

Appendix VI. Focus Group Protocol for Youth in Franklin County

Focus Group Protocol for Opportunity Youth – May 22, 2019

Goals of Focus Group

- Empower youth
- Learn of objectives youth want to achieve as they become adults
- Find the ways that youth want to be supported as they transition to adulthood

Goal details

- We want youth to learn that their voice matters by:
 - Sharing experiences and perceptions
 - Giving context to the data through personal stories and experiences (putting a face on the data)

Focus Group Protocol

Prior to focus group, all participants will receive a welcome letter thanking them for participation. Each participants will be receive the following to review (and sign in some cases):

- Participant consent form,
- Permission for their focus group to be recorded,
- Photo release form, and an
- Outline of what they will be asked in the focus group.

Compensation for Time: All participants will receive a \$25 gift card for their time and participation.

Meal Provided: Participants will be served a meal at the beginning of the focus group.

Other Accommodations: In working with the hosting organization, all participants will receive some limited accommodations to support their involvement (e.g., COTA bus pass, childcare – if notified in advance that this is needed to accommodate request, etc.)

Pipe cleaners will be on each table that the youth can use as a fidgeting device.

Focus Group Length: 60-90 minutes

Location: Host at a service provider location/office in a space that is familiar, comfortable, and private.

Script and Questions for Focus Group

Welcome (10 minutes)

Welcome all participants!

Introduce self and thank participants for taking time to attend. Emphasize how much their input is needed and appreciated for KIDS COUNT work in Ohio.

- Introduce pipe cleaners sitting on tables for participants to use as a fidget device.
- We're going to discuss some challenging topics this evening/morning afternoon and thank you for agreeing to speak with us and share in this conversation. The purpose of our project is to better understand the needs and strengths of youth in our community and to also understand what opportunities exist to make sure that Columbus is an opportunity city to ensure all young people are successful.

- Ask participants to share their first name.
- Briefly review the project information sheet to provide project background and remind participants of the purpose of the meeting, which is to get a better idea of how systems in our city support youth in Columbus.
- Review focus group ground rules:
 - What is said here stays here so that everyone's responses are confidential
 - We will all be kind to one another; it is okay to disagree and we want this to be a place where people can feel safe being honest
- Review and ask participants to complete the consent form and ask if there are any additional questions about the purpose of the session.
- Facilitator reminds participants that their responses will be recorded:
 - "As a reminder, we will be recording. At this point everyone has consented to having this meeting recorded but if you have any objections please let us know."
 - Remind participants that their responses will be kept confidential to the best of our ability
- Note agenda verbally and write on flip chart paper prior to session, too.

Youth Strengths and Definition of Success (15 minutes)

(Facilitator gives participants an opportunity to answer the question below - what does your life look like as a happy adult 10 years from now - through writing or drawing first for 3 minutes, and then youth are given the opportunity to share their responses. The question is also posted on flip chart paper on a wall with the sample prompt questions below it).

- What does your life look like as a happy adult 10 years from now?
 - How old would you be?
 - Would you have a family?
 - What would you like to be doing every day?
 - What would a typical day be?
 - What kind of occupation would you have?
 - Who would be in your life?
 - What would your neighborhood look like?
 - What would be your favorite activities?
- Are systems in place to support your success in ten years? Why or why not?
 - If youth want examples, facilitator may mention that systems can include policies, practices, programs, and people.
- What are some of your biggest strengths that will help you get to living the life you described in 10 years?
 - If examples are needed, facilitator can say as an example: "strengths can include many things, ranging from determination to ability to stand up in front of others".

Adults, Policies, and Programs (15 minutes)

- What do you wish caring adults knew about your everyday life that they can use to help better support you?
- On your pathway to where you are now, do you feel like you had programs and adults who adequately supported you?
- What is likely to attract you to enroll in programs that help you achieve your personal and professional goals?

Structural Barriers (15 minutes)

- We know there are advantages in society to being in groups that do not face certain barriers. In your opinion, how do race, ethnicity, citizenship, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, money, and social connections make it easier or harder for youth to achieve their goals?

Reaction to Data (10 minutes)

(Facilitator introduces worksheet – see below – with data points corresponding to six categories: education, workforce, housing, support systems, health and wellness, and civic engagement.)

- In this report, we present some data in six categories - education, workforce, civic engagement, health and wellness, support systems, and housing - listed on the worksheet in front of you. Are there aspects of your life that are not captured in this list of data, but should be and provide a fuller picture of your life?

Youth Voice in Decision-Making (10 minutes)

- What conversations among policymakers or others regarding youth success, or other important topics, do you feel left out of or a part of?
- How should policymakers best involve youth in these types of decisions?
- Are you interested in being involved in making decisions about how to improve systems and services that help youth be successful?

Final Thoughts (5 minutes)

- Do you have any final thoughts?
- As a reminder, you will have a paper survey that will provide you with another opportunity to provide us with more information that we did not address during the session.

(Facilitator distributes gift card and thanks participants. Facilitator hands participants follow-up survey).