

Instrument 4:

Healthy Marriage Adult Focus Group and Interview Protocol

HM Adult Focus Group or Interview Introduction

The session will be a facilitated discussion about surveys that are completed by Healthy Marriage adult program clients, such as whether and how relevant the questions are to participants' lives and whether the questions are respectful of different life experiences, cultures, values, and beliefs. Illustrative probes are included before the survey questions to encourage this discussion, but moderators may adjust probes depending on timing and relevance.

Check in participants

1. RECORD ATTENDANCE IN A STAND-ALONE FILE THAT CAN BE DELETED/SHREDDDED
2. ASK IF THEY HAVE THEIR SURVEY PACKET NEAR BY
3. ONCE EVERYONE HAS ARRIVED, START THE INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Thanks for helping us today! My name is [NAME], and this is my colleague, [NAME]. We work for a research company called Mathematica. Mathematica was contracted by the Administration for Children and Families (or ACF), which is part of the federal government. ACF works with community organizations to strengthen families through programs, such as [PROGRAM NAME].

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number and expiration date for this collection are OMB #:0970-0630, Exp: 3/31/2027.

We're here today because we want to get your feedback and thoughts about the surveys that clients in HM programs take at the beginning and end of workshops and how to improve them. We want to know how well the questions in these surveys reflect the experiences, values, and beliefs of people from different races, ethnicities, backgrounds, and cultures. You can help us make sure the survey questions are clear and relevant and are not missing any important topics.

Although we don't expect you to speak for everyone, we consider each of you an expert in how well our survey questions work for people with similar life experiences, and really appreciate your feedback.

[SPANISH-SPEAKING GROUP: We are also interested in your thoughts on the Spanish translation. During our discussion, please tell us anything that you think could be improved.]

For your reference, we've compiled the selected questions into one survey packet. This includes a few questions from surveys you took at the beginning of the program and the survey you just completed. If you completed the surveys on a computer, you might not have been asked all these questions because the surveys are programmed to skip questions that do not apply to your situation, based on your answers to earlier questions. Our discussion will take about an hour today.

Informed consent information [if consent was not already collected]

Before we get started, I'd like to be sure you are aware of a few things.

- [IF SITE USING HARD COPY CONSENT FORMS]: Please open your survey packet and take out the top form. This is the consent form. Please take a moment to read through it right now. I will then cover the key points.
- [IF SITE USING ELECTRONIC CONSENT FORMS]: Please use your phone to scan the QR code showing on the screen right now. This is the consent form. Please take a moment to read through it right now. I will then cover the key points.
- First, your participation today is completely voluntary. That means you can decide if you want to participate, and can stop participating at any time without any reason or consequence.
- During the discussion, you can decide not to answer any questions that I ask the group.
- Your responses will not be used in a way that allows anyone outside the research team to identify you. We ask that everyone in this group respect each other's privacy by NOT talking about the details of our discussion with anyone outside the group. However, we want everyone to understand that because this is a group discussion, we cannot guarantee your privacy of what you say in front of each other.
- When we share what we learned during today's discussion we will NOT use your name or any other information that could identify you. We will only share information about you if required by law—that means that if we learn that you have been hurt or are in danger or if you tell us that you plan to seriously hurt yourself or someone else, then, by law, we must report it to the appropriate legal authorities.
- We will record the group discussion and take notes as a back-up. This is to help us remember all of your thoughts and ideas when we make improvements to the survey questions. We will not share this recording with anyone outside of our study team and will destroy it once the study is finished.

Does anyone have any questions at this point?

- Please sign the consent form and [IF HARD COPY: (NAME) will come by and pick them up and mail them back to us/IF ELECTRONIC: Please sign it electronically and then press submit so that we receive it.]

Assent information [if consent was already collected]

Before we get started, I'd like to be sure you are aware of a few things.

- First, your participation today is completely voluntary. That means you can decide if you want to participate, and can stop participating at any time without any reason or consequence.
- During the discussion, you can decide not to answer any questions that I ask the group.
- Your responses will not be used in a way that allows anyone outside the research team to identify you.

- We ask that everyone in this group respect each other's privacy by NOT talking about the details of our discussion with anyone outside the group. However, we want everyone to understand that because this is a group discussion, we cannot guarantee your privacy of what you say in front of each other.
- When we share what we learned during today's discussion we will NOT use your name or any other information that could identify you. We will only share information about you if required by law—that means that if we learn that you have been hurt or are in danger or if you tell us that you plan to seriously hurt yourself or someone else, then, by law, we must report it to the appropriate legal authorities.
- As we described in the consent form you signed, we will record the group discussion and take notes as a back-up. This is to help us remember all of your thoughts and ideas when we make improvements to the survey questions. We will not share this recording with anyone outside of our study team and will destroy it once the study is finished.

Any questions at this point?

Demographic survey questions [if not previously administered]

Next, we would like to ask that you please complete a very short set of questions that ask about your basic demographics. These questions are very important for us to help us make sure that we are collecting information that represents the wide diversity of people who participate in these kinds of workshops. [IF HARD COPY: Please remove the second sheet from your survey packet, called Demographic Questions/[IF ELECTRONIC: Please scan this QR code to pull up the Demographic Questions. Please take a moment to complete these questions.

Thank you. [IF HARD COPY: (NAME will come by and pick them up and mail them back to us/[IF ELECTRONIC: Please hit the submit button so that we receive it.]

Focus group guidelines [focus group only]

1. START WITH INTRODUCTIONS. Before we start our discussion, let's go around and do some quick introductions. Tell us your first name and if you would like, you can add your pronouns.

We want to remind you all again, if we raise anything that you don't want to discuss or that makes you uncomfortable, you don't need to respond. Our goal for today is to get your feedback on how the questions are worded and your thought process for answering these questions, so you can help us improve the questions. As we ask for your feedback on specific survey questions, you do not need to tell us what your answer on the survey was or would be.

2. We understand that participating in a group like this might be new to some of you. Before we begin our discussion, we want to establish a few group rules. Please feel free to add to this if you have other things we should consider as a group:
 - There are no right or wrong answers to our questions. We just want to know your true opinions so we can help make the surveys better for people with similar life experiences—all feedback is welcome!

- Remember to be respectful of everyone's opinions, even if they are different from your own. We are really interested to hear if you all have different thoughts and opinions about these questions, and welcome that discussion. We just want to always be kind and respectful.
- Please do not share what we discuss today outside of this room. It is up to each of you to respect one another's privacy and honor this request.

Do you have any questions before we begin or anything to add to our group rules?

Interview guidelines [interview only]

1. We want to remind you all again, if we raise anything that you don't want to discuss or that makes you uncomfortable, you don't need to respond. Our goal for today is to get your feedback on how the questions are worded and your thought process for answering these questions, so you can help us improve the questions. As we ask for your feedback on specific survey questions, you do not need to tell us what your answer on the survey was or would be.
2. We understand that participating in a session like this might be new to you. There are no right or wrong answers to our questions. We just want to know your true opinions so we can help make the surveys better for people with similar life experiences—all feedback is welcome!

Do you have any questions before we begin?

BEGIN DISCUSSION. SESSIONS ARE BEING RECORDED. CHECK THAT RECORDING HAS BEGUN. GO TO DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOL.

DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOL

USE FOR EITHER FOCUS GROUP OR INTERVIEW

Note on probes

The probes in the data protocol are written for focus groups. Interviewers should modify the language to suit individual interviews. ▲

High level questions

Let's start by discussing your overall thoughts on the surveys. For this first part, think about the exit survey you just completed, as well as the surveys you took at the beginning of the program.

1. If you were to describe your experience responding to the survey questions in one word, what would it be?
2. Overall, how relevant were the questions to your life and your goals?
3. Were there topics that you think the questions overemphasized or were given too much attention?
4. Were there topics that you think needed more emphasizing or additional questions?
5. Were there important topics about family, finances, or other areas that were missing?
6. Thinking about the overall tone of the questions, would you say they were more positive, negative, or mixed? For example, do you think the questions seemed overly positive or overly negative? Why?
 - As we discuss specific questions in the next part of the conversation, please feel free to suggest where and how you think the tone or wording of questions could be improved.
7. How comfortable were you answering the survey questions at the beginning of the program? What about at the end?
8. How did you feel about the time needed to respond to the questions? Too long, too short, just right? Why?
9. Anything else to add about your experience taking the surveys?

ENT/EXIT-A. PARENTING

Probes

Let's start by walking through questions in the Parenting Section and the A1 series of questions that people answer at the beginning and end of classes.

- Do you think that these questions are respectful of your culture and racial and ethnic identity? If not, which questions, and why?
- Do you think that these statements are respectful of people with different backgrounds? If not, which questions, and why?
- Let's look at A1a. This is a long question, but can someone paraphrase what it is asking? Do others interpret this differently? What does "actively raising" mean to you? Do others agree?
- Let's look at A1d. Can someone say the first response in their own words? Do others agree?
- Let's look at A1f, what does "most of the time" mean to you?
- PROBE AS NEEDED ON RESPONSE OPTIONS ON EACH QUESTION (DEPENDING ON WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN DISCUSSED): Do the options make sense? Are there enough options? If not, which ones are missing? Are there too many options? Can the wording be improved? [IF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP INDICATE THAT THE QUESTIONS ARE NEGATIVE: Do you have suggestions to make the wording more positive?]
- Anything else we have not already discussed for these questions and response options? What do others think?

We would like to get a sense of who you are as a parent. We realize that children are different and may require different parenting.

Questions in this section are about your child—or if you have more than one child, your youngest and oldest children—who is 24 years old or younger.

A1a. Do you have any children who are 24 years old or younger? Please include biological children, adopted children, stepchildren, foster children, and any child or youth up to age 24 whom you are actively raising and who is the child of a partner or relative but who is not your biological or legally adopted child.

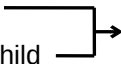
SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Yes, I have one child who is 24 years old or younger _____ } → **GO TO A1b**
- 2 Yes, I have more than one child who is 24 years old or younger _____ } → **GO TO A1b**
- 3 No, I have no children _____ } → **GO TO B1**
- 4 No, all my children are 25 years old or older _____ } → **GO TO B1**

A1b. What is your youngest child's first name or initials?

A1c. Is this your biological or legally adopted child?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Yes, this is my biological child
- 2 Yes, this is my legally adopted child
- 0 No → **GO TO A1d**
- 
- GO TO A1e**

A1d. What is your relationship to [CHILD1]?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Parental figure to spouse's or partner's biological child
- 2 Foster parent
- 3 Relative
- 4 Other (*specify*)

A1e. How old is [CHILD1]?

|_|_| YEARS OLD OR |_|_| MONTHS OLD

A1f. Does [CHILD1] live with you all or most of the time?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Yes, he or she lives with me all or most of the time → **GO TO A2a**
- 0 No, he or she does not live with me all or most of the time → **IF A1a = 2, GO TO A4A
ELSE GO TO A7**

Probes

Now let’s look at question A2a and the options for responding to it.

- Is the question clear? Is there a better way to word the question or structure the statements and response options?
- For parents in the group, do you think these statements are relevant, or make sense, when thinking about your relationship with your youngest child? Why or why not?
- This question asks you to reflect on ways you have felt or acted in the past month, and the response options are the same across all statements within A2a. Can someone walk me through how you would come up with your answers to these statements? What does it mean to be very close with someone, or to be very close to each other? As a reminder, please don’t share how you would respond, just walk me through how you would come up with the response.
- PROBE AS NEEDED ON STATEMENT AND RESPONSE OPTIONS (DEPENDING ON WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN DISCUSSED): Do the choices make sense? Are there enough choices? Are there too many choices? Are there any choices missing? Are there easier or better choices?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for this question and response options? What do others think?

A2a. Please tell us how often you’ve felt or acted this way in the past month with [CHILD1].

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	NEVER	HARDLY EVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
a. I am happy being with [CHILD1].....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
b. [CHILD1] and I are very close to each other...	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
c. I try to comfort [CHILD1] when he/she is upset	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
d. I spend time with [CHILD1] doing what he/she likes to do.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>

Probes

Now let's look at the questions in A2b.

- How did you react to being asked these questions? How do you think people will react to being asked these questions? [IF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP INDICATE THAT THE QUESTIONS ARE NEGATIVE: Do you have suggestions to make the wording more positive?]
- Do you think people will feel comfortable providing honest answers to these questions? Why or why not? What factors might play into people feeling more or less comfortable about providing honest answers to these questions?
- What other ways come to mind for how people might react when they are upset with a child?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for these questions? What do others think?

A2b. Over the past month, did you...

		SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW	
		YES	NO
a.	...hit, spank, grab, or use physical punishment with [CHILD1]?....	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
b.	...yell, shout, or scream at [CHILD1] because you were mad at him/her?.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
c.	...talk to [CHILD1] about what he/she did wrong?.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>

Probes

Now let's look at A3.

- When you read "Child's other parent" who do you think of? Do you think this question would be easy or difficult for most parents to answer? Why might it be difficult to answer?
- What does "working well together as parents" mean to you?
- Anything else not already discussed for this question and response options? What do others think?

A3. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

"[CHILD1]'s other parent and I work well together as parents."

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree

Probes

The rest of section A asks the same set of questions as A1-A3, but about your oldest child. We will not walk through these one by one, but I did want to pause before we move on to see if anyone wanted to say anything here that is different from the first set of questions when you were thinking about your youngest child?

- Do you think it will be easy or hard for parents with multiple children to separately answer these questions for their oldest and youngest children? If yes, what makes it hard?

Probes

Now let's look at A7.

- Do you think that these questions are respectful of your culture and racial and ethnic identity? If not, which questions, and why?
- Do you think that these statements are respectful of people with different backgrounds? If not, which questions, and why?
- [IF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP INDICATE THAT THE QUESTIONS ARE NEGATIVE: Do you have suggestions to make the wording more positive?]
- Anything else here? What do others think?

A7. In the past month, how often have you felt overwhelmed by your parenting responsibilities?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Never
- 2 Hardly ever
- 3 Sometimes
- 4 Often

Section wrap up

Thank you so much for the very helpful feedback on these questions. Before we move on to the next set of questions...

- Do you think these questions covered important aspects of parenting for you, and others in your community?
- In general, were the questions clear and respectful?
- Are there any topics or questions that could be dropped? Tell me more about why they should be dropped (for example, not relevant or not appropriate).
- What other aspects of parenting are we missing?

ENT/EXIT B. JOB AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Probes

Now let's look at the Job and Career Advancement questions, starting with question B1 on job search skills.

- Do you think that these questions are respectful of your culture and racial and ethnic identity? If not, which questions, and why?
- Do you think that these statements are respectful of people with different backgrounds? If not, which questions, and why?
- [IF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP INDICATE THAT THE QUESTIONS ARE NEGATIVE: Do you have suggestions to make the wording more positive?]
- Are there any job search related skills missing here?
- The response options for these statements are all the same. Do the options make sense? If not, what would be an easier or better way to respond to the statements? When do you think someone would select "Not Applicable"?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for this question? What do others think?
- Let's look at question B2. When thinking about looking for jobs, how relevant is having an updated resume? What do others think?

[ASK ALL]

B1. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the statements below?

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NOT APPLICABLE
a. I would like to learn new job skills	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>
b. I know where to find job openings	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>
c. I know how to apply for a job.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>
d. I feel confident in my ability to conduct an effective job search for a job I want.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>
e. I feel confident in my interviewing skills.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>

[ASK ALL]

B2. Do you have an updated resume that you can give to employers?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Yes
- 0 No

Probes

Now let's look at the next few questions, B3-B4.

- How did you react to being asked these questions? How do you think people will react to being asked about some of the topics in this series?
- Do you think that these questions are respectful of your culture and racial and ethnic identity? If not, which questions, and why?
- Do you think that these statements are respectful of people with different backgrounds? If not, which questions, and why?
- Do you think these questions are a good way to find out about someone's financial situation? If not, what other things could we ask about?
- Questions B3a and B3b ask about checking and savings accounts. How did you react to being asked about this? How do you think other people will react to being asked about having these accounts?
- Let's look at B4. Can someone say what this question means in your own words?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for these questions and response options? What do others think?

[ASK ALL]

B3a. Do you have a checking account?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Yes
0 No

[ASK ALL]

B3b. Do you have a savings account?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Yes
0 No

[ASK ALL]

B4. How often do you find it difficult to pay your bills?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Never
2 Once in a while
3 Somewhat often
4 Very often

Probes

Now let's look at the next few questions, B5a – B5c.

- How did you react to being asked these questions? How do you think people will react to being asked about some of the topics in this series?
- Do you think that these questions are respectful of your culture and racial and ethnic identity? If not, which questions, and why?
- Do you think that these statements are respectful of people with different backgrounds? If not, which questions, and why?
- Do you think these questions are a good way to find out about someone's financial situation? If not, what other things could we ask about?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for these questions and response options? What do others think?

[ASK ALL]

B5a. What is your current employment status?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 Full-time employment (usually work 35 or more hours a week)
- 2 Part-time employment (usually work 1–34 hours a week)
- 3 Employed, but number of hours change from week to week
- 4 Temporary, occasional, or seasonal employment, or odd jobs for pay
- 5 Stay-at-home parent or homemaker
- 6 Not currently employed

SOFT CHECK: IF CURRENT EMPLOYMENT = NOT CURRENTLY EMPLOYED = DISABLE OTHER OPTIONS]

[ASK IF CURRENT EMPLOYMENT = STAY-AT-HOME PARENT, NOT CURRENTLY EMPLOYED, OR NO RESPONSE]

B5b. Are you actively looking for work?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Yes
- 0 No

[ASK ALL]

B5c. Are you currently in school, working toward your GED, or in college or other post-high school education?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Yes
- 0 No

Probes

Now let's look at the remaining items on financial well-being in section B.

- How did you react to being asked these questions? How do you think people will react to being asked about some of the topics in this series?
- Do you think people will feel comfortable providing honest answers to these questions? Why or why not? What factors might play into people feeling more or less comfortable about providing honest answers to these questions?
- Were any questions unclear? If so, what is a better way to ask the questions?
- How else can the questions be improved?
- Let's look at B7. How did you react to being asked this question? How do you think people will react to being asked this question? Is the question clear? Is there a better way to word the question or structure the topics or response options? Did you notice anything missing from this list or something you expected to see that was not included? [IF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP INDICATE THAT THE QUESTIONS ARE NEGATIVE: Do you have suggestions to make the wording more positive?]
- Did anyone mark anything we have not already discussed for these questions and response options? What did you mark and why? What do others think?

[ASK ALL]

B5d. In the past 30 days, how much money did you make?

Please include tips, bonuses, commissions, and regular overtime pay, and count all money you received before taxes and deductions and money you earned from informal work or odd jobs. If you held more than one job, include your total earnings from all of your work during the past 30 days. Do not include the earnings of other people who live with you.

Your best estimate is fine.

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 No earnings in the past 30 days
- 2 \$1–\$499
- 3 \$500–\$1,000
- 4 \$1,001–\$2,000
- 5 \$2,001–\$3,000
- 6 \$3,001–\$4,000
- 7 \$4,001–\$5,000
- 8 More than \$5,000

[SKIP IF B6A=5 OR 6 (STAY AT HOME PARENT OR HOMEMAKER, OR NOT CURRENTLY EMPLOYED)]

B6. When did you first start working in the job you have now? If you have more than one job, think about the job you worked at for the most hours during the past 30 days.

____/____

MM

YYYY

B7. Some people experience challenges that make it hard to find or keep a good job. Do any of the following make it difficult for you to find or keep a job?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 I have a criminal record
- 2 I do not have reliable transportation
- 3 I do not have the right clothes for a job (including uniforms)
- 4 I do not have documentation for legal employment (e.g., birth certificate)
- 5 I do not have good enough child care or family help
- 6 I do not have the right skills or education for good jobs
- 7 I have a physical disability or poor health
- 8 I have substance use or mental health challenges
- 9 None of the above

Section wrap up

Thank you so much for the very helpful feedback on these questions. Before we move on to the next section, does anyone have any additional comments about the Job and Career Advancement questions?

ENT/EXIT C. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Probes

Now let's look at questions about personal development, starting with question C1.

- Is the question clear? Is there a better way to word the question or structure the topics or response options?
- How did you react to being asked this question? How do you think other people will react to it? Do you think people will feel comfortable providing honest answers? Why or why not?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for this question and response options? What do others think?

C1. This question is about feelings you may have experienced recently. During the past 30 days, how often have you felt...

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	NONE OF THE TIME	A LITTLE OF THE TIME	SOME OF THE TIME	MOST OF THE TIME	ALL OF THE TIME
a. Nervous?.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
b. Hopeless?.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
c. Restless or fidgety?.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
d. So depressed that nothing could cheer you up?.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
e. That everything was an effort?.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>
f. Worthless?.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	5 <input type="radio"/>

ENT/EXIT D. HEALTHY MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIPS

Probes

Now let's look at question D1 – D4 and the options for responding to these questions.

- For D1, how did you react to being asked this question? How do you think other people will react to this question and the statements? Do you think people will feel comfortable providing honest answers? Why or why not?
- Do you think these questions are relevant to your life and your goals?
- Do you think that these questions are respectful of your culture and racial and ethnic identity? If not, which questions, and why?
- Do you think that these statements are respectful of people with different backgrounds? If not, which questions, and why?
- [IF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP INDICATE THAT THE QUESTIONS ARE NEGATIVE: Do you have suggestions to make the wording more positive?]
- Are the questions clear? Are there better ways to word the questions or structure the statements and response options? How easy or difficult was it for you to respond?
- Do the response options make sense? Are there enough options? If not, which ones are missing? Are there too many? Can the wording be improved?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for this question and response options? What do others think?

D1. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
a. It is better for children if their parents are married.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
b. Living together is just the same as being married.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>

[ASK ALL]

D2. What is your current marital status?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Married
- 2 Engaged
- 3 Separated
- 4 Divorced
- 5 Widowed
- 6 Never married/single

[ASK IF MARITAL STATUS = SEPARATED, DIVORCED, WIDOWED, NEVER MARRIED, OR NO RESPONSE]

D3. What is your current partner status?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 No current partner (unpartnered or single)
- 2 I am romantically involved or in a committed relationship with someone on a steady basis
- 3 I am involved in an on-again and off-again relationship

SKIP IF CURRENT PARTNER = NO CURRENT PARTNER]

D4. How much of the time do you live with your current partner?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 All of the time
- 2 Most of the time
- 3 Some of the time
- 4 None of the time

Probes

Now let's look at D5.

- How did you react to being asked this question? How do you think other people will react to it? Do you think people will feel comfortable providing honest answers? Why or why not?
- Do you think that these questions are respectful of your culture and racial and ethnic identity? If not, which questions, and why?
- Do you think that these statements are respectful of people with different backgrounds? If not, which questions, and why?
- [IF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP INDICATE THAT THE QUESTIONS ARE NEGATIVE: Do you have suggestions to make the wording more positive?]
- Was the question clear? Is there a better way we can ask this question?
- What about the statements; are those clear? Is there a better way we can word those?
- What does “feeling respected by our spouse or partner” mean to you? This might be different for everyone, and that’s ok.
- Do the response options make sense? Are there enough options? If not, which ones are missing? Are there too many? Can the wording be improved?
- In the response options for each statement, what’s the difference between “hardly ever” and “sometimes” to you?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for this question and response options? What do others think?

D5. This question is about your relationship with your partner/spouse. During the past month, how often did the following happen?

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	NEVER	HARDLY EVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
a. My partner/spouse and I were good at working out our differences.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
b. I felt respected even when my partner/spouse and I disagreed.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
c. When my partner/spouse and I had a serious disagreement, we worked on it together to find a resolution.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
d. When my partner/spouse and I had a serious disagreement, we discussed our disagreements respectfully.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
e. During arguments, my partner/spouse and I were good at taking breaks when we needed them.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
f. When my partner/spouse and I argued, past hurts got brought up again.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	NEVER	HARDLY EVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
g. My partner/spouse understands that there are times when I do not feel like talking and times when he/she does.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>

Probes

Now let's look at question D6.

- How did you react to being asked this question? How do you think other people will react to it? Do you think people will feel comfortable providing honest answers? Why or why not?
- Do you think that these questions are respectful of your culture and racial and ethnic identity? If not, which questions, and why?
- Do you think that these statements are respectful of people with different backgrounds? If not, which questions, and why?
- [IF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP INDICATE THAT THE QUESTIONS ARE NEGATIVE: Do you have suggestions to make the wording more positive?]
- Is the question clear? Is there a better way to word the question or structure the statements and response options?
- Do the response options make sense? Are there enough options? If not, which ones are missing? Are there too many? Can the wording be improved?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for this question and response options? What do others think?

D6. During the past month, how often has the following happened?

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	NEVER	HARDLY EVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
a. My partner/spouse was rude or mean to me when we disagree.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
b. My partner/spouse seemed to view my words or actions more negatively than I meant them to be.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
c. Our arguments became very heated.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
d. Small issues suddenly became big arguments.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
e. My partner/spouse or I stayed mad at one another after an argument.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>

Probes

Now let's look at D7, D8, D9 and D10. Let's look at each question individually.

- Is the question clear? Is there a better way to word the question or structure the statements or response options?
- Look at D7 and D8. We have “My partner/spouse yelled or screamed at me” and vice versa. What are some other ways that people might react towards their partner when they are upset about something?
- Do the response options make sense? Are there enough options? If not, which ones are missing? Are there too many? Can the wording be improved?
- Look at D10. How did you react to being asked this question? How do you think other people will react to it? Do you think people will feel comfortable providing honest answers? Why or why not?
- [IF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP INDICATE THAT THE QUESTIONS ARE NEGATIVE: Do you have suggestions to make the wording more positive?]
- Anything else we have not already discussed for these questions? What do others think?

D7. In the past month, how often has the following happened?

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	NEVER	HARDLY EVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
a. My partner/spouse blamed me for his/her problems.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
b. My partner/spouse yelled or screamed at me.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>

D8. In the past month, how often has the following happened?

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	NEVER	HARDLY EVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
a. I blamed my spouse/partner for my problems.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
b. I yelled or screamed at my spouse/partner.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>

D9. How satisfied are you with the way you and your partner/spouse handle conflict?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2 Somewhat satisfied
- 3 Not at all satisfied

D10. Sometimes couples are not faithful to each other. Has your partner/spouse cheated on you with someone else since the program began?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Definitely yes
- 2 Probably yes
- 3 Probably no
- 4 Definitely no

Probes

Now let's look at question D11.

- How did you react to being asked this question? How do you think other people will react to it? Do you think people will feel comfortable providing honest answers? Why or why not?
- Is the question clear? Is there a better way to word the question or structure the statements or response options?
- Do the statements make sense? Can the wording be improved?
- Let's look at D11a. What does "trust completely" mean to you all?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for this question and responses? What do others think?

D11. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your partner/spouse?

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NOT APPLICABLE
a. I trust my partner/spouse completely.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>
b. My partner/spouse knows and understands me.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>
c. I can count on my partner/spouse to be there for me.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>
d. I feel appreciated by my partner/spouse.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>
e. My partner/spouse expresses love and affection toward me.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>

Probes

Now let's look at question D12 and the options for responding to it.

- How did you react to being asked this question? How do you think other people will react to it? Do you think people will feel comfortable providing honest answers? Why or why not?
- Is the question clear? Is there a better way to word the question or structure the statements or response options?
- Do the response options make sense? If not, which ones are missing? Are there too many? Can the wording be improved?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for this question and response options? What do others think?

D12. In the past month, how often have you and your partner/spouse done the following things?

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	ALMOST EVERY DAY	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH	LESS OFTEN
a. Talk to each other about the day.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
b. Laugh together.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>
c. Participate together in an activity we both enjoy.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>

Probes

Now let's look at question D13 & D14.

- How did you react to being asked these questions? How do you think other people will react to them? Do you think people will feel comfortable providing honest answers? Why or why not?
- Let's look at each question individually. Is the question clear? Is there a better way to word the question or structure the response options?
- Do the response options make sense? Are there enough options? If not, which ones are missing? Are there too many? Can the wording be improved?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for these questions and response options? What do others think?

D13. How satisfied are you with your current relationship?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2 Somewhat satisfied
- 3 Not at all satisfied

D14. How much do you agree or disagree with this statement? I view our marriage/relationship as lifelong.

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree

E. PROGRAM PERCEPTIONS

Probes

Now let's look at questions E1 – E6.

- Are the questions clear? Are there better ways to word the questions or structure the response options?
- Is there other questions about your experiences in the program that you think should be included?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for these statements and response options? What do others think?

[ASK ALL]

E1. Since you began attending the program, have you obtained any of the following?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 High school diploma/GED
- 2 Vocational/technical certification
- 3 Other (specify) _____
- na None of the above

[ASK ALL]

E2. Since completing the program, have you...

SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	YES	NO	I AM NOT IN THIS TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP
a. Ended a relationship that was emotionally unhealthy or abusive?.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>
b. Ended a relationship that was just not working for you?.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>
c. Ended a relationship that was physically unhealthy or abusive?.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	na <input type="radio"/>

[ASK ALL]

E3. On a scale from 1 to 5, overall, how helpful was the program to you?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 1 – not at all
- 2 2
- 3 3
- 4 4
- 5 5 – extremely helpful

[SKIP IF CHILDREN = NO CHILDREN OR NO CHILDREN AGE 24 OR YOUNGER]

E4. On a scale from 1 to 5, overall, how helpful was the program for your parenting?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 1 – not at all
- 2 2
- 3 3
- 4 4
- 5 5 – extremely helpful
- na not addressed by this program

[SKIP IF CHILDREN = NO CHILDREN OR NO CHILDREN AGE 24 OR YOUNGER]

E5. On a scale from 1 to 5, overall, how helpful was the program for helping you work together as parents with your spouse, partner, or co-parent?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 1 – not at all
- 2 2
- 3 3
- 4 4
- 5 5 – extremely helpful
- na not addressed by this program

[ASK ALL]

E6. On a scale from 1 to 5, overall, how helpful was the program for your financial well-being?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 1 – not at all
- 2 2
- 3 3
- 4 4
- 5 5 – extremely helpful
- na not addressed by this program

Entrance/exit survey wrap up

Thank you so much for the very helpful feedback on these questions that people answer when they start and end workshops. Did we miss anything in our discussion that you would like to mention now?

Next, we'll discuss the survey questions that people answer when they enroll in the program.

Applicant Characteristics Survey

ACS. SELECTED QUESTIONS

Probes

Let's finish up by walking through a few questions that people answer only when they enroll in the program.

- Do you remember how you reacted to being asked these questions? If you were asked these questions now, how would you react? How do you think other people will react to being asked these questions?
- How comfortable do you think people feel answering these questions?
- Do these seem relevant to you and your life experiences? Do you think that these questions are respectful of your culture and racial and ethnic identity? If not, which questions, and why?
- Do you think that these statements are respectful of people with different backgrounds? If not, which questions, and why?
- Anything else we have not already discussed for these questions in this section? What do others think?

[ASK ALL]

A1. How do you describe yourself?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Female
- 2 Male
- 4 Other (specify)

B1. In the past month, have you or anyone in your household received the following types of assistance?

SELECT ONE
RESPONSE PER ROW

	YES	NO
a. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
b. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
c. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
d. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/Food stamps	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
e. Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>

f. Unemployment insurance	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
g. Housing choice voucher (sometimes called Section 8)	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
h. Cash assistance	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
i. Child support	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>

ASK ALL]

B2a. What is your current living situation?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- 1 Own home
- 2 Rent
- 3 Live at home with parents or relatives (rent-free)
- 4 Live with friends (rent-free)
- 5 Live in a shelter, halfway house, or treatment center
- 6 Live on the streets, in a car, abandoned building, or another place not meant for sleeping
- 7 Currently incarcerated → **GO TO B3**
- 8 Other

Focus Group/Interview Wrap-Up

Thank you so much for the very helpful feedback on the survey questions. Please take a moment to look back through the questions. As you might remember, we want to know how well the questions in these surveys reflect the experiences, values, and beliefs of people from different backgrounds, races, ethnicities, and cultures. Did we miss anything in our discussion that you would like to mention now? This can be about your general thoughts, feedback, or opinions on the surveys and the experience of answering the questions, rather than about specific questions.

That concludes our discussion. Thank you for attending the focus group today and for providing feedback on the survey questions. If you have any follow up questions, we added our email address in the chat and can stay on a few more moments. Otherwise, you will receive an email with a thank you note and your incentive for participating in today’s group. Thanks, and have a wonderful [day/afternoon/evening].