

PHOTOVOICE MANUAL

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SECTION 1- INTRODUCTION TO PHOTOVOICE

Introduction

Photovoice is a process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique. It entrusts cameras into the hands of people which enable them to act as recorders, and potential catalysts for social action and change in their own communities. It uses the immediacy of the visual image and accompanying stories to furnish evidence and to promote an effective, participatory means of sharing expertise to create healthful public policy.

The goal of a photovoice research project is to understand the culture of a public health topic area of concern. A primary purpose of this Photovoice Manual and Tool Kit is to help a professional or community member facilitate photovoice sessions for a community-based participatory research project. A secondary purpose of this tool kit manual is to assure that there is a common understanding about how photovoice sessions should be conducted so that the photovoice sessions are consistent and conducted with a high standard of quality.

Photovoice blends a grassroots approach to photography and social action. It provides cameras not to health specialists, policy makers, or professionals, but to people with the least access to those who make decisions affecting their lives.

Photovoice has three main goals:

- to enable people to record and reflect on their community's strengths and concerns through visual images;
- to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about personal and community issues through large and small group discussions of photographs; and
- to reach policy makers.

Photovoice Sessions

- will bring community members together to better understand the culture of the health topic of concern through visual documentation, communication, and creative problem-solving strategies;
- will allow participants to define issues related to the health topic of concern with visual images;

- will facilitate a dialogue process to contextualize photos taken by participants and create conversation about common themes and concerns;
- will create a visual display of photos to be used to demonstrate to the larger community, including policy makers, issues related to the health topic of concern and
- will connect community members to organizing efforts to address issues related to the health topic of concern.

Session 1

- 1) Introduction to the project and photovoice
- 2) Introducing initial theme/s for taking pictures
- 3) Process of taking pictures

Session 2

- 1) Critical reflection and dialogue
 - selecting photographs for discussion
 - contextualizing and storytelling
 - codifying issues, themes, and theories
- 2) Documenting the stories

Guidelines:

Participants will take part in two photovoice sessions to complete the project. During these sessions participants and facilitators agree to do the following:

- Everyone demonstrates respect for one another by:
 - minimizing distractions by turning off cell phones and pagers;
 - practicing “active” listening by making eye contact;
 - being non-judgmental by exhibiting no negative facial expressions, body language or sounds that indicate disinterest or disapproval;
 - not interrupting while others are speaking or during someone else’s time. Everyone’s time is valuable, so value each person’s time!
- The facilitator will guide both of the sessions which will include group discussion sessions.
- Participants will strive to take part in all aspects of the photovoice project, including taking their own pictures for the research project.
- Facilitators and participants must respect the “confidentiality” of the pictures and stories as well as the storytellers’ names (three exceptions include suicide, child abuse, or intent to harm others).
- Photographs of people will only be shared within the participant group and included in the research if 1) the subject is not identifiable and 2) a signed consent form is obtained from the person who is the subject of the picture.
- The second photovoice session will be audio-taped as a way of gathering and analyzing data, but if there is anyone who does not want their portion taped, the recording will be turned off.

Roles and Responsibilities of a Facilitator

The role of a facilitator is to introduce the project, photovoice and the process of taking pictures. Additionally, the facilitator will be required to lead the group discussions in order to gain information that will help us to better understand the culture of the health topic of concern.

- The facilitator is objective and respects the thoughts and ideas of all participants.
- The facilitator establishes a climate of respect and trust.
- The facilitator will discontinue discussion when the group atmosphere is no longer safe for all participants, and will re-assess if the group can continue after discussion re-direction occurs. They will also determine at that time if it is necessary to erase segments of the discussion determined unsafe to the participants, and will erase that portion immediately.
- The facilitator encourages, but does not force participation.
- The facilitator will make clear to all participants that they may leave the research and/or discussion groups at any time and for any reason without any penalty to their participation.
- The facilitator does not interject his or her own opinions on the group.

The facilitator has a number of very important responsibilities in addition to conducting the photovoice sessions.

- The facilitator ensures the success of a session by communication with all pertinent persons.
- The facilitator confirms the arrangements for a session with the host group or agency.
- If the facilitator organizes the session, he or she will be responsible for making all arrangements for the session, including finding a meeting space, buying refreshments, arranging for day care providers and translation services if needed.

SECTION 2- PHOTOVOICE FACILITATOR SCRIPT

Photovoice Session One

Introduction/Warm-Up

Hi, my name is _____ and I am with _____. Today, I will be a facilitator and you will be a participant and together, all of us will be part of a photovoice project.

The primary purpose of this project is to _____.

One of the tools that we are using to do this research is called photovoice. Photovoice is a process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance

their community through a specific photographic technique. It gives people cameras to act as recorders to show how a specific issue like chew tobacco can impact our everyday lives.

To be part of this photovoice project, you will participate in two photovoice sessions. In the first session, this session, you will learn about photovoice as a research strategy and discuss the process of documenting community issues through photography. In the second session, everyone will have a chance to select one picture to create a contextual story that will be shared with the group. Together we will discuss everyone's selected photos and stories, the differences and similarities, and brainstorm possible solutions. The second session will be recorded by a digital audio recorder, and you will be asked if you agree to have your discussion recorded. If you would not like to be recorded, the recorder will be paused while you share your story. Are there any questions about your participation in this photovoice project?

I would also like to explain some ground rules for the time we will spend together. The most important rule is that we demonstrate respect for one another. This means that we must:

- minimize distractions by turning off our cell phones and pagers;
- practice our "active" listening skills by making eye contact and nodding when you agree with something someone says;
- be non-judgmental, so no negative facial expressions, body language or sounds that indicate disinterest or disapproval; and
- not interrupt while others are speaking. Everyone will have a chance to speak if they want to, so please respect other's sharing.
- respect the "confidentiality" of each other, the pictures shared and each other's stories.

Okay, now let's get started.

[Play the following warm-up game if you have time.]

To begin we are going to play the toilet paper game so that we can have a little fun and get to know each other in the process. The way you play the toilet paper game is by passing this roll of toilet paper around the circle as fast as you can. Each person will grab a little bit of the toilet paper quickly and then pass the roll on. I'll tell you what you will do with your toilet paper as soon as we are done.

[Have participants pass the roll of toilet paper around.]

Okay, now count how many sheets of toilet paper you grabbed. We will go around the circle and I want everyone to say their name and then tell us about yourself. You have to tell us something about yourself for each sheet of toilet paper that you grabbed. So for instance, if you grabbed 3 sheets of toilet paper, you have to tell us 3 things about yourself.

[Go around and have people introduce themselves.]

Introduction to Photovoice Photography

As I mentioned, photovoice is a research technique that gives people cameras to act as recorders to show how a specific issue like chew tobacco can impact our everyday lives. Communities around the country and the world have conducted photovoice projects to demonstrate community concerns like homelessness, poverty and youth violence.

[Show photovoice example and read the story attached to the picture]

In this photovoice project we are asking community members to document [*issue or condition*].

In order to conduct a photovoice project, we have to first talk about the power of photography. There is a saying that says that a picture is worth a thousand words, and that couldn't be more true. A picture not only captures an image, but can show us a person's feelings and personal life experience. For that reason, we have to discuss the power of photography, and how to be respectful and safe when taking pictures.

First, in order to be respectful of people and their personal life experiences, we need to make sure that we only take pictures when people have given us permission to do so. You may choose to not take pictures of actual people and instead places or objects. You may or may not need permission to take a picture, but we suggest that you always ask when possible to be respectful of others. If you chose to take a picture of a person, it is necessary to explain the project and get a signed consent form from that person. Let's look at the form you will use when taking pictures of people.

[Review the consent form, and ask for any questions]

It is also important that if you choose to take a picture of a person that you do everything to make the person unidentifiable. By that we mean that you should try to not include faces or other features that would make it easy to identify that person. Can anyone give me an example of how you might do this? For example, if you want to take a picture of someone walking in the park, you would only take the picture from in back of the person, not with the person facing toward you, and ideally from a distance so that specific physical features that might identify the person can't be identified. Does anyone have questions about the process of taking picture of people so that they can not be identified?

Secondly, we must make sure that everyone in this project is safe when taking pictures. You may have a wonderful idea of the picture you would like to take; however, it may pose some danger to yourself or others. If this is the case, do not take the picture. We need to ensure that everyone connected to this project feels safe, and if you find yourself in an uncomfortable or unsafe situation, we ask that you please walk away from the situation and not take the picture. Are there any questions about how to be safe when taking pictures?

Now, let's talk a little about the theme of this project and the possible pictures you might take in your community. The theme for this project is _____. Let's take a moment for everyone to brainstorm some ideas of what this statement means to them, and possible pictures that you could take.

[Give everyone a couple of minutes to write down some ideas, ask people who are willing to share with the group]

Hopefully, that gives you some ideas of what you might take pictures of to demonstrate the impact [*health issue of concern*] has on you or your community. Now it is time to look at our cameras, and talk about the process of this project.

[Pass out cameras]

Everyone will get one disposable camera and a few blank consent forms. You will have _____ [*insert time period, suggested that you have at least one week, and no more than two*] to take your pictures. Please take lots of pictures, because you never know how they will turn out. Try and take all _____ pictures on your camera. When you are done we will set a time to collect your cameras. Your pictures will be developed and you will get to look at them at our second session. In that session we will select your favorite picture to create your story.

Now that we have discussed everything, and you have received all of your instructions, does anyone have questions? If at this point you would like to opt out of this project, please see me after we conclude.

I want to thank you all for your participation. You will be helping create a better understanding of [*health issue of concern*] in your community. Have a great time taking pictures!

Photovoice Session Two

Introduction

Welcome back everyone. I hope that you enjoyed taking pictures in your community. The goal of this session is to create our stories. To do this, we will need to do three things: 1) select photographs for discussion; 2) contextualize

this project by creating your stories; 3) codify the issues, themes, and theories for this community project.

Selection of Photographs

The first thing we will do is take some time to look at the pictures you took. You need to select one picture from your pictures which best represents our theme _____.

[Pass out sets of pictures to the participants. Take 10-15 minutes to let participant select their picture.]

Contextualize by Creating Stories

Now that you have selected your picture we are going to create your stories. You are going to have some time to answer the following questions (SHOWD):

- 1) What do you **see** here?
- 2) What's really **happening** here?
- 3) How does this relate to **our** lives?
- 4) **Why** does this problem, concern, or strength exist?
- 5) How can this image **educate** the community policy makers, others?
- 6) What can we **do** about it?

Everyone will get a worksheet to answer these questions, and then put them together for your compiled story.

[Pass out the worksheets and allow 20-30 minutes for participants to create their story]

Story-Telling

Now that you have created your story, we are going to share them with the rest of the group. Now we are going to turn on the audio recorder to record our discussion. Is that ok with everyone? Who would like to share their picture and story first?

[Turn on the audio recorder. Let people volunteer to share their stories. Encourage everyone to share; however, if someone absolutely does not want to share, have that person pass.]

Thank you all for being willing to share your pictures and your stories.

Reflection

If anyone would like to comment on or build off of what another person said, we can do that now. [Proceed with the group discussion.] Please think about what you heard today. What do you think are the main reasons that people _____? How does one's family, friends and community support or not support _____?

[Ask other questions to get participants to reflect on the health issue being discussed and how it impacts their community.]

Call-to-Action

What advice or suggestions do you have for community leaders to address this issue/these concerns you are mentioning?

Closing

Thank you so much for sharing your pictures, your stories, your thoughts and views today. If you are ok with sharing your picture and story with us, we would like you to complete the Photovoice Picture and Story Release form, and leave that form together with your picture before you leave. If you would like to keep your pictures and your story, feel free to take them home with you. If after leaving today, you have any questions or concerns or if you would like a write-up of the photovoice project, please don't hesitate to call _____. The phone number is listed on the consent form that you will take home with you.

Thanks and have a good day.