

OUTLINE DISCUSSION GUIDE
FOCUS GROUP STUDY
TEENS

Good (morning, afternoon, evening). My name is _____.

The New Jersey State Library has launched a project to better understand what types of services people who live in your community want their public library to provide.

The Library is very pleased that you have agreed to join us today.

We are here to talk about how the Library can do an even better job of serving teens.

The discussion we are going to have is called a focus group. If you who haven't participated in one of these sessions before, I would like to explain a little bit about how a focus group works.

Focus groups are a way to gather information from a small group of people who have a common interest in a particular subject—in this instance what you all have in common is that you are all teens who use the public library.

You were invited here because the staff library believes you will have some interesting ideas the topics we want to discuss. Your insights will be very valuable because it will help the library offer teens the programs and services they need and prefer in the future.

In focus groups, no answers are right or wrong. We want to hear from everyone in the group. Don't hesitate to speak up when you have a point you would like to make.

As moderator, I will be leading the session and moving us along so that we cover the important questions and still finish on time. If I think that we are spending too much time on one subject, I will step in to keep the discussion moving.

We will be tape recording this discussion so I don't have to take notes. I like to really pay attention to what you are saying and then listen to the tapes later.

My job is to summarize the group's ideas. I will not refer to any of you by name in the report. The information will be used only by the library to plan for teen programs and services.

QUESTION ONE: I would like to begin by going around the table and asking each of you to tell us a little about yourself—what grade you are in, where you go to school, what types of activities you enjoy, what your personal interests are.

QUESTION TWO: From your point of view as a young resident of _____, why do you think it is important to have a good library in our community?

QUESTION THREE: I'd like to hear how you are using the Library now. PROBE FOR:

Books and magazines for school projects

Reading and other materials for entertainment

Summer reading

Online resources

Remote access

Homework help/reference services

Information about colleges and financial aid

Practice tests such as SAT

Teen programs

Use computers in the Library

Study in the Library
Work or volunteer
Other

QUESTION FOUR: Which three of the services that the Library now provides for teens mean the most to you? PROBE FOR:

Collections
Assistance with finding information
Programs for teens
Space for teens to meet
Computer access
Information online

QUESTION FIVE: What do you like least about the Library?

QUESTION SIX: From your point of view, what keeps some teens from using their public library?

QUESTION SEVEN: If you had to give a grade to the Library's teen services, what grade would you give it and why?

QUESTION EIGHT: Do you use your school library? What is different about the way that you use your public library versus the way you use the one at school?

QUESTION NINE: Let's pretend that our library could be changed in some way. Imagine yourself walking into a space that is totally different. What is it you see in your imagination?

QUESTION TEN: How would you like to be able to use technology at the Library in the future?

QUESTION ELEVEN: Are there new services you think the Library should consider adding for teens in the future?

QUESTION TWELVE: What are the best ways for the Library to provide information about its services to teens? How should the Library be communicating with teens? PROBE FOR:

In school

In other places in the community

Electronically

QUESTION THIRTEEN: When you come to the Library, do you feel comfortable asking the staff to help you? Do you think teens are treated the same way as other library customers?

QUESTION FOURTEEN: If you were in charge of the Library, what is the one thing that you would do to make the Library an even better place for teens to visit?