

Attachment E:
ODPHP Physical Activity Guidelines, 2nd Edition
Protocol for Child Focus Groups

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Objectives

The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) will be releasing the second edition of the Physical Activity Guidelines (PAG) in 2018. In preparation for this, ODPHP aims to conduct formative research to inform the development of messaging, products, tools, and dissemination strategies that promote the recommendations in the PAG.

CommunicateHealth (CH) will conduct focus groups with parents of young children (ages 3 to 6), children aged 8 to 12, and adolescents aged 13 to 16. We will conduct 12 in-person focus groups to investigate the following research questions:

1. What beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions exist around physical activity?
2. What factors influence whether or not participants are physically active?
3. What sources, products, and channels do participants trust or prefer when learning about or communicating about physical activity?
4. What message concepts are most relevant and effective in motivating participants and their children to be more physically active? (Parents of young children only)

This document details the protocol for the focus groups with children (ages 8 to 12). See **Attachments D** and **F** for the protocols for the focus groups with parents of young children (ages 3 to 6) and adolescents (ages 13 to 16), respectively.

Participants and Recruitment

We will conduct 4, 60-minute focus groups with children (ages 8 to 12) in 4 greater metropolitan areas:

- Baltimore, MD
- Chicago, IL
- Jackson, MS
- Las Vegas, NV.

The states in which we will conduct the focus groups have among the highest percentage of individuals who report no leisure-time physical activity.¹ These locations were also chosen for regional diversity — each is located in a different HHS region.²

We will conduct these focus groups with children between the ages of 8 and 12. We will aim to include up to 6 participants for each child group (24 participants total for this consumer segment). All focus groups will be conducted in English.

ODPHP will use professional recruitment firms to identify, screen, and recruit prospective participants. The recruitment firm will use the approved screening protocol (**Attachment A**) and screener script (**Attachment C**).

We will recruit children whose parents or guardians report that their child has a low to medium level of physical activity (i.e., parents/guardians report their child gets 60 minutes or more of physical activity fewer than 5 days per week). We will aim to recruit a participant pool with a mix of:

- Gender
- Race/ethnicity
- Household income
- Parental education

Child participants will be offered a \$40 incentive for participation. Parents or guardians of child participants will receive \$35. Parents will be asked to remain on site while their child is participating in the session. Whenever possible, focus groups will take place in locations that can be accessed by public transportation.

¹ http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/downloads/pa_state_indicator_report_2014.pdf

² <http://www.hhs.gov/about/agencies/iea/regional-offices/>

Methods

We will conduct 4 focus groups with children ages 8 to 12, and we will have up to 6 participants in each group (for a total of up to 24 participants in the child focus groups).

Before participating in the focus group, child participants and their parents or guardians will receive copies of the Assent Form – Focus Groups with Minors 8 to 16 Years of Age (**Attachment L**) and Informed Consent and Participant Information Form, Parental Consent–Focus Groups with Minors (**Attachment K**). Participants and their parents or guardians will review the forms and have an opportunity to ask questions about any aspect of the study before the focus group begins. Before they participate, children will sign the assent form and their parents/guardians will sign the parental consent form.

The informed consent and assent statements assure the child participants and their parents/guardians that information provided during the discussion group will be kept private and will only be used to inform ODPHP’s efforts to promote physical activity. The statements also contain language explaining that signing the forms confers permission for the child to be audio recorded during the focus group.

Each focus group will last approximately 60 minutes and will include a moderator and a note taker. ODPHP will be able to observe the focus groups in person. This protocol has been reviewed by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) and determined to “not involve greater than minimal risk” to participants.

Testing Procedures

The moderator will follow a standard guide (**Attachment H**) for each focus group that includes the following:

- Welcome, opening remarks, ground rules, and introductions
- Explanation of the purpose of the focus group
- Warm-up discussion
- Discussion of beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions around physical activity
- Factors influencing level of physical activity among children
- Discussion of sources of and discussions about health information related to physical activity
- Exercises about physical activity content (see **Attachment P**).
- Closing discussion
- Participant remuneration

After the focus group ends, child participants will receive their incentive of \$40 for participation and parents/guardians will receive \$35 for their time. Parents or guardians for each participant

will be asked to sign the Incentive Receipt Form for Child and Adolescent Focus Groups (**Attachment N**).

Reporting Procedures

CH will analyze feedback from focus group participants in the 4 focus groups with children (ages 8 to 12) along with feedback from the 4 focus groups with parents of young children (ages 3 to 6) and the 4 focus groups with adolescents (ages 13 to 16) to identify important themes, commonalities, and preferences. These findings will guide the development of the messaging, products, and tools that promote the recommendations in the PAG. CH will deliver a summary report highlighting key findings and recommendations from across all 12 focus groups.