

## **Measuring, Supporting, and Understanding Child and Caregiver well-being through Employment and Self-Sufficiency research (Measuring SUCCESS) project Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROJECT?**

The United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF) contracted Mathematica to conduct the Measuring, Supporting, and Understanding Child and Caregiver well-being through Employment and Self-Sufficiency research (Measuring SUCCESS) project. The purpose of the project is to learn more about the experiences and well-being of families involved with programs that aim to increase economic security, to inform future research about these types of programs.

### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE FOCUS GROUPS?**

The purpose of the focus groups is to hear directly from participants what it means to “be well” during and after participating in programs that aim to increase economic security, for yourselves, for children in your life, and for your family as a whole. By “be well,” we mean personally, financially, emotionally, in your personal health, and so on. The information collected during the focus groups will be used to contribute to the development of a conceptual framework that will describe how TANF and related programs can shape child and family well-being broadly.

### **HOW DID YOU GET MY NAME?**

[AGENCY/PROGRAM NAME] shared your name with Mathematica to contact to participate in a focus group.

### **WHAT DOES PARTICIPATING IN THE FOCUS GROUP MEAN?**

All focus group participants will be invited to participate in one focus group session, either in-person or virtually by connecting to a Zoom meeting. We will ask you to share your experiences of being a parent or caregiver while participating in a program to increase economic security and your experiences during and after that program. The in-person focus group will be at a community center, library, or nonprofit organization that is accessible by public transportation. We will also ask about what it means to you to “be well” in the program.

### **HOW LONG WILL THE FOCUS GROUP TAKE?**

This focus group will take about 90 minutes, including introductions, background on the study, and consent to participate. The group will include other parents or caregivers who participate in programs that aim to increase economic security.

### **WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE COLLECTED ABOUT ME?**

We will collect your name, email address and phone number. If you agree to participate in the focus group, we will ask you to share your experiences of being a parent or caregiver while

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participating in a program to increase economic security and your experiences during and after that program. We will also ask about what it means to you to “be well” (personally, financially, emotionally, in your personal health, and so on) in the program. During the focus group if you would prefer to use a different name, you can. We will also collect demographic information including gender identify, age, race and ethnicity, and the number and age of children in a family.

### **WILL MY PRIVACY BE PROTECTED?**

All information collected during the focus groups will be kept private by the researchers. The information is stored on a secure computer system at our research firm’s headquarters. Nobody will ever publish your name in connection with the information you provide. Instead, information you share will be combined with information shared by other focus group participants, so researchers can analyze the information together. Once the information is analyzed, we will share back with you themes that we heard across the focus groups. Your information will not be identified individually in any way.

Everything you tell the researchers will be used for research purposes only, unless the researchers are required by law to release it for some other purpose. For example, if you say that you will harm yourself or someone else. Also, nothing you say will affect your eligibility for [TANF] or any other programs.

### **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS AND RISKS OF PARTICIPATING IN THE FOCUS GROUP?**

Participation in this focus group is strictly voluntary. One risk is that you may experience discomfort because the questions are about your personal experience and the experience of your family. You do not have to share any information about yourself that you do not want to. Participation will not affect their participation in the TANF program in any way.

A benefit of being in the group is that, by sharing your experiences, you will help researchers and programs better understand the range of outcomes that someone participating in an employment-related program might experience that could be explored more in future studies and brought to the attention of policy makers. You may or may not benefit personally from participating in this focus group, but your participation in the focus group could help in understanding what it means to be well and have success beyond the program.

### **WILL I RECEIVE A TOKEN OF APPRECIATION FOR MY PARTICIPATION?**

Yes, as a token of appreciation, you will be given [\$50/\$65] after participating in the focus group. Those who participate in our in-person focus group will be given a physical gift card; those who participate in our virtual focus groups will be emailed a gift card upon completion of the focus group.

### **IS MY PARTICIPATION VOLUNTARY?**

We hope you will want to be in the focus groups, but your participation is strictly voluntary. If you agree to participate, the researchers will ask you to participate in a focus group (either in-person or virtually via a Zoom meeting). During the focus group, you will be asked questions about your

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experiences of being a parent or caregiver while participating in a program. You will never be required to answer questions in the focus group. You can stop your participation at any time by leaving the room or Zoom meeting (instructions will be provided about how to navigate Zoom, including how to exit).

### **WHO CAN ANSWER MY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS RESEARCH?**

If you have any questions about the focus groups, you may contact [NAME] at Mathematica, the project's [ROLE] at [PHONE #].

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I DECIDE NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FOCUS GROUPS?**

You can decline to participate in the focus group at any time. If you decide now that you do not want to participate in the focus group, the researchers will not collect any information about you. If you agree to be in the focus group now, you can change your mind later. By agreeing now to be in the focus group, even if later you tell us you no longer want to participate in the focus group, you are authorizing researchers to use information that was collected about you before you stopped participation.