



FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Materials and supplies for focus groups

- Sign-in sheet
- Name tents
- Pads & Pencils for each participant
- Focus Group Discussion Guide for Facilitator
- 1 digital recording device
- Batteries for recording device
- Notebook for note-taking
- Refreshments

1. Consent Process

Script for Facilitators

Good morning/afternoon my name is [full name] and this is (full name of notetaker). We work for Behavioral Assessment, Inc. (BAI), a Los Angeles evaluation and research firm and are conducting this focus group interview on behalf of the Texas Department of State Health Services. We are gathering input from community members to help better understand the Strategic Prevention Framework - State Incentive Grant, you may have heard of it called the Texas SPG-SIG. We hope to learn how coalitions can sustain prevention efforts over the next several years. Before we get started, I want to draw your attention to the consent form. This form lets you know important information about the process and how we view confidentiality.

- We would like to record the focus groups so we can make sure to capture the thoughts, opinions, and ideas we hear from the group. No names will be attached to the focus groups and the tapes will be destroyed as soon as they are transcribed.
- You may refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the study at anytime.
- We understand how important it is that this information is kept private and confidential. We will ask participants to respect each other's confidentiality.
- Your participation in this group is strictly voluntary and you may excuse yourself from the room at any time.

Please complete information on the Sign-In Sheet and answer the few quick demographic questions (age, gender, coalition, years associated with prevention efforts) that is circulating in the group.

2. Explanation of the process

Ask the group if anyone has participated in a focus group before. Explain that focus groups are being used more often in health and human services research.

About focus groups:

- We learn from you (positive and negative)
- Not trying to achieve consensus; we're gathering information
- No virtue in long lists; we're looking for priorities

Logistics:

- Focus group will last about one hour
- Feel free to move around
- Where is the bathroom? Exit?
- Help yourself to refreshments

3. Ground Rules

Ask the group to suggest some ground rules. After they brainstorm some, make sure the following are on the list:

- Everyone should participate.
- Information provided in the focus group must be kept confidential
- Stay with the group and please don't have side conversations
- Turn off cell phones and pagers, please
- Have fun

4. Turn on Recorder

5. Ask the group if there are any questions before we get started, and address those questions.

6. Introductions

- Go around table: Relationship to community (job, how long there); relationship to coalition.

Discussion begins, make sure to give people time to think before answering the questions and don't move too quickly. Use the probes to make sure that all issues are addressed, and move forward when you start to hear repetitive information.