We are also being audio recorded, but that's just so we can go back and make sure we captured all of your thoughts

correctly. [IF APPLICABLE: The camera is also here to “stream” our session to people who are working on the project but couldn’t be here today. The camera is not recording you.]

Does anyone have any questions before we begin?

Icebreaker

Okay, great. First, I’m going to have everyone go around and tell me your name. You all might know each other already, but I want to get to know you too. Just say your first name and then tell us your favorite sport. I’ll go first.

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

WARM-UP ACTIVITIES (5 min.)

[Complete as many of the following questions as time allows]

Well now that we got that out of the way, let’s jump right in. I already mentioned that I am going to ask for your opinions on some different advertising ideas. To get started, I have a more general question.

Can you think of one commercial that you have seen recently that stood out to you? Which one? Why?

What about it got your attention?

What do you remember most about it?

Did it make you think about something [the product] differently?

How would you describe people who use/wear/buy this brand?

What other brands do you like?

If you could have a t-shirt with any brand on it, which brand would you choose?

If you could have a decal or sticker with any brand on it, which brand would you choose? Where would you put it?

Alright, I want to ask about one more thing so I can get to know you a little better before we jump into the next section. I’m going to read a list of activities and for each one, I want you to raise your hand if you have done it in the past year. [Moderator do a quick poll of participants]

In the last year I:

[RANDOMIZE ORDER]
a. went hunting
b. went fishing
c. went mudding
d. went golfing
e. played on a football team
f. played on a baseball team

g. played on a basketball team
h. was on a wrestling team
i. went to a Rodeo
j. went to a 4-H activity or event
k. went to a Future Farmers of America activity or event
l. went to a live music concert
m. went to a festival or fair

Okay, so some/none/all of you said that you went to a live music concert. I'm curious what type of music do you like?

Tell me two of your favorite bands or singers.

Name a song you like that is currently popular.

Fill in the blank: I can't stand to listen to _____ music.

CREATIVE CONCEPTS (50 min.)

[MATERIALS: Participant Rating Sheets, Concept Stimuli]

[A total of 6 concepts will be tested; however, each group will be exposed to only four concepts due to time constraints. Each concept will be tested by at least one group at each school district; concepts will be randomly assigned to groups. Within each group, concepts will be presented in random order to help minimize order effects.]

Now I'm going to share four ideas for a public health campaign on smokeless tobacco. For each, I'll give you a general description of the idea (or concept), and then show you several ads that are designed to bring that idea (or concept) to life.

Please keep in mind that the ads I show you today have not been fully developed –they still need a lot of work before you'd actually see them on TV, online, or on a billboard – for example. It costs a lot of money to produce an advertisement, and your feedback will help determine which ads we should move forward with – so try not to get caught up in small details since these aren't final.

I'm going to show you the first idea and I want you to take a few minutes to complete the Rating Worksheet **[Moderator holds up worksheet]** before we discuss the idea as a group. We'll do the same for the rest of the ideas. Later, we will take a few minutes to compare all four ideas together.

Before I show you the first idea, I want to walk through the rating sheet with you:

- For #1, jot down what you think the main message is – that is, what is the most important thing they are trying to tell you?
- For #2, grade the idea. Just like in school, "A" means great job, you really like the idea and "F" means it failed, you didn't like the idea at all.
- For #3, answer a few questions to tell us about your reactions to the idea—just fill in the circle with how much you agree or disagree with each statement.
- For #4 tell us what you liked most about the idea

- And, for #5, tell us what you would change about the idea to make it better.

Remember, there are no wrong answers, and we want to know what you think before we start talking about the idea as a group.

Lastly, before we start, I want to get a quick sense of the people around you use smokeless tobacco. [Moderator to do quick poll of participants] Show of hands: raise your hand if you have family members who use? Friends who use? Teammates who use?

[The moderator will introduce each concept (and accompanying stimuli) and allow ample time for participants to complete the Rating Worksheet, at least a couple of minutes. The moderator will then lead a group discussion about the idea.]

Okay, so what do you think?

[The moderator will encourage participants to share their reactions and play off one another's comments using prompts such as, "that's interesting, tell me more" and "so you liked that part, what about the rest of you." The moderator will then transition to more direct probing.]

[Creative concept stimuli]

- How did this idea make you feel?
 - [Moderator to probe on feelings: surprised, curious, worried/anxious, angry, disgusted, skeptical, amused]
- What is the main message? What is the most important thing they are trying to tell you?
 - Who do you think this message is directed at? You? Your peers? Why/Why not?
 - Is the message relevant to guys like you?
 - Do you think guys like you will be able to personally relate to it?
- Did this idea grab your attention?
 - If yes – why? What specific part of this idea grabbed your attention?
 - If no - why not?
- Did this idea make you “stop and think”?
 - Why?/Why not?
 - What parts are believable? Not believable?
 - Does it tell you anything new or different? If so, what?
- Tell me about the images...
 - Did they help bring this idea to life? If so, how? If not, why?
 - Are there any other images you would use to bring this idea to life?
- Tell me about the words (or dialogue)...
 - Did they help bring this idea to life? If so, how? If not, why?
 - Are there any other words/stories/situations you would use to bring this idea to life?
- Overall, what did you like most? Why?
- What didn't you like? Why?
- What would you change? Why?
- Is there anything that didn't make sense? Was confusing?
- Is this something...?
 - You would remember?
 - That would make you want to do something? If so, what?

- *You would talk about with other people? If so, who? What would you say?*

[The moderator will introduce the next concept and run through the probes again for the remaining concepts. Moderator will budget approximately 10-12 minutes to focus on each concept.]

BRANDING STIMULI (15 min.)

[MATERIALS: Brand stimuli]

[A total of 3 brand concepts will be presented in random order to help minimize order effects.]

I have one last set of things to show you – they are logos (or images representing brands). The goal for these logos is to communicate a broad message aimed at youth to not use smokeless tobacco. I am going to show you three logo ideas and for each one ask you several questions.

[Show first brand concept]

- *Tell me about the logo...*
 - *What did you think of it? Does it grab your attention?*
 - *What do you like? Dislike?*
 - [Probe on brand attributes]: *Do you think this logo is...Serious? Interesting? Engaging? Silly? etc...*
- *Does this logo “go with” any of the ideas I showed you before?*
 - *Which one(s)?*
 - *Why or why not?*

[The moderator will introduce the next brand concept and run through the probes again for the remaining logos. Moderator will budget approximately 5 minutes to focus on each logo.]

COMPARISON (10 min.)

[MATERIALS: Colored Index Cards]

I'd like you to think about all of the ideas we have discussed today. You have three colored cards in front of you—one green, one blue, one white. The first two questions are going to be about the four ideas I showed you earlier. [Motion/indicate set of four creative concepts]

Take the green card and on it, I want you to write the name of the idea that is **your favorite**, the one that spoke to you, personally, the most. Include at least one reason why this one is your favorite. [Allow participants time to write answer]

Now take the blue card. On this one, I want you to write the name of the idea that is **your least favorite**. Include at least one reason why this one is your least favorite. [Allow participants time to write answer]

Last one—the white card. On the white card, tell me which of the three **logos you like the best**. Include at least one reason why you like this one the best. [Allow participants time to write answer]

[Moderator will ask the following questions if time permits.]

Okay, who wants to share what they wrote?

- *What did you have for green/blue/white? Why?*
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CLOSING (5 min.)

Thank you very much for participating in this focus group. I have enjoyed getting to know you, and appreciate your time. Your feedback has been extremely helpful. If you have any questions or want any additional information please don't hesitate to come see me or one of the study staff before you leave. And, feel free to pick up one of the pamphlets on the back table if you are interested in more information on tobacco prevention.