

Drug Free Communities (DFC) Youth Group Interview Protocol

Youth Group Interview Introduction

Hello. How is everyone doing today? My name is *[insert name of facilitator]* and this is *[insert name of note-taker]*. We want to thank you for taking the time today to meet with us to discuss the Drug Free Communities program at *[insert name]*. To briefly introduce ourselves, we are the part of the National Evaluation team of DFC program, and your participation in this youth focus group is part of a larger evaluation effort. Don't be afraid to be honest, because you represent the voice of the youth, and your opinions and thoughts are extremely important to us. Moreover, what you say inside this room will remain confidential. Feel free to propose any recommendations or ideas that you may have on how your community can better help those around you who have substance abuse problems and addictions. We are very interested in your experiences with the DFC program, with the perceptions regarding alcohol and drugs in your community, and your thoughts on how your coalition can reduce drug use among youth in your community.

Before we begin, we want to remind each of you that your participation in this focus group is voluntary and the information you share with us will be kept confidential. Specifically, this means that (1) the focus group is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or leave the focus group at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence; and (4) only evaluation staff will have access to the interview tape and interview data (that is, if you agree to be tape recorded). This means we will not report or present the information you share with us in any way that will identify you, and you will not get in trouble. We also ask that each member of the group today respect the confidentiality of others and that you do not discuss the contents of what you hear today outside of this group.

With your permission, we would like to record the audio of this group interview. We will transcribe the conversation for accuracy of your comments. Nobody outside of the National Evaluation team will have access to this audio recording. Upon transcription of these recordings as appropriate to the evaluation, we will destroy the recordings themselves, and keep only written records.

Are there any questions before we begin?

(Interviewer): Please remember to ask permission to tape record the interview. They can decline. Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin.

Background of Community Context and Youth Group Context

1. **Introduction:** Please briefly introduce yourself with your name, age, school, and how you are involved in the DFC program.
2. **Youth Perception and Drug Culture:** Let's begin by talking about your experience and opinions on alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, and the drug culture in your community.
 - a. What are your friend's perceptions of drugs? What is the general perception at school? How available are drugs? Is it easier for kids in your school to obtain alcohol or drugs?
 - b. What do you feel are the most common drugs that your friends or peers use?
 - c. What are the different unique ways and substances that kids use to get high?
3. **Access , Availability, and Consumption of Drugs**
 - a. How do youth get introduced to drugs? Who provides it to them?
 - b. After they try drugs for the first time, how do kids buy or obtain cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, prescriptions drugs, or other drugs? Where – via friends, at school, in your neighborhood, from friends' older brothers and sisters?
 - c. Where are common places that people your age consume alcohol, use drugs or smoke cigarettes? Do they tend to do it in groups, at parties, raves??
 - d. Who do people your age usually do drugs with? Do they do it alone or usually in a social setting?
4. **Community & School Context**
 - a. Do you feel safe in your community? Your school?
 - b. Are alcohol and drugs readily available in your community? School?
 - c. Does your community have any drug abuse prevention programs for kids your age? Younger? Older? Are these DFC efforts? Does your school have any drug abuse prevention programs for kids your age? Younger? Older? Are these DFC efforts?
 - d. If kids get caught with drugs or using drugs at school, what happens?
 - e. How does your school deal with violence (including bullying)?

DFC Assessment, Capacity & Planning

5. What are other important goals that you think that DFC should focus on?

6. Substance of Issue in Community

- a. Why do you think kids try drugs in the first place?
- b. What are some community, school, family, or personal interests (e.g., music, art) that your coalition should focus on that they do not currently target?
- c. Are the materials and programs youth-friendly?
- d. Are the materials available in different languages?

7. Youth Involvement

- a. How does your coalition take youth's opinion into consideration when creating policies and programs?
- b. How does the coalition involve the youth in their activities and services?
- c. How can the coalition provide meaningful opportunities for the youth to participate in the coalition? In other words, how would you like to be more involved in the coalition?

Implementation

- 8. What would decrease alcohol and drug use among youth?
 - a. An increase in afterschool activities and drug-free activities?
 - b. An increase in law enforcement and stricter policies regarding possession and consumption of drugs?
 - c. Making kids more aware of the harmful consequences of drugs?
 - d. Changing the physical environment?

9. Coalition's Messages to Youth

- a. What is your coalition's primary message to the youth regarding substance use? Does the main message promote an abstinence model "just say no" or does it educate youth about potential negative impacts of drug use/abuse?
- b. Are these messages and efforts and activities effective in drug abuse prevention? What could be changed to make them more effective?

Evaluation

10. Activities and Services

- a. Which of your coalition's activities and services are most helpful in providing support or prevention programs for youth with substance abuse problems? Some examples of activities and services are media campaigns, presentations on drug use, activities focused on enhancing life skills and

conflict management skills, youth or family counseling, and sponsoring drug-free events.

- b. Are there any services or programs that the coalition provides that are not effective in reducing drug use?

11. Youth Recommendations

- a. What are some services, events, or information that you would like your coalition to provide that is currently not provided?
- b. What are some areas of improvement for your coalition?

12. Perception of Coalition Leaders

- a. Do you feel comfortable being completely open and honest with your coalition leaders and the adults involved in the program or services?

DFC Outcomes and Impacts

13. Community Impact

- a. Do you see changes in your community after the implementation of DFC programs?
- b. Do you feel that there is an overall increase in safety, increase in community collaboration, and decrease in youth drug use?