

# STUDENT INTEREST SURVEYS

## A GUIDE FOR FULFILLING THE SMV INDICATOR G-1

*Indicator G-1 of the SMV Tool ensures that programs are engaging and communicating with their students, and adhere to the spirit of student voice by gathering participants input. These surveys can also provide programs support for student retention.*

<b>Engaging &amp; Communicating with Students</b>			
<b>G-1</b>	<p><b>Gathering Student Participants' Input about Program Offerings<sup>15</sup></b></p> <p>Regularly elicits input from participants at all sites to determine programming that matches students' needs and interests.</p>	<p><i>To be fully compliant, the subgrantee must provide evidence of at least one of the following:</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (a) <b>Student <u>Interest</u> Surveys</b> developed &amp; administered to gather input about program offerings (A)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (b) <b>Focus group protocols &amp; notes</b> documenting discussions with participants to be used to inform program design/activity offerings</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (c) <b>Other</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

[SMV Tool](#)

There are two ways of fulfilling compliance for this indicator as seen above; Student interest surveys and Focus group protocols & notes. During the SMV process you will only have to provide evidence of one of these options, however, you may want to incorporate both in you survey practices dependent on the needs of your program. For example, here are some reasons you might chose to use either of these forms of survey.

### STUDENT INTEREST SURVEYS

<b>Pro</b>	<b>Con</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are able to write their own answers in their own words</li> <li>• Less staff intensive – can be electronic</li> <li>• Can follow up with direct individuals if they mention concerns with the program</li> <li>• Written surveys can be more easily translated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple surveys may be required if you serve multiple grades of varying reading and writing levels</li> <li>• May have low submit rates</li> <li>• If anonymous, there is no chance to ask clarifying Qs or follow up</li> </ul>

### FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOLS & NOTES

<b>Pro</b>	<b>Con</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equitable for lower grade levels who don't have as developed reading and writing skills</li> <li>• Allows students to share ideas</li> <li>• More of a conversation rather than a question &amp; answer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More staff intensive</li> <li>• More time intensive</li> <li>• Possible language barriers for ENL students if there is no interpreter available</li> </ul>

**REMEMBER:** Whether you chose one form of survey or decide to implement both, remember to document all of the work for compliance purposes.

## WHAT TYPES OF QUESTIONS SHOULD WE ASK?

You want to make sure you are reading the indicator carefully as it tells you exactly what types of questions you should be asking. You want to ensure your survey includes questions about the students' needs and interests.

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### SOME EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS WE'VE SEEN:

Questions about Needs	Questions about Interest
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you feel safe at the after-school program?</li> <li>• Did the program help you complete school work?</li> <li>• Did the program help improve your grades?</li> <li>• Do you need more homework support?</li> <li>• Did staff help you when you needed it?</li> <li>• Was staff supportive?</li> <li>• Why do you come to the after-school program? (multiple choice)</li> <li>• Have you made friends at program?</li> <li>• Do you feel your ideas are considered in the planning of activities? (Yes/No)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your career goal?</li> <li>• What would you like to learn more about?</li> <li>• Select your <b>top three</b> interests that you would like to see as an extracurricular activity or club at school.</li> <li>• What would you change about the after-school program?</li> <li>• Have you tried new activities at the after-school program that you haven't done anywhere else? If yes, what was it?</li> <li>• What are your favorite type of activities in out program? (Multiple choice)</li> </ul>
Common Supplemental Questions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What school do you attend?</li> <li>• What grade are you in?</li> <li>• How many times a week do you attend the after-school program?</li> <li>• Do you have any ideas to make program better?</li> <li>• Is there anything you would like to share?</li> </ul>	

## HOW CAN I MAKE MY SURVEY MORE AGE APPROPRIATE FOR LOWER GRADE LEVEL?

ASK SIMPLE QUESTIONS, USE LARGER FONTS, READ QUESTIONS OUTLOUD.

After-school program staff helps me.

Strongly agree     Agree     Disagree     Strongly disagree

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I get to try new things. Choose one.



Draw a picture of your favorite activity in the box below.

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Do you like (insert activity here)?



## WHAT WOULD A FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL & NOTES LOOK LIKE?

For compliance your program would need to produce evidence of protocol (procedures of how you conduct focus groups) and notes (the recorded participants responses).

### Protocol should include information such as:

- When focus group is occurring (SMV requires the administration date)
- Objective
- Participant group size
- Who is leading the focus group
- How to prepare for focus groups
- Discussion questions/points
- Documentation Method - who and how students' answers will be recorded

### Things to consider:

- If interpreters are required for participants
- Are your questions age appropriate?
- How to redirect if needed
- Frequency of focus groups

### NOTE:

Your TARC will accept submission of 1<sup>st</sup> person notes, scanned copies of notes, hand-written notes (legible), typed notes of the discussion that takes place.

## RESULTS

After surveys you should discuss the results and any common trends that you uncover. Often student voice can inform insight to student participation/retention. These results can be brought to your team for further discussion on what changes might be reasonable and implementable. You can bring these results to stakeholders to help bolster support of your programming, or as supporting evidence when changing program offerings.

### Consider sharing results during/with:

- Advisory Board
- Collaborative Planning Time
- Evaluator