Focus Group Protocol: Process Evaluation

Purpose: To gather feedback from students regarding the first half of campaign materials and content. This feedback will be used to adjust and enhance campaign content and activities. Student input is vital to the success of the campaign. By eliciting student feedback, they have an opportunity to have their voices heard and also see some of their suggestions being implemented. The group meeting should last about 30 minutes.

Recruitment: Each group should consist of approximately 8-10 students, ideally equal numbers of boys and girls. Where possible, get a representative sample of students and avoid recruiting from one organization or group (e.g., volleyball team, student coalition group, etc.). It is preferable to secure a new set of students who did not previously participate in the previous focus group. This approach ensures varied representation from across the student body and increases the chances of receiving a variety of new ideas and perspectives.

Preparation: The ideal room setup will allow for one in-person adult facilitator to ensure each youth has an opportunity to contribute their ideas. To encourage student engagement, it is best if perceived authority figures are not present during the discussion.

It is useful to have media materials on-hand as a reference to present at the end when provided with a final opportunity for feedback. First, engage in getting their thoughts solely based on their recollection of the material.

On-site Facilitator Instructions
Allow a few minutes for all students to arrive. Once the discussion has begun, it is not recommended to allow late students to enter. It is helpful for the facilitator to know the first names of the students so that they can call on them by name and ensure that no one is left out.

Where appropriate, further probe to better understand a response (e.g., "Can you say more about that?"). Allow for space after questions as they are all designed to be open ended. Allow for a minimum of 10 seconds of silence then prompt with another open-ended question or call on individual youth. If needed, continue with closed-ended follow-up questions. If one or two people offer an idea, see what others would like to add before moving to the next question.

Suggested script to read aloud: "Hello I am _____. Thank you for being here. This discussion group will be easy and not too long. We would like to ask you all about information being shared at your school regarding the end-of-year survey last year and the ongoing messaging campaign happening here at [School Name]. There are a few simple rules for our discussion.

The rules: 1- Everyone participates.
2- One at a time.
3- Short answers, not long stories.
4- There are no right or wrong answers.
5- You can always "pass" if you do not want to answer or do not know how to answer."

Warm-up exercise: Begin with a warm-up exercise after stating the rules for discussion. Perhaps ask the group to name various types of trees <u>with no repeats.</u> This is a simple task that is not gender biased. The purpose of the warm-up is to demonstrate the rules. The leader calls on each student to participate and reminds them that it is OK to pass. After all students have participated, the facilitator should conduct a second round. In the second round, ideally, two or more students will pass and all will become more comfortable with the rules. Especially no stigma attached to passing.

Sample Facilitator Questions:
- How many of you have heard a morning announcement regarding the end-of-year survey taken last year?
    a. How many of these announcements have you heard?
    b. What was your reaction to them?
    c. Did they catch your attention?
        i. If yes, why?
        ii. If not, what would catch your attention?
    d. Did you believe the information shared in the announcement(s)?
        i. What made it believable? Why or why not?
        ii. What would make the information more believable?
- How many of you have seen posters regarding the school survey taken at the end of last school year?
    e. What was your reaction to seeing the posters?
    f. Were the posters noticeable? Large enough to see?
        i. How many other posters are on the walls? Are the posters with survey information noticeable/stand out?
    g. Was there any that you liked in particular?
        i. Why?
        ii. What did you think about….the colors, images, size, message, words, placement, etc.?
    h. Was there any that you disliked?
        i. What did you dislike and why?
        ii. Were there any colors, images, size, message, words, placement, etc. that turned you off?
    i. What suggestions do you have to make the posters more interesting? More believable?
- How many of you have seen school staff wearing buttons that say "9 out of 10" or "almost all"?
    j. What was your reaction to seeing them?
    k. Have you had conversations with your teachers, staff, or other students regarding the buttons?
        i. If so, what was talked about?
    l. What did you like about the buttons? Dislike?
- How many of you have seen table tents containing survey information?
    m. What was your reaction to seeing them?
    n. What did you like about them? Dislike?
    o. What suggestions do you have to make the table tents more interesting? More believable?

- How many of you have seen water bottle/laptop stickers containing survey information?
    p. What was your reaction to seeing them?
    q. What did you like about them? Dislike?
    r. Are the stickers being used by students? Why do you think they are being used/not being used?
    s. What suggestions do you have to make the stickers more appealing? More believable?
- How many of you have seen stickers on the floor containing survey information?
    t. What was your reaction to seeing them?
    u. What did you like about them? Dislike?
    v. What suggestions do you have to make the stickers more interesting? More believable?
- Out of everything we have talked about, what has stood out to you the most? Posters, announcements, etc.? Why?
    a. What has worked well in grabbing your attention and why did it grab your attention?
    b. Would you like to see more or less of this information? Was it enough to notice? Did you get tired of seeing it/did you start ignoring the information?
        i. Do you receive a lot of other information through the school? Does the survey information stand out? If not, what would make it stand out?
    c. What has worked well in giving information that you believe? What made the information believable?
    d. What has stood out the *least* and why?
    e. What has *not* worked well in giving information that you believe? What made the information unbelievable?
- Overall, do you find the media to be positive in nature? Why or why not?
- Would you like to see recognizable colors or images on the materials? This can include school mascot, school colors, entrance to the school, sporting events/fields, etc.
- Are there any other suggestions on how the survey information can be made more visible, interesting, or believable?