

**APPENDIX H:  
EMPLOYED TEEN FOCUS GROUP FACILITATION GUIDE**

Participants: Group of ~10 teens (14-17 yrs old)

Duration: 1-2 hours (~120 minutes)

***Questions and Schedule***

**Pre-Session**

Greet participants as they arrive, offer them snacks, let them know where the restrooms are, and give them a short handout.

A few minutes before beginning the session, gather the participants and encourage them to choose a seat.

**Introduction (10 minutes):**

- Welcome participants (2 minutes).
  - Hello everyone, thank you for taking time to help us with our study. My name is [Facilitator name], and I work for Eastern Research Group, Inc. We are doing a study on youth employment to help the government improve the materials they have created to help parents, employers and teens understand labor law and keep teens safe on the job.
  - We need your help. We want to hear from you about your work experiences. We are trying to find out how employers treat employees under 18 and how they handle the laws that apply to young workers. We are going to ask you some questions about your work environment, how your employer handles work issues like training, and how certain situations would be handled at your job. Keep in mind that we will not share any identifying information about you or your employer with anyone, and if we write about anything you say here today, we will make sure your comments are anonymous and can't be linked to you or your employer. To help us with this, we encourage you to speak about your job in general terms, like "cashier at a fast food restaurant." We don't need to know the name of the business.
  - During the session today we will also show you some of the materials that I mentioned a minute ago. We would really like to hear what you have to say about how the materials look and how useful they are to you. If we have time, we would also love to hear your suggestions on how to make the materials better.
  - Brief discussion of ground rules
  - Are there any questions before we begin?
- Briefly review handout (3 minutes)
  - Okay, let me draw your attention to the handout you received when you arrived, does everyone have a copy? You may already be familiar with this information, but let's take a moment to review just to be sure that everyone is on the same page when we talk about your work experience. The chart at the top of the page describes the number of hours you can work during the school year or during summer, and also describes jobs that you are not allowed to do, usually referred to as "Hazardous Occupations." These are jobs that the government has decided are too risky for young workers to do, there is a list of them below the chart.

- When you talk about your job, it's okay if something you describe isn't allowed by the rules. We're not concerned with whether or not something you did on the job was legal, and we are not going to report you or your employer. What we want to know is what actually does happen at your jobs and how information on teen labor laws might impact your work conditions.
- Does anyone have any questions about the hazardous occupations or the equipment listed on the handout?
- Have participants introduce themselves (5 minutes).
  - Now you all know who I am and why we're here today so let's take a minute for you to introduce yourselves. Please tell the group your first name, or the name you prefer to go by if you have a nickname. Then tell us where you work – again, you don't need to give us the name of your employer, you can just describe them in general terms. For example, if you work for McDonald's, you can tell the group that you work for "a fast food restaurant."

**Work Experiences/Work Environment (25 minutes):**

- Let's start by talking about why everyone decided to get a job. What made you decide to start working?
- Tell me what you like about having a job.
- How much supervision do you have at the place you work? Have you ever seen a manager tell someone not to use a piece of equipment or to be sure to clock out on time?
- How does the place you work handle teen employment rules? Are the rules posted somewhere? Have you ever read them? Do you re-read them every now and then?
- What kind of training did you receive when you started working? What was it about?
- What kind of information, if any, did your employer give you about what you're allowed and not allowed to do given your age?
- What kind of information, if any, did you receive from your guidance counselor or other educator about what you're allowed and not allowed to do given your age?
- Did you talk to your parents about what kinds of jobs you're allowed and not allowed to do?
- [When participants talk about a story where rules were broken, ask, "Suppose you were in a similar situation? How do you think you would handle it?"]

**Scenarios (25 minutes):**

[Note: ERG does not expect to present focus group participants with all of these scenarios, but rather to use this as a menu of possible scenarios that the facilitator can pick from.]

- Now let's talk about some situations that could happen while you're working. For each one I'll describe a situation to you and I would like you to tell the group how you would react, and how the situation would be handled by your coworkers or managers. If you happen to remember an actual work experience that a scenario reminds you of, please feel free to share that too.

- Suppose this happens while you are at work while your manager is sitting in their office [For each situation, ask these follow-up questions]:
  - How would this situation be handled at your job?
  - What would happen?
  - Who would take action (a coworker, manager, or owner)?
- [14-15 year-olds] You're scheduled to work until 7 p.m. but your replacement just phoned to say she was stuck in traffic and will be 30 minutes late. The store has been very busy and your coworker doesn't want to be stuck on the sales floor by themselves for 30 minutes.
- [16 and over] You're stuck in traffic and you've called your work to let them know you will be 30 minutes late, a 15 year old coworker answers the phone – do you ask them to stay after 7 pm until you can get there?
- [14-15 year-olds] Your friend at work wants to switch schedules with you. He wants you to work his Saturday shift for him because his team has an away game that day, but working his shift would put you over 18 hours for the week.
- [16 and over] Your team has an away game this Saturday but you're scheduled to work. The only person who could switch shifts with you is a coworker who is 15, and working your shift would put them over 18 hours for the week.
- [14-17 year-olds] You're working in a sandwich shop during a big lunch rush. Your coworker is working the sandwich station and shouts for someone to slice some more deli meat for them. You're the only one who is immediately free to help.
- [16 and over] You're working at a pizza place on a Friday night. There have been a lot of orders for delivery, and the delivery person is falling behind. You have a driver's license and you drove your car to work that day. You know that delivery drivers get to keep their tips.
- [14-17 year-olds] You're working in a grocery store that also does home delivery of customer orders. There are a lot of big orders going out today and the delivery person needs someone to ride with them and keep track of the orders as they're delivered.
- [14-17 year-olds] You're told to clean up the back room of the store after a delivery, so you stack up all the empty boxes and packing material. A coworker yells back to you that you should just put them in the trash compactor and push the "on" button.

### **Mid-Session Break** (10 minutes)

### **Evaluation of materials** (30 minutes):

- [Lay out materials on table] Have you ever seen any of these materials, maybe during work training or at school?
  - If a coworker asked you to slice some tomatoes using a meat slicer with this sticker [show sticker] on it, how would you react? Do you think the sticker would affect their decision to ask you?
- [For each item] How useful do you think this item is? Ask how the item could be changed to make it more useful or informative.

- How would seeing these materials or signs change how you do your job, if at all?
- If you were in charge of teaching teens about teen employment rules, how would you do it?
  - Would you create posters/bookmarks? How would they be different?
- [Bring up [www.youthrules.dol.gov](http://www.youthrules.dol.gov) web site on computer screen] This is the YouthRules! Web site, which the Department of Labor has created to inform you about your rights as an employee.
  - What are some reasons, if any, you might search for information on this site?
  - [Go through the main page, the hours page, and the page on what jobs teens can work.]
  - What do you think is useful about the site? Not useful?
  - If you were in charge of creating a web site to inform other teens about teen employment rules, what would the site need to include? What design features and information?

**Concluding comments** (5 minutes)

- Summarize comments for participants.
- Thank participants for their comments.
- Give participants outreach packet and reimbursement.