

OWH appreciates and understands OMB's concern that a combined focus group with users and non-users may result in biased responses. However, the decision to conduct a mixed focus group was carefully based on the pilots that we conducted (users only, non-users only, and a mixed group) as well as the previous study conducted by ASPE (where users and non-users were mixed) (OMB Number: 0990-0421). In instances of mixed groups, we found that women reacted to and reflected on each other's diverse experiences in valuable ways, generating richer data. By hearing a woman discuss the benefits she experienced through the program, a non-user considered those benefits in the context of her own life and responded more concretely to how the program could have affected her. Alternatively, hearing about the experience of a woman who did not use state-level PFL encouraged women who used the program to reflect on their experience in a way they otherwise had not. In addition, combining users and non-users helped the discussion stay focused on state-level PFL. The pilot group of non-users tended to discuss other topics related to early motherhood instead of a program they did not participate in or were not aware of.