

YOUTH QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUCTIONS

Some general recommendations for interviewing homeless youth:

1. Treat the youth with respect.
2. Try to find a relatively private space away from others, but still in a safe location to conduct the questionnaire. Some of the questions are sensitive and youth may not be comfortable being honest if they feel others will overhear.
3. Do NOT assume high levels of literacy with the youth and do NOT do anything to shame a youth if you encounter issues around low literacy or difficulty understanding the questions.
4. The questionnaire was developed and tested on homeless youth in Los Angeles and typically takes about 10 minutes to administer.

{ BEFORE GETTING STARTED } ESTABLISH CONSENT: Voluntary Participation

- ⇒ Read the data sharing language at the top of the form to the youth.
- ⇒ Let them know that you will not share their names with anyone outside your organization.
- ⇒ Let them know their participation will not affect their program participation.
- * If they are willing to give you the data, but not have it shared then mark the top of the form “NOT TO BE SHARED” and don’t enter it.

{ DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS }

Gender:

- * Sensitive question! Don’t assume!
- ⇒ Ask, “What gender do you identify as? Male, female, or transgender?”
- ⇒ If participant answers “Transgender,” then ask:
“Do you identify as someone who was born in a male body but feel or live as a woman [transgender woman]?
Or do you identify as someone who was born in a female body but feel or live as a man [transgender man]?”

Race:

- * Again, do not assume!
- ⇒ Ask, “Which of the following races do you identify as?” Read ALL response options.
 - Check off ALL appropriate response options.
 - If they respond “mixed race” check the multiple races they identify with.

{ PLACES OF STAY }

- ⇒ Begin by asking, “Where did you sleep last night?”
 - Based upon the participant’s response, mark the appropriate checkbox. This may require some discussion.
- ⇒ Then ask, “How long have you been staying there?”
 - Remember to check the “units” (days, weeks, months, years).
- ⇒ Then ask, “In the past 12 months, have you spent the night in any of the following places?”
 - If none, mark “None of these” and move to back page.
- ⇒ If any are marked, ask “In the past 30 days, did you stay in X place?” Do this for all of the past 12 months locations.
 - If none, mark “None of these.”
 - Otherwise mark appropriate boxes in “Past 30 days” column.
- ⇒ Then ask, “In thinking about your whole life, how long in total have you been without a home, or a regular place to stay/sleep, or been homeless?”
 - Write the number, and check the box for the “units”, either days, weeks, months, years.
- ⇒ Then ask “Since you have been without a home, or a regular place to stay/sleep, or been homeless, how many different times have you been stably housed?”
 - If asked to define “stably housed,” may ask, “Did you feel it was safe and lasting?”

{ REASONS FOR LEAVING HOME }

- ⇒ Remember to first read: “Did you ever become homeless because...” and then read each of the four questions to follow.
 - Not the same as being thrown out.

{ SCHOOL & WORK }

- ⇒ Read the questions as written and read the answers for youth to select from.

{ PAST EXPERIENCES }

- ⇒ Read the questions as written.
- ⇒ When asking about marijuana use, remember to read: “IF you’ve used marijuana...”
 - If Never, write “N.”
- ⇒ If youth has never been or gotten someone pregnant, fill in “0” for biological children without asking the question.

{ MOOD }

- * Ask these questions regardless of any known diagnosis.
- ⇒ Preface the Mood section by saying “For the following items, please select the choice that best describes how you have felt over the past WEEK.”
- ⇒ Emphasize that you want to know about the last WEEK and show them the four answer choices available.
- ⇒ For the second set of mood questions remember to emphasize that now we want to know about how the youth has felt in the past MONTH.