

Focus Group Social Responsibility and Prevention

Hi, welcome to this focus group, which is part of a research project sponsored by Penn State University. My name is Les Gally and I will be the moderator of this group. In a focus group, people discuss their ideas and opinions on some topic. The topic for this group is what kids do when other kids are doing something that might hurt them or others. We're interested in your honest opinions -- not what you think kids SHOULD do but what you think kids really do and why. Just give your honest opinion in your own words.

We don't want you to talk about specific kids or specific incidents that may have happened. It's very important to keep the conversation general and confidential. That means we don't talk about anyone in particular. And that also means you should only use your first name -- so that what you say is also confidential.

Just a few more things about the focus group and research in general before we start. I want to make sure you understand that you don't have to answer any questions that you don't want to and you are free to leave the group at any time. Although this session is being recorded, all of your answers will be kept confidential. We ask that you call each other only by first names. The tapes will be destroyed as soon as the group discussion is transcribed. And, by the way, this doesn't affect your grades or anything in school. We don't tell your teachers or principal what you say.

INTRO: First, could you tell us your name (first name only please) and one thing that you enjoy doing (hobby, activity etc)?

Can you think of any examples of things that your friends might do that would hurt them?

A number of examples have been mentioned. Now can you talk about what you would do if your friends... (specifics that kids have mentioned -- smoking, drinking, drugs, etc.).

- Probes if no one talks: Would you do anything or would you ignore it? Would you ask some other friends or adults for advice about what to do?
- Follow up probes: How do you think your friend would respond if you said something to them? Do you think they'd be angry with you? Would you worry about embarrassing them? Or maybe even embarrassing yourself?
- Follow up probes if these aren't mentioned. What about things like smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol or drunken driving? How do these compare to the other issues already mentioned? Do kids think these are dangerous things to do or not? (Try to understand how kids of different ages think about 'risks', i.e., what's harmful)

to an individual and what's not harmful? What might hurt other people and what wouldn't?)

- Follow up probes: So now you've told us what you might do with friends. How about with kids who aren't your friends? Would you do anything if kids who weren't your friends were doing something that might hurt them? Like some of the things you already mentioned (drinking and driving, etc.) Would your response to kids who aren't your friends be the same or would it differ in some way?
- Follow up probes: Someone (or nobody) said they would talk to an adult. Why do you think kids would talk to an adult? Or why might they decide not to talk to an adult? (If no one mentions divulging a confidence or being disloyal, mention that some kids in another group said that they felt their friends wouldn't trust them anymore if they went and talked to an adult).
- Follow up probes: We talked about some things that might hurt an individual's health -- like smoking. Or that might hurt other people (like drinking and driving). What about things like bullying other kids or making fun of them -- things that might not hurt people physically but might hurt their feelings? When that happens, what do kids do?

When we've talked to kids in other groups, some of them felt that if kids decided to do things like smoke or drink, it was no one else's business. They said it was their body and you should just leave them alone. What do you think about that? Do you agree with them?

Other kids we talked to said they would stay away from kids who were drinking or doing drugs because they were afraid that they might get into trouble. What's your reaction to that?

In general, would you say kids ignore it if their friends are doing things that could harm them or do they try to do something about it?

Who are other groups or individuals who could influence young people's decisions about risky behavior and what could they do?

Let's summarize the key points of our discussion.

Does this summary sound complete? Do you have any changes or additions? Have we missed anything? What advice do you have for us?

THANKS FOR SHARING YOUR VIEWS. IT'S BEEN VERY HELPFUL.