



# Creative Testing Parent Focus Groups Discussion Guide

## GUIDELINES & INTRODUCTIONS (10 MIN)

### Guidelines

Hello everyone and thank you for speaking with me today. My name is X, and I work for a private research company.

Before we begin, I want to go over a couple of things:

- We've asked you here because we want to know what you think and feel about the topics we're about to discuss. I want to emphasize that there are no wrong answers. Our whole purpose for being here is to hear what you think, so please speak up, especially if what you have to say is different than what someone else is saying. You may represent what a lot of other folks think. I will ask though that we remain respectful of one another during today's discussion. If you are disagreeing with someone else, please be assured that we are capturing every opinion and that disagreements do not need to be belabored during our conversation.
- Later in the group, we're going to look at some statements and materials that could eventually become ads that I'd like to get your feedback on. These "ads" have not been produced yet and are missing key elements—they currently look like a draft of an ad you might see in a magazine.
- As we're going through these, one important thing I want to point out—I did not create any of the materials that we'll be reviewing today. If you like them or if you don't like them, please say so. Your responses won't affect me either way. Like I mentioned earlier, my whole reason for being here is to learn about what you think, not to try and sway you.
- There may be times I ask you to clarify or ask you to tell more about what you just said. This is simply to make sure I understood and accurately capture what you think, not because I'm challenging your point of view.

- I also want to note that your participation is voluntary. If I ask any questions you do not wish to answer or become uncomfortable for any reason, you do not have to answer. I do want to hear from everyone though, so I might call on you at some point if I notice you're being particularly quiet.
- Everything you share here is confidential. Nothing you say will be tied back to you. Your name and any identifying information will not be used in any of our reports.
- There are some other people listening in who are helping me take notes so that I can fully focus on our conversation and be respectful of your time. At the end of the group, they might have a couple clarifying questions for us.
- I'll be recording our conversation. The recordings will be used to confirm our notes and other project staff may hear the recording at a later date. I love a lively discussion, but I ask that you speak one at a time—although I understand it can be difficult, especially online. I simply want to make sure I hear everything that everyone says. I want this to be a free-flowing discussion, but if there's background noise where you are, please mute your mic. I am going to start the recording now.
- Our discussion should take no more than 90 minutes. Also, in preparation for today's discussion you were asked to have a piece of scrap paper available. Please make sure you have some paper handy. I also want to note that coming out of the focus group, we have additional information and resources available. I appreciate the time that you carved out to be here, and I want to be respectful of that, so I may interrupt us so that we stay on track.
- For our discussion today, I'd like you to specifically think of your 6-11 year old children when answering questions. You might have children of other ages, but we really want to know your perspective when it comes to kids between the ages of 6 and 11.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

## Introductions/Ice Breaker

I'd like to start by getting to know each of you a bit better. So, I'm going to have everyone go around and share their first name or name you prefer to be called, where in the country you are, and something you enjoy doing with your child.

I can go ahead and get us started.

- **[MODERATOR INTRODUCES SELF AND THEN HAS EACH PARTICIPANT INTRODUCE THEMSELVES AND RESPOND TO ICEBREAKER.]**

## COVID-19 TOP-OF-MIND REACTIONS (15 MIN)

Thank you—I look forward to getting to know you better over the course of the conversation.

- To start off, I'd like for each of you to fill in the blank for the following sentence. I feel \_\_\_\_\_ about the next few months in relation to COVID-19.  
[MODERATOR: LISTEN FOR USE OF CORONAVIRUS VS. COVID/COVID-19.]
  - o Tell me a bit—and to the extent to which you're comfortable and want to share—more about what specifically is causing you to feel this way.
    - In what ways has the pandemic affected you and your child's lives?
    - What are you most looking forward to for your child in the next few months? What about the least?
      - (If not mentioned above): Do you currently have childcare?
      - (If not mentioned above): Do you expect that your children will attend school in person in the fall?
      - (If not mentioned above): How safe do you feel about sending your child back to in-person learning?
    - Where do you go to learn information about children and COVID-19?
  - o How concerned are you about the possibility of your child contracting COVID-19?
    - How does your current level of concern compare to the beginning of the pandemic?
    - What measures or behaviors do you and your child take to lower the risk of getting COVID-19?
      - How have these behaviors changed over time, if at all?

## BASELINE: VACCINE INTENT & LIKELIHOOD TO RECOMMEND (30 MIN)

- [WRITE.] I'd like for you to pull out the scrap paper we asked you to have handy. I would like for you to write down likely, unlikely, or unsure to the following question: What is the likelihood you will get your child a COVID-19 vaccine when it's authorized and available for children under the age of 12?
- [HAND COUNT.] Who said that when a vaccine is available, you are likely to get your child a COVID-19 vaccine? Please raise your hand. Who said unlikely? And who said they are not sure?

- o What sorts of things encourage or motivate you to get your child vaccinated?
  - What would your child gain by getting vaccinated? **[PROBE ON NOT WEARING A MASK AND/OR PARTICIPATING IN ACTIVITIES]**
  
- o What, if any, concerns do you have about your child getting a COVID-19 vaccine once it is available?
  - **[IF SIDE EFFECTS MENTIONED, PROBE.]** Tell me more about that.
  
- o In your household, how do you make health-related decisions like this for your child or children?
  - Have you had any discussions with your child's other parent or guardian about getting a COVID-19 vaccine for your child?
    - **[PROBE ON ANY CONFLICTS BETWEEN CAREGIVERS]**
  - In general, where do you go for information when making these decisions? **[PROBE ON WHO THEY TALK TO]**
  - What conversations have you had with your children about getting a COVID-19 vaccine?
  
- o What have you heard or read about the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines in children
  - Where have you gotten this information?
  
- o Earlier, I mentioned the word authorized—when a vaccine is authorized—what does authorized mean to you?
  - Is there another word that you would prefer to hear rather than authorized?
  
- o What information would you like to know about the COVID-19 vaccines for your child?
  - What makes that information more valuable to you?
  - Where would you want to get that information? Who would you like to hear from?
  
- o **[SHARE SCREEN].** On the piece of scrap paper that you have handy, I'd like for you to rank how trustworthy each of the following are from who you would trust most for information about the COVID-19 vaccine to who you would trust least.

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
  2. State and local health officials
  3. State or local school officials or teachers
  4. Your pediatrician
  5. American Academy of Pediatrics
  6. Other organization or foundation (ex: March of Dimes)
  7. Those in your immediate circle, family members, friends
- Which do you trust most? What makes them trustworthy?
  - Which do you trust least? What hurts their credibility?
    - **[PROBE ON HHS.]**

## VACCINE READINESS FRAMES (30 MIN, ~5-6 MINUTES FOR EACH)

Next, I am going to show you written descriptions of a few different statements (or, communication approaches). I'm going to ask for your feedback to determine which you feel would be the best starting place for developing advertisements about a COVID-19 vaccine when it or other options are authorized and become available to children aged 6 and older. Please keep in mind that what I am going to show you are merely written descriptions of messaging strategies/approaches and don't represent the actual words that you might see on an ad. Think of this as the big idea behind the ad. As we discuss each of these, we would like you to assume that the vaccine or vaccines have already been authorized for use and are available to you.

**[MODERATOR TO SHOW FOUR STATEMENTS, ONE PER THEME, ONE AT A TIME.]**

### MESSAGE FRAMES:

- **[BENEFIT TO CHILD]** Children are still at risk if they contract COVID-19. By getting them the COVID-19 vaccine, I am helping keep my child healthy.
- **[BENEFIT TO LOVED ONES]** By getting my child the COVID-19 vaccine, I am helping keep our loved ones and our community healthy.
- **[HOPE FOR NORMALCY]** Vaccines, along with mask-wearing, physical distancing, and other precautions, will help ensure my child's return to school, sports, and other group activities in the future.
- **[CONVENIENCE]** Getting my child a COVID-19 vaccine will help our work and school lives return to a regular schedule.
- **[BENEFITS OUTWEIGH RISKS]** While there are no known long-term effects caused by COVID-19 vaccines, getting your child vaccinated protects them from any long-term effects caused by COVID-19 and from severe COVID-19.
- **[SAFETY/TESTING PROCESS]** A COVID-19 vaccine will only be authorized for children younger than 12 if it is safe and effective.
- **[SIDE EFFECTS]** Feeling mild side effects for a day or two after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine is worth it if my child will be protected.

**[FOR EACH.]**

- What was your immediate reaction after reading this?
- How convincing is this as a reason to get your child a COVID-19 vaccine once it is available?
- On a scale of 1 to 5, with one being not convincing and 5 being very convincing, how convincing is this message as a reason to get your child a COVID-19 vaccine once it is available? **[MODERATOR ASKS EACH PARTICIPANT TO GIVE RATING]**
  - What about it is convincing?
    - What about it is not convincing?
  - What would you change to make it better?
- How important, if at all, is it to send a message like this right now?
  - Tell me more about that. Why do you think it is/is not an important message to send right now?
- How believable is this?
- What might the next sentence of this statement be to make it stronger?
  - What sorts of additional information does a statement like this need?
    - **[PROBE ON FACTS, STATISTICS, PROOF POINTS, VALIDATORS.]**

**[IF BARRIERS OR FACILITATORS TO VACCINATION COME UP DURING ANY FRAME, PROBE FURTHER ON THIS.]**

**[MESSAGE-SPECIFIC PROBES.]**

- **[HOPE FOR NORMALCY]** What does 'other precautions' mean to you?
  - **What do you think about your child returning to in-person learning in the fall? Is that a motivator for getting them a vaccine? [PROBE IF NOT MENTIONED]**
- **[CONVENIENCE]** How important is returning to a regular school schedule to you?
  - What types of incentives would lead you to get your child vaccinated?

- **[SAFETY/TESTING PROCESS]**
  - What kind of information would make you feel safe in the decision to get your child vaccinated?
- **[BENEFITS OUTWEIGH RISKS]**
  - What do you think of the phrase “long-term effects” in regards to the vaccine?
  - What about in regards to COVID-19?
- **[SIDE EFFECTS]** What do you think of the phrase “mild side effects”?

## **WRAP-UP (5 MIN)**

- Those are all the questions I have for you. I just want to check to see if any of my colleagues have any final questions.
- Is there anything you would like to share that you have not had the chance to before we wrap up?
- Thank you very much for participating in this discussion. I appreciate your time, and your feedback has been extremely helpful, as it will help the country to deal with pandemic more effectively.
- As I mentioned at the beginning, there are resources listed in your informed consent sheet if you would like more information about what we’ve discussed. Please remember not to share anything we’ve discussed here today.