

Step 5

Letter Inviting Community Leaders to Participate in a Focus Group

This is a letter a *TfC* team drafted to invite leaders of soup kitchens and community pantries to participate in a focus group. The letter gives background on the *TfC* program and provides information that will allow the reader to make an informed decision about whether they want to participate. This letter might be a template that you and your students can edit so that it works for your focus group.

Date

Dear XXXX,

As students on the Tools for Change research team who are investigating issues of hunger in our community at the XXXXX High School, we invite you to participate in a focus group with other leaders of food pantries and community dining rooms. Our target date for the focus group is Saturday, April 26 from 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at a central and convenient location to be announced.

Tools for Change is an action-research seminar, led by Dr. William Tobin of Duke University. In the program, students from three school districts in Rye Town use social science research methods to investigate issues affecting the Town of Rye. In the past, for example, we have used data to understand the reasons behind low voter turnout in Rye Town. Each year our findings are presented to the town in the form of policy recommendations in an effort to improve some aspect of our community. This year, we chose hunger as our topic of investigation due to its surprising prevalence in our community. Additionally, some of us serve as volunteers in food pantries and kitchens in our community and our lives were touched by this work.

This year we hope to run a focus group made up of leaders like you. We want to learn

about what is working well in your organization and better understand the challenges you confront in your work.

Tools for Change high school students will lead the focus group discussion, take written notes and audiotape the session so we will have transcript of the conversation. What you say in the focus group is confidential. Your real name will not be included in any reports written about the focus group. The only people who will have access to the notes, audiotape recordings or information from the focus group are the *Tools for Change* students and instructors.

We know you are busy and if you are interested in participating, we want to make this work for your schedule. If you have questions about *Tools for Change* or the focus group, please contact Dr. Tobin at XXX or XXXX. Questions about logistics should go to XXXX.

Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,