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**TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Effectiveness of Safety Devices in Reducing the Risk of Child’s Access to Hazardous Cords and Loops Focus Groups**

The general objective of this project is to provide the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (“CPSC”) with data regarding the perceptions and behaviors of consumers toward the installation and use of window coverings, as well as the use of safety devices. These safety devices, when used properly, may have the potential to address hazards associated with window covering cords. The information gathered from the proposed study will be used by CPSC staff to make recommendations regarding potential actions to improve the likelihood of correct installation, use, and maintenance of corded window covering safety devices.

The focus groups will include open discussions in addition to a hands-on portion that will allow the participants to directly experience corded window covering safety devices. Observing participants interacting with corded window covering safety devices will allow the researcher to objectively document errors and challenges in use. After participants experience various covering and cord designs, each will be in a better position to productively discuss the issues related to installation, use, maintenance, effectiveness, and consumer acceptance. These data will enable the CPSC to assess the relative effectiveness of these devices and allow the participants to provide a concrete basis for their opinions on the usability, acceptability, system features, and parameters that would maximize the safety benefits of this particular countermeasure and increase user acceptance of the device.

**PURPOSE:**

Between 1996 and 2012, there were 184 reported fatal strangulations and 101 reported nonfatal strangulations involving window covering cords among children 8 years and younger (CPSC, 2014). Using separate data from the National Center for Health Statistics (“NCHS”) and a CPSC study, from 1999 through 2010, CPSC staff estimates that, on average, a minimum of 11 fatal strangulations related to window covering cords occurred per year in the United States among children under 5 years old (CPSC, 2014). Emergency department injury data from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (“NEISS”) for 1996 to 2012 indicate that an estimated 1,590 children received treatment for injuries due to entanglements in window covering cords (CPSC, 2014).

In the United States, there is a voluntary standard to address strangulation hazards associated with cords on window covering products. The American National Standard for Safety of Corded Window Covering Products (“ANSI/WCMA” A.100.1) provides requirements that address strangulation hazards associated with the continuous cord loops, inner cords, and cord joiners of window covering products. Despite the improvements to the safety performance requirements for window coverings under the 2014 ANSI/WCMA standard, in reviewing IDI findings for 249 injury cases, CPSC staff found that the voluntary standard only addressed hazards involved in 25.7 percent of the investigated incidents (CPSC, 2014). The voluntary standards did not effectively address hazards involved in 57 percent of the incidents. In cases in which pull cords or continuous loops are still in place, the current standard does not address the hazards to children, including entanglement in a loop created by knotted or tangled pull cords, entanglement in one or more long cords where the child wraps cords around the neck, entanglement in a loop above the stop ball of the cord, and entanglement in a continuous loop cord.

There are a number of safety devices that are used with window coverings to reduce child access to the hazardous cords or loops; however, these devices are not defined in the current standard with the exception of tension devices and may not be widely used.

To establish the effectiveness of these safety devices in reducing the number of child injuries and deaths related to window covering cords, CPSC staff requires a thorough evaluation of the issues related to correct installation, use, maintenance, effectiveness, and consumer acceptance of the various cord safety features in both qualitative and quantitative terms so that subsequent decisions can be data-driven and objectively supported. If the safety features are successful at preventing children from strangulation, but also present installation and use challenges for the adult consumer, the perceived usability and acceptance by consumers may negatively impact their decision to purchase window coverings with the specific safety feature or increase the likelihood that they would look for strategies that will disable it. Thus, effective safety devices need to address adult annoyance and acceptability issues that may be barriers to consumer acceptance.

CPSC’s contractor will identify the factors that impact installation, use and maintenance of safety devices that are used with corded window coverings. The proposed study will assess the interaction of the consumers with the different types of safety devices available in concordance with a range of window covering products to determine the factors that affect installation and use of the devices. In addition,

the study will examine the different types of barriers that may prevent installation and extended use of these devices, such as risk perceptions, supervision habits, costs and living conditions. These different factors will be studied using a variety of participants: parents of young children, homeowners and renters, adults without children, and older adults.

As part of this study, CPSC's contractor will conduct focus group discussions that include a hands-on component with recruited adults. Focus groups will consist of three component sections. Before any interaction of the participant with the products, participants will discuss their familiarity and actual experience with relevant products, safety perceptions, willingness to use, and ratings on key dimensions. Subsequently, participants will be able to work with a selected set of products. The products will be set up as functioning window coverings and safety devices at the contractor's Human Factors Laboratory. Participants will operate and/or install 6 to 8 different product scenarios. This will allow participants to directly experience the devices and document objectively any errors and problems in use. The hands-on component will be enhanced by discussions with each participant to understand their strategies, product usability, acceptability, and design features and parameters to maximize the safety benefits of the technology. Thereafter, the participants will be in a good position to productively discuss the issues related to installation, use, maintenance, effectiveness, and consumer acceptance.

Ten focus groups will be conducted to get adequate representation of key demographic groups, based on family structure, age, home window treatments, and other demographic factors identified as critical in the initial phases of the project. Each trial focus group will last approximately 90 minutes. Participants will be permitted to attend only one group. Participants will be recruited from the greater Washington, D.C. area. Focus group discussions will address:

- Participant experience with window coverings in his/her own household;
- Factors participants considered when purchasing window coverings;
- Participant awareness, perception, and comprehension of warning labels on window coverings;
- Participant awareness and interaction with safety devices that are currently on the market;
- Willingness to purchase a safety device;
- Factors that affect the decision to install a safety device, including reasons why a safety device may not be used;

- Frequency of children in the household;
- Exposure of children to the window coverings;
- Experience with children handling/playing with window coverings;
- Pre-existing familiarity, understanding, use, and perceptions of products and hazards;
- Perceptions of safety products presented: likely effectiveness, ease of installation and use, cost, concerns, willingness to try;
- Likely response of their own children to products (for groups that indicated they had children);
- Perceived maintenance; and
- Use acceptance.

CPSC's contractor will execute all necessary preparatory and logistical activities to recruit for and conduct all the focus groups, including developing the hands-on exposure protocol, preparing the moderator guide, securing facilities, purchasing the corded window coverings and safety devices, preparing support materials for the focus groups, and recruiting participants.

The contractor will conduct focus groups with recruited adults. The recruitment strategy will include homeowners and renters with and without children, and elderly participants. All elderly participants will be required to have at least some contact with children in their home. The contractor will attempt to recruit an equal percentage of male and female participants and to include a range of demographic and socioeconomic groups. Participants will be carefully defined, targeting individuals who represent the conditions outlined above.

After the focus groups, the contractor will develop a report. The report will summarize insights gained regarding the use and effectiveness of corded window coverings and safety devices. The information collected during the focus groups will not only be hypothetical consumer opinions, but it will also reflect the participant's opinions based on actual exposure to the different corded window covering safety devices. This experience will enable the CPSC to assess the relative effectiveness of these devices, as well as allow the participants to provide a concrete basis for his or her opinions on the usability, acceptability, system features, and parameters that would maximize the safety benefits of this particular countermeasure and increase user acceptance of the device.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:**

The recruitment goal is to identify 60 participants. Participants will include homeowners and renters, both with and without children, and elderly participants who have at least some contact with children in their home. The contractor will attempt to recruit an equal percentage of male and female participants and to include a range of demographic and socioeconomic groups. Participants will be carefully defined, targeting individuals representing the conditions outlined above.

**BURDEN HOURS**

<b>Category of Respondent</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Participation Time</b>	<b>Burden</b>
Focus Group Participants	60	150 minutes per participant	150 hours
<b>Totals</b>	60	150 minutes per participant	<b>150 hours</b>

**FEDERAL COST:** The estimated annual cost to the federal government is \$175,248.

Total estimated cost to the government for conducting the data collection is as follows:

Number of Participants	60
Total estimated cost of conducting survey	\$175,248
Cost per completed Participant includes \$75 stipend	\$2,920.80

This estimate is based on the total cost of the awarded research contract, divided by the specified number of completed participants.

## 6383.01 Focus Group on Window Coverings and the Use of Window Covering Safety Devices Moderator Guide

**Note:** There are questions in this guide that pertain only to a subset of the total recruits. These include participants who are: (1) homeowners, (2) renters, (3) participants with children (under age 5) living with them, (4) participants without children (under age 5) living with them, but have children of this age visit, and (6) participants who are elderly. Sessions will be scheduled according to these groupings. During the sessions, these questions will be omitted when they do not apply to the recruited group.

### 1. Review Purpose, Objective, and Scope of the Focus Group

#### Introductions and rules

*Moderator introduces self and aides*

The purpose of this focus group is for us to learn more about how people decide which window shades and blinds to buy and how they use them. We are also trying to understand the effectiveness of various features and devices that are made for these products.

No special knowledge or ability is required to participate. You have been selected to participate in this focus group because you indicated that you have window shades and/or blinds in your home. During this focus group, you will have an opportunity to try out several different window shade and blind configurations and related devices and share your opinions with us.

How many of you have taken part in a focus group?

Before we begin our discussion, I would just like to review some basic focus group rules and guidelines.

- a. Focus groups have certain rules and etiquette that we follow
  - i. No one will be judging your responses
  - ii. We need to hear about your feelings and opinions, not ours. We are not here to reach consensus, but to hear and discuss a range of views. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers.
  - iii. We want to encourage discussion among group members, not to/from the moderator; the moderator

will merely guide the discussion to cover the topics we need to hear about.

- iv. We want to give everyone the opportunity to speak - it is important to hear from everyone.
- v. The session is being video and audio recorded for analysis later; participation is voluntary.
- vi. Refreshments, rest rooms, and breaks are available and planned.

- b. Please be completely honest during this discussion. Your responses will NOT be shared with anyone other than people working on the project. Your name and any other identifying information will not be used in any reports that we prepare about the focus group.
- c. Please respect the privacy of the other people in this group by not discussing what is said here with anyone outside the group or in public.
- d. Our objective is to gain insight about how people use and feel about various types of window coverings and safety systems designed for them. During the session, I will guide us along various topics; but **YOU** are the **experts** and will be doing most of the talking.

## 2. Self-Introductions and Ice Breakers

- A. Introductions:  
Go around to each person in turn. Initiate a round of introductions with participants (first names only), and ask each participant what they do for a living.
- B. Participant Experience with Different Window Blinds and Shades and Safety Devices:  
Use flashcards with pictures of different blinds and shades and safety devices to discuss and categorize by familiarity and use.

## 3. Initial Discussion

- A. Participant Experience with Window Coverings
  - What type(s) of blinds and/or shades are in your home? *Show images of different types.*  
[Possible probe/follow-up questions: What other type(s) of window coverings do you have, such as drapes or curtains?]
  - Did your home come furnished with these?

[Possible probe/follow-up questions: For those who said their home came furnished with window coverings: Have you ever considered replacing the window coverings and blinds? How old do you estimate the different blinds and shades in your home to be?]

[Possible probe for renters: Does your rental agreement allow you to purchase and install different window coverings?]

- Which rooms have window coverings?  
[Possible probe/follow-up questions: How many windows in your home have window coverings currently installed? Do any of the windows have window ledges or a space where you could climb or stand?]
- What furniture (or equipment or toys) do you have positioned near the windows in your home?  
[Possible probe/follow up questions: How close is the furniture (or equipment or toys) to the window?]

#### B. Purchasing and Installing

- Have you ever purchased window coverings? This includes blinds, shades, drapes, and curtains.
- What stores or online websites did you use (or would you use) to shop for window coverings?
- What factors did you consider (or would you consider) when purchasing?  
[Possible probes: Cost, time and effort to install, appearance, safety, availability, product reviews]
  - If participants indicate they considered (or would consider) safety as a factor in deciding which window covering to install, ask: Where would you look for safety information pertaining to the window shade or blind?  
[Possible probes: On the window covering package, safety websites, store websites]
- Did you install the new window coverings yourself? (Or with assistance, professional installation)
- Tell us about the installation of your window coverings
  - How long did it take?
  - Did you use any written instructions (this may include the instruction manual or instructions on the blinds or shade) to install the window coverings?
  - Were there warning labels on the box or the coverings themselves?
  - Did you install all provided safety features, such as cord cleats, tensioners, or other accessories? *Provide a description of the safety device, and show pictures or examples of cord cleats and tensioners.*



### C. Use and Maintenance

- Do you adjust your window coverings daily, or do you leave them at a preset height/orientation/position?  
[Possible probe/follow-up questions: Do you ever have any problems when you are trying to adjust your window blinds or shades, and what type of issues do you experience (cord is stuck or jammed, the window covering does not stay at the desired height)?]
  - For participants who indicated that they installed accessories, such as cord cleats and tensioners ask: Do you ever have any issues when working with the window covering accessories (cord cleats, tensioners; what type of issues do you have?
- What type of problems have you experienced when using your window coverings?  
[Possible probe/follow-up questions: Have you ever had a shade or blind break or come loose? If so, what happened? How did you fix it (did you fix it)? ]
- For participants who indicated that they installed accessories, such as cord cleats and tensioners, ask: Have you ever had any of the installed accessories break? Did you fix the broken accessory (why or why not)? What type of maintenance is required for your window coverings to function properly?

### D. Perception of Hazards Associated with Window Coverings/Understanding of Risks

- What safety risks do you see with window shades and blinds?
- Who might be at-risk from window coverings (children, pets)? Why?
- Have you heard any stories about someone being injured by a window shade/blind?
- Do the window shades and blinds at your home have warnings or safety labels?
  - Did you read the safety label?
  - What types of information are included on the label?
- Are you aware that safety devices exist for different window blind and shade types?  
[Possible probe/follow-up questions: What types of window covering safety devices have you heard of?]
- Have you purchased a safety device for your window coverings, or did they come with some sort of safety device? If so, what type?

[Follow up question for renters: Did your rental come with a safety device pre-installed?]

- Have you ever installed a safety device for a window covering, if so, what kind(s)?  
[Possible probe/follow-up questions: How do you feel the installation process went? Did you use the instruction manual? Was the instruction manual easy or difficult to use?]
- How willing would you be to purchase a safety device for your window covering?
  - What factors would influence your decision to purchase a safety device (cost, install requirements, possible damage to wall, convenience, aesthetics, need for safety device)?
  - Where would you look for information on window covering safety devices?
- What were some of your reasons why you might install a safety device?
- How would you decide which device to install?
- What are some of the reasons you may not install a safety device?  
[Possible probes: Cost too much, installation was onerous, unaware safety devices existed, kids are always supervised – no need].
- What are some reasons why you may choose **not** to use the safety device?  
[Possible probes: onerous, broken, forget, see it as not necessary over time, no children present].

E. Questions Specific to Participants with Children (under age 5) Living in the Household

- What are some common situations when you may leave your child alone in the house? [Example, when you are in the kitchen making dinner and your child is playing in the den].
- What is the longest period of time you would feel comfortable leaving your child in the room by him/herself?
- Are there some rooms you would leave the child alone longer than other rooms?
- Have you ever noticed your children playing with or showing an interest in the blinds or shades in your home?
  - Have you ever experienced a close-call with children playing with the window coverings that resulted in a possible dangerous situation?
  - Have you ever spoken to your children about not playing with the blinds or shades in your household?

- Have you noticed if the window cords are knotted or looped by children? (may occur over time)
- In your opinion, what age child would be most likely to play with window coverings and thus need safety devices on the window coverings?
- Which type of blinds or shades do you believe may appeal more to children? Do you think there are specific features or devices that may be more interesting to them?
- Are there any rooms you would consider using a cordless window covering instead of a safety device? What is your reasoning for doing so? *Provide a description of a cordless blind and an example of the product.*

F. Questions Specific to Participants Who Do Not Have Children Living in the Household

- How frequently do children under the age of 5 visit your household?
- What type of safety concerns do you consider when children are visiting your home?
- Have you ever noticed these children playing with the blinds or shades?

G. Questions Specific to Elderly Participants

- How frequently do children under the age of 5 visit your household?
- What type of safety concerns do you consider when children are visiting your home?
- Have you ever noticed these children playing with the blinds or shades?
- Do you ever experience difficulty working with your window blinds and shades?
- How likely would you be to install safety devices for your blinds and shades?

## 4. Hands-On Product Exposure

Now, I would like you each to have the opportunity to experience several window shades, blinds, and different safety devices. Once you all have participated in this exercise, we will come back here, and I would like you to provide some feedback on your experiences. While you are working with the different window covering and safety devices,

we encourage you to please think aloud and describe what you are doing and tell us about any positive or negative feedback you may have. We will also be asking you several questions while you are working with the different shades and blinds.

*During the hands-on portion, participants will be encouraged to “think aloud” as they perform the tasks. They will also be asked specific questions that pertain to the window coverings or safety devices. Participants will all experience the same types of blinds and shades and safety devices so that they can all speak on to the same topics. Participants will be videotaped during this part of the session.*

Possible Questions during Hands-On Exposure:

- Did you use the installation manual?
- How easy or difficult did you find the installation manual?
- How necessary would a safety device be for the window covering you are working with?
- How easy or difficult was it to install and use the window covering safety device?
- How confident are you that you installed it correctly?
- Do you believe anything about this shade/blind/device would be attractive for young children?
- In your opinion, what is the likelihood of danger for a child under 5, if they were playing with this window covering?
  - o How effective would the safety device be?

## **5. Follow-Up Discussion**

### **A. General Discussion on the Task and Performance**

- What were your general thoughts about the tasks?
- What were some of the problems and errors you experienced trying to use the products?
- What were some of the problems and errors you experienced trying to use the different safety devices?

### **B. Response to Labels and Instructions**

- Did you use the written instructions?  
[Possible probes/follow-up questions: How easy or difficult was it to understand the labels on the window coverings? How easy or difficult was it to understand the instruction manual?]

### C. Perceived Barriers to Installation and Use

- How easy/difficult was it to install/use the different devices?
- How likely would you be to purchase and install a safety device?

[Possible probe for renters: As a renter with children, how likely are you to purchase/install the safety device? As a renter without children, how likely are you to purchase/install the safety device? How likely that you will demand that your landlord or property owner or manager install a different window covering?]

### D. Acceptance & Use

- In your opinion, how effective would \_\_\_ (*insert specific safety device and hold up an example, repeat for all types*) safety devices be in preventing hazards?
  - o How easy or difficult was it to install \_\_\_? Please describe any challenges you faced when you were installing \_\_\_?
  - o How easy or difficult was \_\_\_ to use? Please describe any challenges you faced when you were using \_\_\_?
  - o Would you use \_\_\_? Would you be inclined to use it each time you operate the blind or shade? Are there certain times when you wouldn't use it?
  - o What are some potential dangers that you think may remain even after a safety device has been installed? (For example, if cord cleat is not installed high enough, child can reach and undo the cord. Alternatively, if tension device is not installed to provide sufficient tension, the opening might be large enough for the child to insert his head).
  - o How likely is it that this window covering or safety device would malfunction or require repair?
  - o What factors are associated with willingness to purchase (cost, availability, aesthetics, need, maintenance, reliability, usability)?
  - o What type of maintenance do you think this would require?
- How about a cordless option, how likely would you be to purchase this type of blind or shade? What would prevent you (and others) from purchasing a cordless blind or shade? *Provide a description of a cordless blind and an example of the product.*

### E. Alternative Ideas

- Does anyone have anything else they would like to mention about window coverings or safety devices for window coverings before we conclude the focus group? Are there any issues that we have not raised?

## **6. Wrap-Up**

Thank you for your time. What we have heard and learned today will help us understand better the use patterns of window coverings and the effectiveness of various window covering safety devices.

- Instruct participants about how they will be reimbursed for their time.

## Effectiveness of Safety Devices in Reducing the Risk of Child's Access to Hazardous Cords and Loops Advertisement Text

Westat, Inc., is looking for participants for a study aimed at understanding how people decide which window shades and blinds to buy and how they use them. We are also trying to understand the effectiveness of various features and devices that are made for these products. There is no special knowledge or ability required to participate.

If you are interested, please visit: [www.studywebsite.com](http://www.studywebsite.com), or call us at 1-800-XXX-XXXX

DRAFT

## Focus Group on Window Shades and Blinds Recruitment Screener Guide

*NOTE: Screener instrument will be adapted for an online website, which will allow participants to self-report answers via a brief questionnaire and submit a picture of the window covering types in their household. For participants who prefer to call in, a telephone number will also be provided, and the screener will be interviewer-administered.*

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ *(will be automatically date and time-stamped via Web survey)*

Westat, Inc., will be conducting focus groups for the federal government. The focus group will take about 1.5 hours and will take place at \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in location). We are trying to understand how people decide which window shades and blinds to buy and how they use them. We are also trying to understand the effectiveness of various features and devices that are made for these products. No special knowledge or ability is required to participate.

As part of the session, you will be asked to participate in a discussion about your experiences with window shades and blinds and to interact with a few different types of window coverings and related devices. If selected, you will be paid \$75 for your participation, upon session completion.

We will not be scheduling you for a focus group today. We need to recruit a number of available people before we try to schedule a session. If you are eligible, we will add your name to the list of potential participants.

If you are interested, I will need to ask you a few questions to determine your eligibility. Are you interested in participating?

a. Yes *(If yes, questionnaire will advance to question 1).*

b. No *(If no, a message will appear thanking the person for their time and will end the screener).*

1. Which of one of the following categories best describes your age?

- a. 18-25
- b. 26-35
- c. 36-45



- d. 46-55
- e. 56-65
- f. 66-75
- g. 76+

2. What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female

3. Do you rent or own your primary residence?

- a. RENT
- b. OWN

4. Do you have window blinds or shades in your household?

*A photo of each example window covering will be included on the website to help participants easily identify the type in their household.*

- a. YES
- b. NO

*If no, a message will appear thanking the person for their time and will end the screener.*

5. Below are examples of different window blinds and shades that you may have in your home. If you have this type of window covering in your home, please mark the box below the picture. Please check all that apply.

*A photo of each example window covering will be included on the website to help participants easily identify the type in their household.*

6. If you would like, you can submit a photo of up to (5) five different window blinds or shades that you have in your household. The photo should be of the window only, no people or identifying information.

*Allow space for up to 5 photo downloads.*

7. Below are examples of some of the different features and devices that are made to work with window blinds and shades. Do the blinds or shades in your home have any of these additional features or devices installed?

*A photo of each example safety device will be included on the website to help participants easily identify the type in their household.*

- a. YES                      b. NO

8. Are there any children under the age of 5 who live with you?

- a. YES                      b. NO

*If yes, ask question 9, if no, proceed to question 10.*

9. Please provide the ages of any children under age 5 who live with you. There is space to record the ages for up to 5 children.

*Provide space to fill in ages for up to 5 children.*

10. Are there any children under the age of 5 who visit your home?

- a. YES                      b. NO

*If yes, ask question 11, if no proceed to question 13.*

11. Please provide the ages of any children under age 5 who visit your home. There is space to record the ages for up to 5 children.

*Provide space to fill in ages for up to 5 children.*

12. How frequently do children under age 5 visit your home?

- a. One or more times per week  
b. One to two times per month, but no more  
c. Once or twice a year, but no more  
d. Less than once a year

13. Please provide your name (first name only is fine):

\_\_\_\_\_.

- 14.** Please provide a phone number where we can easily contact you if you are selected for the study:

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- 15.** Please provide a valid email address where you can be reached if you are selected for the study:

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- 16.** For statistical purposes only, could you please tell me your race?

- a. White/Caucasian
- b. Black/African-American
- c. Hispanic/Latino
- d. Asian
- e. Middle Eastern
- f. American Indian or Alaska Native
- g. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- h. Other \* SPECIFY \*
- i. Don't know
- j. Prefer not to answer

- 17.** For statistical purposes only, will you please tell me which one of the following categories best represents your total family income?

- a. Less than \$10,000
- b. \$10,000-\$14,999
- c. \$15,000-\$24,999
- d. \$25,000-\$34,999
- e. \$35,000-\$49,999
- f. \$50,000-\$74,999
- g. \$75,000-\$99,999
- h. \$100,000-\$149,999
- i. \$150,000-\$199,999
- j. \$200,000+
- k. Don't know
- l. Prefer not to answer

**18.** How did you hear about the study?

- a. Newspaper
- b. Friend
- c. Email
- d. Craig's List
- e. Flyer
- f. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**19.** Can you tell me which days and times of the week when you might be available, if you are selected to participate?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

***Closing:***

Thank you for your time and interest. Once we get a pool of names together, we will schedule the focus group. We cannot guarantee that you will be included because participation depends on the times that we meet and the total number of people that are signed up. However we will make every effort to include you.

**Consent to Participate in a Focus Group**

**Title of the Project:** Window Shades and Blinds and Related Devices

**Researcher:** Westat, Inc., under contract with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission ("CPSC")

**Invitation to Participate in a Research Study**

Westat, Inc. invites you to be part of a focus group to investigate the use of window shades, blinds, and possible hazards associated with these products. This study also looks at design features that can reduce the possible hazards associated with window shades and blinds. The study is funded by the CPSC.

**Description of Your Involvement**

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to participate in a focus group where you will discuss your experience with your own window coverings. You also will be asked

to try out different types of window shades and blinds and related devices. We have placed video cameras in the room, and you will be videotaped when you are working with the window coverings and associated devices. You will be asked to talk out loud to share your thought processes during your interactions with the window shades and blinds and related devices. We also will take notes during the focus groups.

The entire session will take about 90 minutes.

#### **Benefits of Participation**

Although you may not directly benefit from being in this study, others may benefit because the findings of this study may be used to improve the safety of window shades and blinds.

#### **Risks and Discomforts of Participation**

We do not believe that there are any risks or discomforts from participating in this research.

#### **Compensation for Participation**

You will be given \$75 if you complete the entire focus group session. If you leave before the focus group ends, you will not be compensated. You will be expected to pay for your own transportation and parking.

#### **Confidentiality**

The results of this study may be published or made public. You will not be identified in any publications or presentations.

There are some reasons why people other than Westat researchers may need to see information that you provided as part of the study, including audio/visual recordings of your participation. This includes personnel at the CPSC, which is sponsoring the study.

To keep your information safe, your name will not be attached to any data, but a study number will be used instead.

Please be advised that although the researchers will take every precaution to maintain confidentiality, the nature of focus groups prevents the researchers from guaranteeing confidentiality. Please respect the privacy of your fellow participants and do not repeat what is said in the focus group to others.

#### **Voluntary Nature of the Study**

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You do not have to answer a question that you do not want to answer. If you decide to withdraw early, the information or data that you provided will be destroyed.

### **Audio/Visual Recording**

Audio/visual recording will be done as part of the study procedures. Upon completion of the study, these recordings may be used for educational purposes in the classroom, in professional conferences and presentations, and for similar purposes.

You may not participate in this study if you are not willing to be recorded.

Please sign below if you are willing to be recorded.

### **Storage and Future Use of Data**

The researchers will destroy any information containing identifying information about you within six months after completion of the study.

Audio/visual recordings will be archived for potential use for the purposes described above.

### **Contact Information for the Study Team**

If you have any questions about this study, please contact:

Dr. Neil Lerner  
(301) 315-5962  
Westat, Inc.  
1600 Research Boulevard  
Rockville, MD 20850

### **Contact Information for Questions about Your Rights as a Research Participant**

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researchers, please call the Westat Human Subjects Protection office at 1-888-920-7631. Please leave a message with your full name and the name of the study, "Window Shades and Blinds Focus Group Study," and your phone number, beginning with the area code. Someone will return your call as soon as possible.

### **Consent**

By signing below, you are agreeing to be in the study, and you are giving permission to be recorded. You will be given a copy of this document for your records, and one copy will be kept with the study records.

Be sure that any questions you have about the study have been answered and that you understand what you are being asked to do. You may contact the researcher if you think of a question later.

*I agree to participate in the study.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*I agree to be audio/video recorded.*

Yes

No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

DRAFT

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