

Introductory and Consent Script for Focus Groups

Hello, my name is _____ and I'll be leading our discussion today.

Thank you for being part of this focus group. We're conducting a study of fatherhood programs and the fathers and coparents who participate in them. The study's goal is to better understand how fatherhood programs support and can better support fathers' healthy coparenting and romantic relationships. The study is funded by the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We are here today to learn more about the services this fatherhood program provides, your experiences with those services, and about how it might better serve **[fathers/coparents]** like you. To thank you for your participation, you should have already received a \$30 gift card. Did anyone not get theirs?

I am from Child Trends, an independent research organization. I will be your facilitator for this session and _____ will be taking notes. We are taking notes and, if everyone agrees, recording the session to make sure we get everything right. Your answers will not be linked with your name in any way. We will use the recording to fill in our written notes, but the recording will be destroyed after our study is completed. If you want to say something that you do not want to be recorded, just say so and we will turn it off. We will not tell anyone who said what in this meeting. To protect the identity of others, I ask that when talking about someone, you only use their first name, nickname, or call them by a title such as "son, daughter, mother, sister, or brother."

We will do everything we can to keep everything you tell us private. However, privacy also depends on all of you. We **strongly request** that no one discuss what is said today with anyone outside the group. However, we cannot guarantee that everyone here will follow this request.

At the end of the focus group we will distribute a brief questionnaire to get some basic information about you and your relationships. You can skip any questions you don't want to answer, and your name will not be associated with your answers. These questions should take you no more than 15 minutes to complete.

Your participation today is voluntary. Your participation in the group will have no effect on the services that you get from the fatherhood program or any other program you may participate in. Once we begin the focus group, you may choose to leave the group at any time, and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.

I'm not sure how many of you have been in a focus group before, but let me give a brief overview of what to expect. As the facilitator, I will be asking questions, but I want the interaction to flow among you - let's have lots of open discussion. I encourage you to talk to and ask questions of each other. There may be times when I need to interrupt the conversation -- either to ask you to clarify something you said or to move the discussion on to another topic. Most people say they enjoy being in these groups.

Do you have any questions for me right now? If you have questions later, the phone numbers for the study director and the Child Trends Institutional Review Board are on the forms we have given you.

Does everyone here agree to participate in the focus group? If you do not want to participate, you are free to go. **[Ask everyone who agrees to say yes]**

Is it ok with everyone in the room to record the focus group? We will only use the recording to fill in our notes. **[Ask everyone who agrees to say yes]**

If NO ask: Remember, we can pause the recording if you want to say something that you do not want recorded. Would you be ok with us recording the focus group if you have the choice to stop the recording later?

If still NO: That's ok. We won't record the group.