Delaware County 2026 Community Health Assessment
Focus Group Discussion Guide Draft
Parents of Young Children

INTRODUCTIONS, GUIDELINES, PERMISSIONS (~5 MINUTES)

- Welcome!
- Has anyone participated in a focus group before? [SHOW OF HANDS]
- Review the focus group environment. Obtain recording permissions.
- Please turn off / silence cell phones.
- Explain purpose of conversation: Delaware County is in the midst of its Community Health Needs Assessment and Planning process, which has the ambitious goal of improving the health and wellness of residents. As part of this process, my research firm – Illuminology – is conducting focus groups with residents and community leaders and surveying residents about a variety of health issues and topics. Today, I'm excited to talk with you and hear <u>your</u> perspectives on health in the county!
- Explain report and CHIP
- There are no right or wrong answers, and no need for group consensus. Please tell me what you're really thinking. I'm looking for your honest feedback.
- Forgive me if I move the discussion along at some points.
- I'd like to introduce our observers (names, affiliations; will be circulating to take photos?)
- Now, let's introduce ourselves to one another. Can you please share your name and the ages of your child or children?
- *(NOTE: This guide presents a conversational roadmap, not a script to be followed word for word. The moderator will ask questions as applicable, taking into account the amount of time remaining.)*

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES (~20 MINUTES)

- Overall, what do you think are the most important **health issues** facing <u>children age 5 or younger</u> who live in Delaware County? Feel free to talk about physical health, developmental issues, behavioral issues, or any other topics that impact health and wellness.
    - What issues with nutrition and physical activity are present among young children in the community?

- Overall, what do you think are the most important health issues facing parents or guardians of children age 5 or younger who live in Delaware County? Feel free to talk about physical health, mental health, substance misuse, or other health-related issues.

- Next I want to ask a really big-picture question. What would you say are the biggest challenges your family faces in day-to-day life?

HEALTH CARE ACCESS (~20 MINUTES)

- What are some reasons young children in the community may not get (or may have delays in getting) health care?
    - *Cost? (Co-pay/deductible? No health insurance? Other?)*
    - *Availability?*
    - *Transportation?*
    - *Feeling that providers might not look like residents or understand them or their community?*

- Is there a particular kind of health care that is difficult to access? [PROBE ON DENTAL HEALTH CARE]

- Why might young children need to get health care outside of Delaware County? [PROBE TO UNDERSTAND WHERE GETTING HEALTH CARE / WHAT TYPES OF SERVICES]

CROSS-CUTTING FACTORS (~30 MINUTES)

Social Determinants of Health

- Next I want to talk about any other non-medical factors that might influence health that we haven't already discussed. Some examples of these factors are financial stability; safe, affordable housing; transportation; social and community support; and access to education and information.
    - What non-medical factors do you see as issues that affect the health of families with young children in the community [that we haven't already discussed]?
    - How much of your household income goes toward your housing? Would you say it's a reasonable amount, or not so much?
        - [IF NEEDED] What issues with the cost of housing exist in the community?

Specialized Topics – Population Health and Well-being

Next I have some questions about some other specific topics that might influence health and well-being.

- Are there issues with the affordability and/or quality of child care in Delaware County, or not so much?

- Do you see use of screens as an issue among young children in the community, or not so much? [PROBE TO UNDERSTAND - AMOUNT OF SCREEN TIME, TYPE, OTHER ISSUES]

- Do you feel like there is a sense of belonging among families of young children in the community, or not so much? [PROBE TO UNDERSTAND GAPS IN BELONGING]

- What safety issues do you discuss with your young child/children?

- Do you feel like there is adequate support for young children with disabilities in the community, or not so much? [PROBE TO UNDERSTAND]

- Do you feel like there is adequate support for young children who don't think or process information in a way that's seen as typical in the community, or not so much? [PROBE TO UNDERSTAND]

PARTING COMMENTS (~15 MINUTES)

[PARTICIPANTS WILL ALSO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS IN WRITING AT THE END OF THE GROUP/AFTER THE GROUP AND PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS THEY HAVE TO ENSURE THEY ARE ABLE TO VOICE ALL THOUGHTS/CONCERNS]

- What are some things that community partners could do – or could do more of – to improve the health and well-being of young children and their families Delaware County?

- Thinking about the health of young children and their families in the community, what else do you think we should know?

<IF TIME ALLOWS>

Poverty & Discrimination

- How do you think **poverty** affects the topics we talked about today?

- How do you think **racial/ethnic discrimination** affects the topics we talked about today?