

CPI Monthly Support Calls FY 2008-2009
Questions & Answers from
Tool Specific Calls – October through December 2008

Conducting Focus Groups Tool: October 8th and October 9th 2008

Q: We will be doing focus groups with members of our leadership development training. When we pilot our protocol should we use a separate group from those who will be participating in the actual focus groups?

A: Yes. You do not want to have the same people who took part in your protocol pilot participate in your focus groups. If you have a large enough pool of possible participants you can ask one group to pilot your protocol and take them out of the pool for the focus groups. If you do not have a large number of possible participants you can find people who are similar to the participants you want to recruit and have them pilot the protocol.

Q: Is it appropriate to give incentives for participation in the focus groups? If so, what are some good examples of incentives we can use?

A: Yes. Incentives are commonly provided to participants of focus groups. Depending on your participants, your setting, and your resources, you will need to determine the most appropriate incentives for the group. Healthy food is always a good choice for a focus group. You may consider other options if you feel it would encourage participation and discussion in the group (e.g., small gift items, gift cards).

Q: Is it appropriate to use a laptop to record the focus group responses?

A: Yes. The note taker can either take notes on paper or on a laptop. You will need to explain to the participants the purpose for having the laptop and your process for recording their responses. You should also allow participants to see what you have recorded if asked.

Q: Shouldn't we know how many youth to expect at a focus group based on the number of parent consent forms we received?

A: This depends on the type of parent consent you choose – active or passive. Active parent consent is when the parents need to respond either yes or no to indicate whether or not their child can participate in an activity. Each child needs to return a form, marked either yes or no. If you choose this type of parent consent then you would know how many possible participants you have, but they might not all attend the focus group. With passive consent, the information is sent home, and only needs to be returned if the parents want to opt their children out of the activity. If you choose this type of consent for your focus groups you will only receive forms from those parents who do not want their children to participate. Refer to Step 3 of the focus group materials in your CPI Tool Kit for a detailed description of both active and passive consent forms. Sample active and passive parent consent Forms are provided in Appendix 7E of the CPI Tool Kit.

Q: Is it appropriate to recruit participants by putting an ad in the paper?

A: Yes. This can be a good strategy, particularly when you are recruiting participants you do not normally serve/have access to. Newspaper ads may also assist in recruiting a diverse pool of participants.

Q: In conformity studies they have found that people in groups of 6-8 start to agree with each other. Won't focus group participants start to agree with each other?

A: Not necessarily. It is the role of a good facilitator to create an environment where diverse perspectives can be voiced. We provide focus group facilitator guidelines in Appendix 7H that include ways to encourage participants to express different points of view. In addition, the way you introduce the focus group in the beginning and the structure of your questions and probes will help set the tone of your group.

Pretest-Posttest Tool: October 22nd 2008

Q: Are True/False questions appropriate for Pretest-Posttest surveys?

A: It depends on the type of question. True/False questions can be appropriate for knowledge questions; however, they are not always appropriate for attitude and behavioral intention questions.

Q: Is it enough to collect 50 surveys if we want to test for statistical significance? If so, would the t-test be appropriate?

A: For statistical testing, it would be best to collect between 50 to 100 surveys. The more surveys you receive, the more stable your data will be. The t-test would be the first test you would use for statistical significance.

Q: Do we need to get school approval of the questions we include in our survey?

A: Yes. Once you have created your survey you must secure approval from the appropriate stakeholders, including the local school site or school district. It is good practice to ask the principal or other administrator to review your survey.

Q: What is immediate follow up as opposed to long-term follow up? What do we need to do for CPI?

A: For CPI purposes, we are asking you to do an immediate posttest. This means you would give your participants the posttest on the last day of class or right after you finished. Long term follow up can be anywhere from 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, or longer after your program.
Long-term follow up gives you stronger data, but it takes many more resources.

Participant Satisfaction Tool: November 5th 2008

Q: Can we have participants complete the survey online or electronically?

A: At this time we do not have web-based versions of surveys to share. We can explore the possibility of developing a tip sheet for agencies to use when wanting to create web-based surveys for their participants.

Implementation Tool: November 19th 2008

No questions asked on call.

Training and Support Tool: December 3rd 2008

Q: Can we hire outside trainers to create trainings for our staff? Do you have a resource for master trainers?

A: Yes. It is possible to have outside trainers create trainings for your staff to address the training needs you identify using this tool. If you arrange for or attend trainings using TPP monies, you will need prior approval from your OFP Program Consultant.

NOTE: One participant stated that her organization successfully contacted their County Office of Education (COE) to provide free general trainings for their staff. The COE was able to provide the trainings because her agency provides presentations in schools. She suggested that other agencies try this as well – particularly if they provide health education in schools.

Q: Can the Training and Support Tools be completed on-line?

A: The tools are not available to complete on-line, however word versions of the tools can be obtained from your Evaluation Liaison and completed electronically.

Curriculum Review Tool: December 17th 2008

Q: We are using a curriculum that that utilizes parts of many other curricula. When we complete the Curriculum Review Tool, do we look at each of the curricula we draw from, or the one we actually implement?

A: You will want to complete the tool using the curriculum that you implement. Since it is a combination of several curricula you may want to pay particular attention to whether or not the topic areas covered are balanced or if you cover all topic areas relevant to your population. You may also want to document what is currently contained in your curriculum and identify additional or new strategies to add or to delve deeper into.