

YEP: Youth Small Group Interview Protocol

Outline (90 minutes)

1. Introduction, consent, introductions of participants to each other (15 minutes)
2. Protocol questions (65 minutes)
3. Conclusion – advice on youth engagement and compensation (10 minutes)

Introduction

Welcome and consent

Hello! Thank you for taking the time to talk with us today. I'm _____ and this is _____ from Child Trends, a research organization that is partnering with the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to learn more about how organizations funded by the Hilton Foundation have engaged youth in policy advocacy.

Purpose: As you may know, we are working with [organization name] to learn more about how young people like you are engaged in efforts to change how local government and policies support youth. For this project, youth engagement refers to the involvement of youth in advocating for policy change through activities such as developing policy agendas or campaigns, coalition and relationship building, and serving on decision-making bodies. Given your experience working with [organization name], we are hoping to learn more about [summarize policy win]. Today, we'll talk about how your involvement in [organization name]; what contributed to your experience, and how this engagement has influenced policy advocacy efforts and outcomes.

Time: This discussion should last about an hour and a half.

Verbal consent/assent: [Share link to study information sheet.] As shared on the study information sheet, participation in today's conversation is voluntary. Perspectives and experiences that you share today will be kept confidential. This means we will combine what you share with what we hear from other youth and adults to highlight what successful examples of youth engagement in policy advocacy look like.

We will be taking notes during our conversation today. Our notes will be kept secure and no one outside of the research team at Child Trends will have access to them. We will compile a summary document, without including your name, of what we learn in this conversation, which may include general information about your experience being engaged in policy advocacy. This summary document will be shared with the Hilton Foundation's staff, [organization name], and members of our research group who are collaborating with us to conduct this study.

Additionally, based on what we learn from our conversations, we will develop individual organizational profiles, in summary format, that highlight examples of youth engagement in policy advocacy, as well as a summary report of our learnings. This may include general information about this policy advocacy

If you have questions about the [Authentic Youth Engagement in Policy Project](#), please contact co-Principal Investigators Amy McKlindon at amcklindon@childtrends.org and Samantha E. Holquist at sholquist@childtrends.org.

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effort, factors that helped or hindered youth engagement, successes and challenges related to youth engagement in this effort, and changes that occurred related to this effort. These individual profiles and summary report will be shared with [organization name], the Hilton Foundation's staff, and publicly available on the Child Trends' website to increase knowledge about youth engagement in policy advocacy.

As a thank you for your time today, you will receive a \$50 electronic gift card via email within 24 hours of our conversation.

Confidentiality: We will not use your name in any reports. We may use some anonymous quotes (without names) because it helps highlight important themes. While we're talking, please let us know if you say something that you wouldn't want us to quote, and we will be sure to keep that information private. We ask that you respect one another's privacy and do not share what is discussed in the group with anyone outside of this conversation. However, we cannot guarantee this will not happen.

You may feel uncomfortable answering certain questions, and you may refuse to answer any questions you are not comfortable answering or leave at any time. If you would like to leave once we begin, please let me know; you will still be compensated for your time.

[Permission to record:] Before we get started, we'd like to request your permission to record our conversation. Like the notes, recordings will be kept secure, however we will not share the recording. No one outside of the research team at Child Trends will have access to them. We'll reference them only to catch anything we missed during the note taking.

Do you have any questions on the information I've provided so far?

I am now going to individually ask each of you to confirm your participation in today's conversation.

[Ask each participant the following questions].

1. Are you willing to participate in this discussion?

[If a participant says no, thank them for their time and dismiss them from the room.]

2. Are you willing to be recorded?

[If the participant is not willing to be recorded, ask if they would be willing to proceed with the interview without recording it. If this option is acceptable, the notetaker should document how the interview was processed. If one participant is not willing to be recorded, forgo asking this question for the following participants.]

Thank you for agreeing to participate in today's conversation.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant, you can reach our Institutional Review Board by email: irbparticipant@childtrends.org. If you have questions about our study, please contact Amy McKlindon: amcklindon@childtrends.org. **[Start recording].**

Protocol Questions

Throughout this conversation, we'd like to understand how you were involved with and engaged by [organization name] to support [policy win]. This includes what your role was/is in this effort, how the organization supported you, relationships you built with others, factors that impacted your involvement in this effort, and any results from this advocacy effort.

1. Share your name and how you learned about [organization name] and their efforts to engage youth in policy advocacy?
 - a. **Probe:** Why did you decide to join [organization name] in their efforts with [policy win]?
 - b. **Probe, if necessary:** How were you recruited?
2. What made [organization name] decide to address this [policy win]?
 - a. **Probe:** Whose voices were included in that decision?
 - b. **Probe, if necessary:** Did you feel empowered to be part of these decisions? Why or why not?
3. What was your role in working with [organization name] in this [policy win]?
 - a. **Probe:** In what ways did youth and staff work together on [policy win]?
 - b. **Probe:** Did you experience any challenges working with staff on [policy win]? If so, tell us about them.
 - c. **Probe:** In what ways did youth work together without staff on [policy win]?
 - d. **Probe:** Did you experience any challenges working with youth on [policy win]? If so, tell us about them.
4. What assistance and/or resources did you receive from [organization name] to support your role in this [policy win]?
 - a. **Probe:** What types of training did you receive?
 - b. **Probe:** What types of other resources did you receive?
 - c. **Probe:** What training or resources would you have liked to receive?
 - d. **Probe:** Were these trainings and resources helpful?
5. Tell us how you supported the achievement of [policy win].
 - a. **Probe:** What did you do to advocate?
 - b. **Probe:** Who made the decisions for how you were going to advocate?
6. Who were the key decision-makers that you interacted with?
 - a. **Probe:** Can you describe your experience working with them?
 - b. **Probe:** How did [organization name] support you when working with decision-makers?
 - c. **Probe:** What successes did you have working with decision-makers?
 - d. **Probe:** What barriers did you face in working with decision-makers?

7. Beyond [organization name], what other resources or organizations have been most supportive of youth engagement in [policy win] and how?
8. What are the outcomes of the [policy win]?
 - a. **Probe:** How did policy change?
 - b. **Probe:** What did you learn?
9. In what ways did/have you continued to support [policy win]?
 - a. **Probe:** Have youth been involved in implementation of policies related to this effort?
 - b. **Probe:** Have youth provided guidance on enacting this policy?
10. Have there been changes in the way youth have been incorporated into [organization name's] decision-making since this policy win?
 - a. **Probe:** If so, what types of changes?
11. Have there been changes in the way that youth voice and leadership has been incorporated into [system(s) related to policy win]?
 - a. **Probe:** If so, what types of changes?
 - b. **Probe:** What more could or needs to be done to support youth in policy advocacy?

Conclusion

12. What is one tip you would share with an organization hoping to engage youth in policy advocacy?
13. Anything else that you would like to share?