

Focus Group Guide  
Chicago Flavored Tobacco Ban Study  
Spring 2015

Target participants: Convenience sample of 40 in-school adolescents, attending one of the schools affected by the Flavored Tobacco Ban, aged 14-18 (9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade) who have used flavored tobacco products in the past, recruited through schools and community organizations. Four focus groups of 10 youth each, stratified by location and distribution of the schools affected by the ban (2 North, 1 Central, and 1 South) will be recruited at 1 point in time, approximately 5-6 months from the November 7<sup>th</sup> ban implementation.

Introduction: *Hello everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Thank you for participating in our focus group today, your input is very helpful to our project. As you know, we have asked you to join today's discussion because you have reported that you've used flavored tobacco products in the past. So, today we will be talking about flavored tobacco use and places you get flavored tobacco. Just a reminder, flavored tobacco products include menthol cigarettes, vape pens, MODS, cigars, chew that have the taste or aroma of menthol, mint, wintergreen, chocolate, vanilla, honey, cocoa, any candy, any dessert, any alcoholic beverages, any fruit, any herb, and any spice.*

**Purpose:**

- To help researchers understand how teenagers like yourself make choices about using flavored tobacco products, and where you get those products. We are also interested in knowing if you are aware that the City of Chicago has implemented a flavored tobacco product ban in all retail stores located within 500 feet of a school.
- This discussion is very important in helping the researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago understand how much you know about this ban and what you think about the ban.

**Ground Rules:**

- *We appreciate you choosing to participate in our discussion today. Though we will use the information you share with us today in our research study, we will not share any private information such as your names when we use it. Your identities will be protected.*
- *This is a casual, relaxed discussion with no right or wrong answers, but we would appreciate honest and straightforward opinions. We are not trying to sell you anything, and are just interested in listening to your opinions and thoughts.*
- *We will be tape recording today's discussion so we can refer to them later. To make sure everyone's voices are heard, please try not to interrupt any of the other students while they are speaking*
- *Your parents will not know what you've said in the group.*
- *Remember you can "pass" on any question you do not want to answer, and remember that you don't have to participate in this discussion. To get the cash though, you do have to stay for the entire group discussion.*

➔ *First, we'd like to get a sense of who all of you are. Could everyone tell me your first name only, age, grade, and the school you attend?*

#### Tobacco Usage

*First we will be talking about flavored tobacco usage. I want to remind you that your identities will be protected, so please be honest in your responses. You reported that you have used a flavored tobacco product in the past, but we'd like you to think about all tobacco use (not only flavored tobacco).*

- ➔ *Can you tell me which types of tobacco products and/or e-cigarettes you've used?*
- ➔ *How often do you use tobacco products?*
  - *When did you start using flavored tobacco products?*
  - *Why did you start using flavored tobacco products?*
  - *How long have you used flavored tobacco products?*
- ➔ *Are there specific flavors of tobacco products that you prefer?*
- ➔ *Have you changed any of the types of tobacco products you've used over the last three months? If so, how?*

#### Place of Purchase

*Next we'll talk about where you get tobacco products, specifically flavored tobacco products, as we mentioned earlier. Think about all of the locations where you may have purchased flavored tobacco products..*

- ➔ *Where/how do you usually get flavored tobacco products?*
  - *Friends?*
  - *An adult?*
  - *A store?*
  - *More than one location?*
  - *Do you usually return to the same place when buying tobacco products?*
  - *Near school?*
  - *Near your home?*
- ➔ *Have you changed where you get these products? Why? How much further away from your home do you have to travel now?*
- ➔ *How difficult is it to purchase flavored tobacco products near your home? Near school?*

#### Tobacco Laws

- ➔ *Have you heard about any new tobacco laws in the City of Chicago?*
  - *If so, which ones?*
  - *What have you heard?*

- *What do you think of these new laws?*
- *How effective do you think the new law to remove flavored tobacco products from stores within 500 feet of schools will be in preventing teenagers from using flavored tobacco products? Why/why not?*
- ➔ *Do you know if any stores near your school or home have stopped selling flavored tobacco products?*
  - *If yes, have you noticed any new tobacco products being offered for sale?*
  - *Any other changes in the store after the ban went into effect?*
- ➔ *What do you think would keep someone your age from using tobacco products?*

*That is all the questions we have for you today. Thank you again for joining our discussion, your participation is very important to our research study.*

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