

Date

Fatherhood TIES Focus Group Training

Sub-title



Welcome and ice breaker

Overview of the Fatherhood TIES study

Research Ethics

Focus Group Co-Facilitation

Questions and Next Steps

Agenda

ICE Breaker

The background is a solid teal color. Overlaid on this are several thin, white, overlapping circles of varying sizes, creating a geometric pattern. The main text is centered within these circles.

Fatherhood T.I.E.S. Study

Testing Identified Elements for Success in
Fatherhood Programs

Overview of the TIES Study

The study focuses on testing fatherhood program elements – to see how and where they are most effective at improving the lives of fathers and their children.

- TIES hopes to learn how programs can improve:
 - Father well-being
 - Father-child relationships
 - Co-parenting relationships
 - Economic stability

Focus Group Co-Facilitation

Steps for Facilitating a Focus Group

Steps	Person Responsible
1. Getting consent from participants	TIES team member only
2. Creating Community Agreements for the focus group	FA and TIES team member
3. Building Connection with participants	FA and TIES team member
4. Facilitating Discussion	FA and TIES team member

1. Informed Consent

- Informed consent is both a *process* and a *form*
- The Fatherhood TIES research team member and Father Advisor's role is to **inform**, not influence or coerce.
- We share enough detailed information about the study and focus group that fathers can make an informed choice.
- We ask fathers if they want to participate in the Fatherhood TIES focus group
 - It is their choice to participate (or not)
 - If they agree to participate, they can also choose what information to share in the group

1. How to get informed consent?

Use the informed consent form and focus group scripts to explain the following to fathers:

- **You are being asked to participate in a focus group for the Fatherhood TIES study**
- **Length of participation: About 1 hour**
- **Participation is voluntary**
 - **No penalties for not participating such as loss of services or service quality**
 - **You can choose to not answer questions or drop out any time**
- **Risks and benefits**
- **Protection of personally identifiable information, as well as any exceptions to privacy**

2. Creating Community Agreements

Community agreements represent how members of the focus group want to interact with and be treated by each other during the focus group (and after).

- Can pose as a question: "What do you need from every person in this group in order to feel safe, supported, open, and productive?"

Steps for creating Community Agreements

1. Explain Community Agreements

2. Share examples

3. Ask for additional agreements



- What we say here, stays here. What we learn here, leaves here. Don't share what's said in the group, outside of the group. However, what we learn from the group discussion will be used for research.
- Make space, Take space. *Be aware of how much you are talking (or not talking) and allow others to talk.*
- What else?

3. Building Connections with fathers

- Participants as experts
- Awareness of community and sensitive topics
- Your role as the co-facilitator
- Recognizing and expressing gratitude to participants for their time and contributions

4. Facilitating the Discussion

Follow the Focus Group Guide

- Repeat the question – repetition gives more time to think.
- Pause for the answer – a thoughtful nod or expectant look can convey that you want a fuller answer.
- Repeat the reply – hearing it again sometimes stimulates conversation
- Ask when, what, where, which, and how questions – they provoke more detailed information
- Use neutral comments – “Anything else?”

Tips for Guiding the Discussion

- Use Listening Skills
- Probing and Clarifying Questions
- Time Management
- Record the Discussion

Listening Skills

- Active listening
- Body language and facial expressions
- Importance of neutrality
- Allowing silence

Using Probes and Asking Clarifying Questions

- Examples of probes
 - “Please say more about that...”
 - “Could you explain what you mean by...”
 - “Could you give an example of what you mean by...”
 - “Has anyone else had a difference experience/opinion?”
- Summarizing and reflecting back what is said
 - What I’m hearing you say... is that right?
- Avoid asking leading questions
 - “Don’t you think...”

Time Management

- Keeping the focus group moving
- Checking in with participants
- Not rushing participants
- Familiarity with the focus group questions and using it efficiently

Recording and Note taking

- The project team member co-facilitating with you will take care of all recordings and notes during the focus group.

Co-Facilitation Practice

Let's practice what we've learned in breakout rooms.

Research Ethics

What are they and why do they matter?

Research Ethics 101

- **WHAT:** Research Ethics are standards that govern the conduct of scientific researchers. Maintaining ethical principles is important for protecting the dignity, rights, and welfare of research participants.
- **WHY:** 1) Research ethics promote research goals such as knowledge and truth, 2) Research ethics support values such as trust, mutual respect and fairness, and 3) Research ethics ensure that researchers can be held accountable to the public.

Key Principles for treatment of Human Subjects in Research

Research Principles are rules or guidelines for doing research with **people participating in research studies like Fatherhood TIES** or “Human Subjects”

Human Subjects are:

- “Living individuals about whom an investigator conducting research obtains: data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or identifiable private information.”
- *Federal regulations govern the treatment of human subjects.*

Belmont Principles:

Respect for Persons

- Voluntary participation
- Informed consent

Beneficence

- Maximize potential benefits and minimize potential harms

Justice

- Fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of research
- Fair selection of research subjects

Privacy

- You have an obligation to keep focus group participants' information private.
- You can help assure people that the information they share will remain private.
 - Never share any information about specific people in the focus group except with MDRC team members. This means:
 - Not telling friends or family members who attended the group.
 - Not telling friends or family members what was said in the group.

Questions and Next Steps