

INSTRUMENT 3: YOUTH TOPIC GUIDE

THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995

This collection of information is voluntary and will be used to provide the Administration for Children and Families with information to help refine and guide SRAE program development. Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average **XX** minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number and expiration date for this collection are OMB #: **XXXX-XXXX**, Exp: **XX/XX/20XX**. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Melissa Thomas at mthomas@mathematica-mpr.com.

Note to reviewers: This guide includes a universe of topics relevant to a broad range of potential studies that will be planned under the SRAE National Evaluation 2.0. The topic guide will be tailored to reflect each specific study, the relevant research questions, and questions for youth interviews and focus groups.

MODERATOR NOTE: Based on your current understanding of the program and previous conversations with the program, use this topic guide to identify relevant topics that then will be tailored to the program. To do this, first, identify topics where we have not already collected information. Then, use the identified topics to develop questions specific to the study.

INTRODUCTION AND YOUTH ASSENT

Moderator and co-moderator introductions

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us today. We are from Mathematica, an independent research firm, and we are here to learn about your experiences with [SRAE program name]. My name is [name], and my colleague is [name].

Explanation of project and purpose of discussion

We are doing a study on classes like [SRAE program name]. During our discussion today, we are interested in learning about your impressions of these classes, the topics covered in class, and your interactions with the program facilitator. We will use the information you share with us to write a summary of what we have learned, but we will not use any of your names, so please feel free to talk openly about your opinions. All information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law.

Ground rules for discussion

Before we start our discussion, we want to give you some ground rules about how our time together will go:

- Participation in today's discussion is voluntary. That means you do not have to participate, and you can choose to stop participating at any point.
- Please do not discuss anything we talked about in today's focus group with anyone outside of this group. Everything we talk about should remain private within this group.
- The discussion will last about 60 minutes.
- There are no right or wrong answers to the questions we will ask. We are interested in learning each of your opinions. We very much appreciate your participation today.
- To keep us on schedule, I may change the subject or move ahead from time to time.
- We will be taking notes and audio recording the session, but everything you say will be kept private to the extent permitted by the law and any recordings will be deleted at the end of the study.
- Does anyone have any questions before we begin?

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Do you agree to participate in this discussion?

Do we have your permission to record the discussion?

A. Topics to cover in focus groups or interviews

Construct	Topic
What are the characteristics of youth who receive the SRAE programming?	
Youth characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of themselves and other youth in the SRAE program (for example, age, grade, primary language, transient nature)
To what extent are youth engaged in the SRAE programming? How do youth experience the program content and activities?	
Engagement in the SRAE program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceptions of how engaged youth are in the program (themselves and their peers) Identification of what program content, components, or activities yield the highest and lowest engagement Facilitators and barriers to engagement Level of engagement in the SRAE class compared to other classes Strategies facilitators use to help engage youth in the program Frequency of youth attendance in SRAE classes and whether attendance is required
Facilitator – youth relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which youth feel connected to their facilitator Extent to which youth feel their facilitator treated them fairly and with respect Extent to which youth feel they relate to their facilitator
SRAE program satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which they enjoyed the program Program components or activities youth seem to respond to the most Program components or activities youth seem to respond to the least Suggestions of how to improve the program or make it better How well the facilitator was able to deliver information How well the facilitator was able to answer questions
Relevance of SRAE content, lessons, activities, or program components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceptions of how relevant the topics discussed in the SRAE program are to their current decisions and relationships Perceptions of how what they learn in the SRAE program will apply to their future decisions and relationships Content youth feel is missing or needed Content, topics, or activities youth have found helpful or helped them make different decisions than they would've before the program
Perceptions of specific strategies or program content, lessons, activities, or components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions to improve program Description of SRAE program/curricula Key skills or topics that youth learn about in the SRAE program Examples of key skills or knowledge that participants have gained

Construct	Topic
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Description or examples of specific strategies youth learned about in the program
Feelings of safety and connectedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extent to which youth felt safe during program sessions, what contributed to that sense of safety, and barriers to having a sense of safety• Extent to which youth felt connected to other students during program sessions, what contributed to feeling connected, and barriers to feeling connected with other students• Extent to which youth felt comfortable asking questions, what contributed to this comfort and barriers to feeling comfortable asking questions• Extent to which youth felt comfortable participating, what contributed to this comfort, and barriers to participation• Extent to which the mood or tone of the class is similar or different from their other classes and what contributed to it feeling similar or different• Extent to which the facilitator sets the mood or tone of the class and what the facilitator does to set the mood or tone• Content/lessons/activities that make youth uncomfortable